



**THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
SOCIAL SCIENCES UNIVERSITY OF ANKARA  
INSTITUTE FOR GRADUATE STUDIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**ISRAELI POLICIES ON CHANGING THE IDENTITY OF BAYT  
AL-MAQDIS**

**MASTER'S THESIS**

**AHMET GÖKHAN METE**

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AL-MAQDIS**

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# **ISRAELI POLICIES ON CHANGING THE IDENTITY OF BAYT AL-MAQDIS**

## **ABSTRACT**

This master's thesis aims to identify the policies and methods that are employed by the Zionist State of Israel to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis. Within this context, the policies, methods and tools serving their interest are scrutinized in a detailed way. Not only the ones having direct impact inevitably, but also the other actions taken and regulations put into effect by the Israeli government that contributes to their ultimate goal indirectly are also elaborated. In this sense, it is argued that the Zionist State, aiming at turning the Occupied Palestine Territories in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular into a region possessed by Jewish identity, culture and values under the Israeli hegemony, go to any lengths and take advantage of everything serving their interest. Taking all methods and policies that are applied by the Israeli government into the consideration, it is concluded that every policy followed, every regulation put into action is closely intertwined. In other words, it is connected with each other in many ways and approaching from this perspective, it can be said that these are the cogs in the wheel in a sense. Basically, one regulation or policy followed by them comes with multiple outcomes that serve the Israelis' interest one way or another and it impacts the Palestinian society economically, politically and socially in negative ways without exception. Besides, what has been done by the occupying authority is nothing but apartheid and it is argued that the State of Israel is a settler colonial state in many aspects.

In the dissertation that majorly deductive and inductive approach, constructionism and statistical analysis are employed, it is also aimed at researching the impacts of what has been done by the Israelis to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis and Judaize the land. In this context, the question that the impacts of Israeli policies in Bayt al-Maqdis are whether permanent or temporary is quite significant, because it is argued that the destiny of Bayt al-Maqdis will be shaped according to the answer of this

question in a sense. Considering the cruciality of it, the possible solution ways that get them closer to the salvation and liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis are critical to minimize the impacts of what has been done by the Israelis. Hence, it is discussed and elaborated in a detailed way in the last section of the work.

What is covered in the thesis is not merely regional and it cannot be narrowed as something that is only related to Turkey or Palestine. On the contrary, it is an international issue and it should be solved with the help of international law and even the thesis, considering its content, can be used as a material providing a detailed analysis on the issue. Individuals studying on this field in particular and anyone who is interested in the issues related to Bayt al-Maqdis can benefit from what is discussed in the thesis. Besides, there are not many studies made on this specific issue. So, it is doubtless that it will contribute to knowledge and fill the gap in the available literature in this regard.

**Keywords:** Bayt al-Maqdis, Israeli occupation, identity, liberation

# BEYTÜLMAKDİS'İN KİMLİĞİNİ DEĞİŞTİRMEDE İSRAIL POLİTİKALARI

## ÖZET

Bu tez İsrail tarafından Kudüs'ün kimliğini değiştirmek için kullanılan politika ve metotları belirlemeyi hedefler. Bu bağlamda, İsrail'in çıkarlarına hizmet eden politika, metot ve araçlar detaylı bir şekilde incelenir. Kaçınılmaz bir şekilde direk etkisi olanların yanı sıra, İsrail'in nihai amaçlarına dolaylı yoldan hizmet eden ve İsrail hükümeti tarafından yapılan eylem ve yürürlüğe konan regülasyonlar da incelenmiştir. İşgal edilmiş Filistin topraklarını ve özellikle de Kudüs'ü İsrail hegemonyası altında Yahudi kimliği, kültürü ve değerleriyle bezenmiş bir yere dönüştürmeyi hedefleyen İsrail hükümeti ellerinden gelen her şeyi yapmış ve amaçlarına hizmet eden her şeyden faydalanmaya çalışmıştır. İsrail hükümeti tarafından uygulanan metot ve politikalar göz önünde alındığında, kullanılan her politikanın veya her bir regülasyonun birbiriyle iç içe olduğu kanısına varılmıştır. Diğer bir deyişle, birbirlerine birçok açıdan bağlantılıdır ve bu açıdan bakıldığında, bir çarkın dişlileri olduğu söylenebilir. Kısacası, bir regülasyon veya uygulanan bir politika İsrail'in çıkarlarına bir şekilde hizmet eden birkaç alt sonuçla beraber gelir ve Filistin toplumunu ekonomik, sosyal ve politik açıdan olumsuz etkiler. Ayrıca, işgalci güçler tarafından yapılanlar apartheid'dan başka bir şey değildir ve İsrail devleti birçok yönden yerleşimci sömürgeci devlet olarak düşünülür.

Ağırlıklı olarak tüme varım ve tümden gelim, yapısalcılık ve istatistiksel analizin kullanıldığı tezde, Kudüs'ün kimliğini değiştirmek ve şehri Yahudileştirmek için yapılan şeylerin etkisini araştırmak da tez de hedeflenenden biridir. Bu bağlamda, Kudüs'te uygulanan İsrail politikalarının etkisinin kalıcı veya geçici olduğu sorusu çok önemli bir yer tutar, çünkü Kudüs'ün geleceği bir nevi bu sorunun cevabına göre şekillenecektir. Önemi göz önüne alındığında, İsrailliler tarafından yapılanların etkisini minimuma indirmek için Kudüs'ün kurtuluşuna ve özgürlüğüne yaklaştıracak olan çözüm yollarının çok kritik olduğu söylenebilir. Bu yüzden de tezin son kısmında bu mesele detaylı bir şekilde tartışılmış ve incelenmiştir.

Tezde anlatılan şeyler sadece bölgesel bir mesele değildir ve yalnızca Türkiye veya Filistin ile ilgili bir şeye indirgenemez. Aksine, bu uluslararası bir meseledir ve uluslararası hukukun yardımıyla çözümlenmelidir ve içeriği düşünüldüğünde tez bu sorun üzerine detaylı analiz sunan bir materyal olarak da kullanılabilir. Başta bu alanda çalışan bireyler olmak üzere Kudüs meselesi ile ilgilenen herkes bu tezde ortaya konanlardan faydalanabilir. Ayrıca, bu konu üzerine özellikle yapılmış pek fazla çalışma bulunmamaktadır ve şüphesiz ki bu çalışma bilime katkı sağlayacak ve literatürdeki boşluğu bir nebze olsun dolduracaktır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Kudüs, Beytülmakdis, İsrail işgali, kimlik, özgürlük

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

|               |                                                                     |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>CIA</b>    | Central Intelligence Agency                                         |
| <b>EIA</b>    | Environmental Impact Assessment                                     |
| <b>ESNMC</b>  | Edward Said National Conservatory of Music                          |
| <b>ESCWA</b>  | Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia                     |
| <b>EU</b>     | European Union                                                      |
| <b>FL</b>     | Foreign Language                                                    |
| <b>GDP</b>    | Gross Domestic Product                                              |
| <b>ICAHD</b>  | Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions                         |
| <b>ICJ</b>    | The International Court of Justice                                  |
| <b>LNG</b>    | Liquefied Natural Gas                                               |
| <b>PNO</b>    | The Palestine National Orchestra                                    |
| <b>PLO</b>    | Palestine Liberation Organization                                   |
| <b>POT</b>    | Palestinian Occupied Territories                                    |
| <b>UK</b>     | United Kingdom                                                      |
| <b>USSR</b>   | Union of Soviet Socialist Republics                                 |
| <b>UNESCO</b> | The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| <b>UN</b>     | The United Nations                                                  |
| <b>UNRWA</b>  | The United Nations Relief and Works Agency                          |

# **CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

Occupation is not just a term referring to seizing lands of a country. To begin with, it is not the only way to achieve it and it can be accomplished in many different ways. One of the most efficient ways to manage it is to do it indirectly by using other tools in parallel with this purpose. Cultural occupation is crucial in this regard considering the possible negative impacts of it affecting any country occupied dramatically. Hence, attempting to change characteristics of a country and imposing your culture and traditions, in other words your identity on another country is one of the most efficient methods for this purpose and it can be said that there are many examples of it from the history. What France did to Algeria by imposing their culture and language on the whole Algeria is a good example of it considering it has had on-going impacts on Algeria which is a country French is spoken generally. Secondly, Israel establishing its own state in 1948 and seizing East Jerusalem and West Bank from Jordan as a result of Six-Day War in 1967, follows similar policies for the same purpose with France. It is said that Israelis quadruple their territories at the end of the war. However, their greed to expand their lands and taking over the control of Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular have intensified in time. In short, the Israeli government that is not able to occupy the whole territory of Palestine thoroughly attempts to occupy it indirectly by using numerous policies and methods in a way that brings about vitally damages which is not easy to erase the impacts in this regard.

## **1.1. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Occupations have taken place in the world for centuries. It has negative impacts dramatically on any country occupied and the impacts and consequences of it can be permanent as much as it can be temporary varying from case to case. For instance, reflections of English culture, language and traditions on African countries colonized by the British can be seen explicitly besides the aforementioned case related to Algeria, yet traces of German occupation and the values related to Germany are rarely seen in Paris occupied by Hitler's Germany and the major difference between two events arises from whether cultural occupation occurs or not. Therefore, changing the identity of any country by using different methods and policies that pave the way for cultural

occupation is something permanent and it causes unrecoverable damages. Hence, once it is achieved, it is quite difficult to get things back on track and turn the tables on in this sense. Approaching from this perspective, it can be defined as the real occupation. Israelis, having their own agenda that conquering Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular lies at the heart of it, have been trying to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis by employing different methods and policies for a long period of time and it can be said that they are willing to go to any lengths to accomplish what can be called their ultimate goal in this regard. The researcher argues there are core components constituting a nation. Within this context, culture is one of them and changing the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis also stands for changing the culture of it as well and this is a major threat for Bayt al-Maqdis that may have negative impacts lasting for years.

## **1.2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- What are the policies Israelis have been using to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis?
- Have they succeeded in imposing their own culture and traditions on Bayt al-Maqdis so far?
- What are the impacts of cultural occupation that have been struggled to impose by Israelis?
- Are the impacts permanent or temporary in Bayt al-Maqdis?

## **1.3. AIMS OF THE RESEARCH**

- To identify the Israeli policies used to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis.
- To analyze whether they have accomplished to impose their own identity on Bayt al-Maqdis or not.
- To research what the impacts of cultural occupation are.
- To examine whether the impacts are temporary or permanent in Bayt al-Maqdis.

## **1.4. SIGNIFICANCE AND PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH**

It can be said that there are many studies analyzing the conflict between Israel and Palestine. However, there are not many studies made on Israeli policies on changing

the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis. Hence, it can be said that it will contribute to knowledge and fill the gap in the available literature in this sense. In addition, there are many people who do not even have a clue what has been going on in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. People's awareness should be raised on not only the cruciality of cultural occupation in general and in Bayt al-Maqdis in particular, but also the tragedy that Palestinians have had to suffer and endure in everyday life for years. These are the major points that make the research significant. Besides, the researcher's will to work on an issue that draws his attention and he strongly believes he can produce a remarkable work considering his background as a linguist that can be considered his strength in this regard maximize the efficiency without doubt. In conclusion, the thesis subject is highly important, because the first step to draw people's attention on any issue is to make sure they become conscious so that they can do something to change it. Therefore, if people's awareness is raised on what Israelis have been up to in Bayt al-Maqdis and the predicament that Palestinians are in because of the Israeli policies, they can stand against it and the Israelis fail on their attempts.

## **1.5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Settler colonialism is the theory that will be employed in the thesis considering it is in parallel with what is covered in the thesis and it fits perfectly in this regard. Colonialism is a well-known fact that the roots of it date back to centuries ago. Settler colonialism, however, is a relatively new term that is used in 1920 for the first time in a context referring to British colonialism in Australia (Veracini, 2010, p. 3). "Settler colonialism is a specific mode of domination where a community of exogenous settlers to permanently displace to a new locale, eliminate or displace indigenous populations and sovereignties, and constitute an autonomous political body" (Veracini, 2010, p. 1). There are various types of colonialism. Apart from the aforementioned one, rogue colonialism, extractive colonialism and postcolonialism are some of them in this regard (Shoemaker, 2015). Fundamental characteristics of settler colonialism distinguish it from the other forms of colonialism. First and foremost, it is not an event, but a structure (Wolfe, 2006, p. 388). It aims at replacing the settler with the indigenous ones permanently. Basically, they "come to stay" (Veracini, 2010, p. 4; Busbridge, 2017, p. 4). It is a mode of domination and this is exactly one of the distinctive factors

differentiating it from the other forms of colonialism (Veracini, 2019, pp. 2-3). Logic of elimination is another important fact as the essence of settler colonialism (Veracini, 2019, p. 13). In other words, logic of exploitation in colonialism turns into logic of elimination in settler colonialism (Busbridge, 2017, p. 1). Considering the aforementioned features related to settler colonialism, the researcher puts forward that what has been done by the Israelis are almost identical to what lies at the bottom of settler colonialism. Approaching from this perspective, it can be said that the particular theory will contribute to be comprehended what is covered in the thesis in a better way by the reader.

Not only scholars specializing on the issues related to Palestine and Israel, but also the ones working on colonial studies clearly express Israel is a settler colonial state (K. El-Awaisi, 2019, p. 21; Lloyd, 2012, p. 67; Masalha, 2015, p. 14; Pratt, 2013, p. 23; Veracini, 2013, p. 28, Wolfe, 2006, p. 392). It is also put forward that Zionism itself is a colonial project (Ram, 1993, p. 327). What is argued by Lentin is in parallel with this idea: She argues Zionism should be considered within the framework of settler colonialism (Lentin, 2018, pp. 64-65). Their intention to colonize Palestine is clearly expressed in Colonel Churchill's letter to the President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, Sir Moses Montefiore as well (K. El-Awaisi, 2019, p. 19). Replacement of the old with the new is a key component regarding the theory and this is exactly what the Israeli Jews have been up to even before the establishment of their state. What is expressed by Theodor Herzl who is considered one of the forefathers of Zionism is in parallel with this idea: "If I wish to substitute a new building for an old one, I must demolish before I construct" (Wolfe, 2006, p. 388). Besides, exclusiveness stands out as one of the elements reflecting characteristic of settler colonialism which is associated with the elimination of the indigenous people (Wolfe, 2006, p. 393). Considering the following phrase, it can be said that local Palestinians are considered an obstacle standing in front of the Israelis and preventing them from fulfilling their ultimate dream which means it requires the local's gradual elimination: "A land without people for a people without land" (Lloyd, 2012, pp. 66-67). Apart from it, the researcher, connecting the dots, puts forward that there is an intimate relation between terra nullius meaning land belonging to no one as a feature related to settler colonialism and what is called a myth by Ilan Pappé and presented as if it is a fact by the Israelis to mislead people,

namely the claim that there were not indigenous people in the territories seized by them. So, it can be considered another example reflecting the State of Israel's settler colonial structure.

Moreover, asserting sovereignty is a key component of settler colonialism and the Israeli Jews also aim at becoming the upper hand and strengthening their sovereignty in the land by employing numerous policies and methods such as ethnic cleansing or daily abuse of human rights (Lloyd, 2012, p. 68). Discrimination and incarceration also play an important role in this regard (Busbridge, 2017, p. 5). In addition, what is called frustration policy by the researcher is considered a key component by Veracini due to what it leads to, namely forcing population to leave (Veracini, 2013, p. 31). Keeping colonizer and colonized separate is significant in terms of settler colonialism (Veracini, 2013, p. 26) and approaching from this point of view, it matches with what has been done by the Israelis within this context as it will be elaborated in the thesis. Apart from it, legitimacy and normalization are other crucial points regarding this particular theory that can be considered the final steps in this regard (Veracini, 2013, p.26). By the same token, Masalha points out Israelis' struggles within this context such as their attempt to fit in with the Biblical narrative of the borders of the Promised Land (Masalha, 2015, pp. 11-14). They also replace Arabic names with the Hebrew ones to "legitimise 'historical claims' asserted by the Zionist settler-colonial movement" (Masalha, 2015, p. 5). Basically, settler colonialism seeks to legitimize itself as a core component of it (Lloyd, 2012, p. 69) and this is what the occupying authority wants to achieve considering the actions taken and policies followed by them. Eventually, they aim at reaching a point that the indigenous ones are considered the others (Veracini, 2013, p. 28).

Another issue that needs to be touched upon is what is aimed in this regard "depends upon the denial of fundamental rights to the indigenous population of Palestine purely on account of their ethnic identity as non-Jews" (Lloyd, 2012, p. 69). Besides, both Ram and Lentin emphasize what has been done by the Israelis is racism (Ram, 1993, p. 330; Lentin, 2018, p. 86). Ram takes the argument further and argues "the colonial nature of Israel makes it inherently racist and oppressive, giving a privileged position to Jews over the native population" (Ram, 1993, p. 330). Basically,

what has been done by them is nothing but apartheid and it is called that way by Human Rights Watch as well as it will be elaborated in the related section of the thesis.

It should be kept in mind that although Israel is to be considered a settler colonial state, they have failed in many aspects. Firstly, it needs to work on its own without depending on any external or internal support to make it work which is something the occupying authority fails considering the current situation and their relying on United States government in particular (Veracini, 2013, p. 35). “Beyond U.S government aid, ... in order to colonize the West Bank has produced a situation in which the entire settler colonial project of Israel depends, once again, on external support” (Veracini, 2013, p. 35). Besides, it is a well-known fact that the State of Israel is established with the support of the British (K. El-Awaisi, 2019, p. 14; Veracini, 2013, p. 35). Secondly, displacement of the local ones with the settlers is the essence of settler colonialism. However, the State of Israel, driving many Palestinians out of their own homeland at the early stages of its establishment and the following years, has failed in this regard, especially after the Six Day War as it is expressed in the following: “Indeed, if settler colonialism is about establishing legitimate claims to specific locations, Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and Gaza ultimately has very little to show for after over forty years of unrestrained rule” (Veracini, 2013, p. 28). Likewise, what is put forward by Busbridge is similar to this argument. She argues if success is a key criterion within this context, Israel has failed since 1967 considering they are unable to turn West Bank and Gaza in particular into settlements that are recognized as part of settler colonial state (Busbridge, 2017, p. 12). Besides, normalization process and indigenization of the settler are crucial with regard to settler colonialism. In other words, the settler ones are recognized as the local population itself in time. The Israeli government, however, has failed not only in this regard, but also in assimilating Palestinians and adopting them in their society by following numerous policies and methods such as offering citizenship (Veracini, 2013, p. 30). Due to the implementations of the Israeli Jews in the occupied territories, the things have gone from bad to worse and instead of normalization which is something aimed in settler colonialism, it causes nothing but polarization between the settler and the indigenous (Veracini, 2013, p. 30; Busbridge, 2017, p. 18). In addition, “the identities of settler and indigene are also ...vehemently contested” (Busbridge, 2017, p. 16). The absence of the

aforementioned factors, namely assimilation, integration and normalization deter them from providing a fruitful environment to establish a settler colonial system (Veracini, 2013, p. 31). It is argued that it eventually leads to decolonization (Busbridge, 2017, pp. 12-13) which can be considered a step back, thereby a failure in this regard. Israel is called a settler colonial state by French-Jewish historian and sociologist Maxime Rodinson in 1967 and it is considered a milestone in theorizing Israel as a settler colonial state (Lentin, 2018, p. 65). Considering everything discussed in this section, it can be argued it is an interpretive paradigm. The Israeli government has failed in many aspects with regard to settler colonialism. Yet, it does not change the fact that the State of Israel is a settler colonial state embodying the characteristics of settler colonialism and it is doubtless that this particular theory will contribute to be comprehended what is covered in the thesis from an analytical point of view by the reader.

## 1.6. SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

- **Issue:** Israeli policies having been used to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis
- **Location:** Bayt al-Maqdis, Palestine
- **Period of Time:** 1948- the present

The researcher prefers to focus on a period of time starting from 1948, because this is when Israeli occupation in the land started.

## 1.7. TERMINOLOGIES

**Bayt al-Maqdis:** There are many names to call this specific land throughout the history. Jerusalem, Ursalim, Aelia are some of the names used by people from different nations in this regard. However, Bayt al-Maqdis is the general name of it used by Muslims. Bayt stands for house as it is used to refer to Ka'bah as well in the Qu'ran and al-Maqdis or al-Muqaddas means holy, blessed and pure. The term Bayt al-Maqdis was preferred by the Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, using this term is quite proper, rather than using other terminologies addressing to the same land.

**Cultural Occupation:** There are many different ways to occupy a nation. However, cultural occupation is the most vital and crucial one among the others considering irreversible consequences of it. Cultural occupation, that can be described as imposing

one's culture, identity and traditions on another country that brings about permanent impacts on the country invaded, is another way of occupation.

**The Intellectual Nakba:** There are different types of occupation, in other words, a nation can be occupied with different ways by employing different methods and tools. Once the occupation of the land is occurred, it can be overcome even though it is not an easy task to achieve. However, when the minds are occupied, there is nothing left to do, because it wipes out hope, will to resist and stand against the occupation itself. People's mind is twisted in a sense and this is what was attempted by the British in 1917: the occupation of the mind that stands for the Intellectual Nakba which can be defined as crisis in knowledge.

## **1.8. LITERATURE REVIEWS**

**Title:** Uluslararası İlişkilerde Yeni Bir Tasavvura Doğru: Beytülmağdis ve Geleceğimizin İnşası

**Author:** Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi

**Year of Publication:** 2019

There are many important places in the world. What makes them important varies from place to place and Bayt al-Maqdis is unique in terms of what makes it crucially significant and the importance attached to it. Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi comes up with a theory that he has developed on his own related to Bayt al-Maqdis and it can be said that he is a pioneer in this regard considering most of the theories on the table are developed by the Western countries and their scholars. El-Awaisi proves al-Masjid al-Aqsa is the center of the Barakah and the Barakah spreads in different amounts in form of invisible waves. Besides, there are three circles in the theory. El-Awaisi publishes a whole book explaining the theory in a detailed way and the work published in 2019 is titled Uluslararası İlişkilerde Yeni Bir Tasavvura Doğru: Beytülmağdis ve Geleceğimizin İnşası.

First of all, “A New Geopolitical Theory” is the first chapter of the work. In the chapter, what is focused is the process of being determined the center of the theory. Starting point of it is the four verses that are related to the issue and these verses can be considered the cornerstone for the development of the theory. In addition, it can be clearly understood the fact that Bayt al-Maqdis is the land of Barakah considering the four verses mentioned in the work and it can be argued that the surrounding area of it is also covered with Barakah. Definition of geopolitics and its relation to the issue are also covered in the first chapter of the work. The first verse of Surah al-Isra which has a major role in terms of the development of the theory and the importance and place of Bayt al-Maqdis in Islam are underlined by Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi as well.

Secondly, “The Barakah Circle Theory of Bayt al-Maqdis” is the second chapter of the work and the importance attached to the word “hawlahu” and the circles of the theory with the boundaries of it are explained in a detailed way. The preparation of England’s project starting with the will of some Christian clergymen in England to fulfill the promise about establishing a Jewish settlement in the Holy Land that is mentioned in the Bible and establishment of the first British consulate in Bayt al-Maqdis in addition to the summary of the second circle are the other issues mentioned in the book.

Thirdly, the third circle of the theory includes Ka’bah which is quite important for Islam and the resemblances between Ka’bah and Al-Aqsa Mosque are underlined as well. The relation between Zam-Zam well in Makkah and Seriyye spring in Bayt al-Maqdis is a detail that is highlighted within this context. The significance of Ankara in terms of geopolitics and the theory, considering it is located on the same line with Madinah and the distance to Bayt al-Maqdis and the weight of geopolitics that are the same, is stressed in the book. The sections emphasizing the importance attached to Egypt, Turkey and Eastern Mediterranean as “true power of Eastern Muslim countries” worth being highlighted in this regard.

Finally, summary of the theory is the bulk of the last chapter in the work. Emergence of the theory and its development process and the aims of the theory are the other specific issues mentioned in the section as well.

In short, it can be said that Bayt al-Maqdis is a unique region in many ways and the region that is called the land of Barakah and al-Masjid al-Aqsa as the center of the Barakah are where the Barakah spread through the other countries in different amounts. El-Awaisi develops his own theory called “Barakah Circle Theory of Islamic Jerusalem” and publishes a whole book about it. The contributions of the work to Bayt al-Maqdis Studies in general and, within this case, the thesis in particular are numerous. However, the other tools that can be used to contribute to the development of Palestine and the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis are not mentioned in the work naturally considering the main theme of it and these will be emphasized by the researcher in the thesis.

**Title:** “The Judaization of Al-Quds”

**Author:** Basem L. Ra’ad

**Year of Publication:** 2018

What Basem L. Ra’ad aims in his work is to expose Israeli policies to increase their dominancy on the region in many different ways and their intention is to turn Bayt al-Maqdis into a Jewish city in this regard. First of all, Ra’ad argues Israel has had an objective for years aiming at having control of the whole Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular besides a project started in 1968 to expand the Jewish quarter in the city and he argues the fact that they have destroyed hundreds of villages and houses in the whole country including the ones in cities such Haifa, Yafa and Bayt al-Maqdis. Secondly, he also stresses there are laws enacted by the Israelis to provide a legal cover to take over the control of the land and control the city’s demography by applying discriminatory regulations on residency in a way serving their interest. The Israelis have applied many policies to Judaize and change the identity of the region such as being proceeded the city through expropriations within and outside the walls, preventing the constructions of Palestinian buildings and their development with restrictive regulations, expansion of Jewish quarter, increasing the Jewish population in the city unlike the Palestinian population reduced by unfair laws and policies such as revoking their residency status and restrictions on family reunification. In addition to everything mentioned above, a policy applied by them is what concerns the author most. It is to change the names of streets and places in the region and use Hebrew above Arabic and

English names and they distort the original Arabic names into Hebrew ones in most cases. The author argues it is a policy dating back to 1967 considering their demolishing *Haret al-Maghariba*, Maghribi Quarter, to clear the area for a plaza in front of al-Buraq Wall and destruction of 135 houses and the buildings including mosques, madrasas and zawiyahs. The author argues that it aims at nothing but changing the identity in the land and imposing their own identity on the region and the idea of “Greater Jerusalem” aiming at Israeli domination in the region despite the Oslo Agreement mentioned in the article is significant in this regard. Moreover, Elad and Jewish National Fund which are right-wing Zionist organizations are used by the Israeli government so that they seize Palestinians’ buildings by using the Absentees’ Property Law and the Israelis expropriate more Palestinian private lands on the pretext of archaeological excavations for City of David National Park. Finally, they use laws as legal tools, despite its abuse according to the author, to Judaize the land by destroying the Palestinian identity of it. The Absentees’ Property Law, the Land Acquisition Law, the Planning and Construction Law are some of them in this regard. In short, the Israelis employ different methods to change the characteristic of Bayt al-Maqdis and increase their dominancy in the region and Basem L. Ra’ad who uses historical methodology stands against it and reveals what they have been doing for years nothing but judaizing Bayt al-Maqdis. However, Ra’ad does not mention what the impacts of being changed the names of streets and places in the city are, although he argues that it is a policy used by the Israelis for their purposes. Hence, what the researcher has to be fulfilling in his research is the impacts of it in Bayt al-Maqdis.

**Title:** “Between Muslim and Jewish Sanctity: Judaizing Muslim Holy Places in the State of Israel, 1948-1967”

**Author:** Doron Bar

**Year of Publication:** 2017

The Holy Land is one of the most important cities in the world. What makes it is so unique and significant and separates it from the rest of the cities in the world is majorly its holiness as a city hosting three major religions, namely Islam, Christianity and Judaism and the rich history of it. One of the most significant factors in this regard is the religious and historical sites in the city that people from all over the world and

from different religions attach importance to it. It can be said that there are so many holy sites, buildings and graves in the region that are visited frequently by pilgrimages and tourists every year. Transforming the sites in the occupied Palestine Territories in general and the Holy Land in particular into sites that are exclusive to the Jews and associated with the Jews by evoking a sense that what makes it sacred is majorly Jewish relicts, facts or events related to Judaism is one of the significant methods to change the identity of the region. What is written by Professor Doron Bar, specializing in cultural-historical geography and researching popular and national sacred sites in the history of Palestine and the State of Israel, is prominent in this regard. Especially the article titled “Between Muslim and Jewish Sanctity: Judaizing Muslim Holy Places in the State of Israel, 1948-1967” and published in-by Journal of Historical Geography in 2017 is quite important within this context. The bulk of the article focuses on the holy sites and graves that are turned into Jewish sites by employing numerous different methods and tools such as making up fabricated relics and facts so that a specific grave or site is associated with the Jews and such an image in people’s mind is raised. The author also scrutinizes the process and highlights the factors leading to it. Attempting to erase the Muslim past related to such religious sites and graves besides undermining the value and importance attached to it by Muslims is another major tool employed in this sense. Vandalizing the Site of David’s Tomb and smashing the ceramic tiles covering the majority of the walls of the sacred site that is considered it reflects Muslim traditions and culture is a good example in this regard and what they aim by that is to wipe out what may be possibly associated with the Muslims, in other words its Muslim past and value so that is considered exclusively a Jewish site. The author also exemplifies the sacred sites and graves that are adapted as Jewish sites and graves. Tomb of Rabban Gamliel in Yavneh, the Tomb of Benjamin (Nabi Yemin) located near Kfar Sava and the Tomb of Judah in Yehud are some of them in this regard. Secondly, the author underlines the external and internal factors that bring about such a transformation. He argues the immigrants settling in the occupied territories play a major role in this sense. They are able to practice their religious rituals freely considering their convenience to access such sites and lack of Muslim population visiting the sites and graves frequently because of their expulsion and the occupation. Bar also highlights The Absentees’ Property Law is also important regarding making the things easier for the State of Israel

whereas it works in the reverse way for Palestine and local Muslim population. Thirdly, Bar puts forward that the Ministry of Religions makes effort to expropriate Muslim sacred sites, buildings and graves and transform them into Jewish sites eventually and possess a Jewish identity in this sense. Their struggles to find different ways to justify what they have done within this context are stressed in the article as well. Finally, making up proofs to strengthen Jewish ties with the David's Tomb whereas undermining Muslim past in this regard in addition to the other holy sites is another method employed by the Israelis as it is discussed deeply in the related section of the thesis. The sacred sites and graves that have to undergo such a transformation, the process of it, the external and internal factors paving the way for the Israelis are also discussed in the article. However, what is unveiled in the article and will be touched upon by the researcher are the other methods and tools that are used in different fields and sections by the Israelis to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis and Judaize the occupied territories and its impact on both Palestine and the Palestinian society.

**Title:** "Educational and Economic Dimensions in the Israeli Project Against Occupied Jerusalem"

**Author:** Nadia Sa'd Al-Deen

**Year of Publication:** 2017

Nadia Sa'd Al-Deen has many works exposing the aggressive policies imposed on the Palestinian society by the State of Israel to have the upper hand in the land and pave the way for changing the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis and keeping the land under their sovereignty easily for good. Her article published in Contemporary Arab Affairs is one of them in this regard. What the author mainly focuses on in this work is the policies, laws and implementations regarding economy and education system that are abused by the Israelis. By doing so, they, as the upper hand in the land that hold the power allowing them to use acts in a way serving their interest, aim at turning such things into a series of tools that are used to make the life much more difficult for the Palestinian society. The researcher finds suitable to call it frustration policy as it is called that way many times in the thesis taking the major and the minor outcomes of the implementations and policies employed by the Jews into the consideration. Firstly, what

happened throughout the years under occupation breaking out in 1948 affected education system in Palestine as well. East Jerusalem was under the Jordanian administration until the dramatic events breaking out in 1967. Hence, the Palestinian students settling there and attending the schools located in East Jerusalem were educated by the Jordanian education system. However, it changes dramatically after the series of events breaking out in 1967. The education was under direct supervision of Israeli Ministry of Education and it provided Israelis exactly what they desire. The numbers of students attending the schools decrease remarkably. After the resistance against the policies followed by the Israeli government, so called unified curriculum is adapted. Yet, it does not solve the issue unsurprisingly. It causes an increase in the overall classroom hours that intensifies the burden on the students shoulder and it impacts their efficiency in the courses in a negative way obviously. Furthermore, it does not any help regarding the number of Palestinian students dropping out of school due to the Palestinian parents' concerns about what is taught to their children in the schools following a curriculum designed mainly by the Israeli Ministry of Education. Secondly, it can be said that the curriculum is turned into something that serves the Israeli Jews' interest regarding changing the identity of the land and justifying what has been done by them throughout the years by misleading the students with fabricated facts. Besides, they also attempt to wipe out many things related to the Palestinian history and values. Omitting Palestine from the maps in history and humanities course books and removing the logo of the Palestinian Authority from the covers of the coursebooks, using Hebrew place names, such as Yerushalem, Judea and Samaria and teaching Hebrew in the state schools are just some examples in this regard. Insufficient conditions in the schools and the attitudes of the officials in military checkpoints besides its psychological effect on the students who have to bear it and experience the same negative incident over and over again in everyday life are another negative factors leading them to either drop out of school or decrease the students efficiency in the courses in this regard.

Another issue stressed by the author is the economic policies followed by the Israelis. The Israeli government employs a policy to isolate the city from the rest of the West Bank territories. By doing so, what they majorly aim at is to disturb the economic and financial structure of Palestine taking other measurement and policies imposed on the Palestinian in this regard into the consideration. They also attempt to limit the

activities of the Palestinians in the region by military checkpoints. The Palestinian people's access to some areas and worksites are restricted by the Israeli government and by turning even working in their own homeland into something complicated, the flow of income for the Palestinians is limited. Moreover, it can be said that it have an impact on trading and tourism sector dramatically because of being restricted mobility from and to occupied territories. It can be also said that another difficulty related to it is the taxes and charges imposed on the Palestinian business men and merchants which can be considered another burden on their shoulders. Besides, it brings about bankruptcy and the shutting down of many enterprises. The number of taxes imposed by the Israelis is numerous. The researcher, however, finds suitable to scrutinize it in the related section of the thesis in this regard, rather than elaborating it under this title considering the main purpose of a literature review. In short, the article that historical methodology is employed covers the Israeli policies and implementations mainly related to economy and education with many specific examples in this regard. Yet, what is not touched upon by the author is the other policies and methods used by the Israelis to secure their domination in the land, change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis and eventually turn it into a Jewish region that is endowed with Jewish traditions and culture and this is the gap that will be fulfilled by the researcher in the thesis.

**Title:** “The Problem of Identity in Palestinian Literature”

**Authors:** Haifa Majadly, İbrahim Yılmaz

**Year of Publication:** 2016

There are not many articles written on reflections of the conflicts between Israel and Palestine in literary works such as novels and novellas. However, the article written by Haifa Majadly and İbrahim Yılmaz is one of them. The main argument that Majadly and İbrahim Yılmaz put forward is to show how Palestinian novelists are successful in terms of reflecting Israeli policies and attempts to destroy Palestinian identity in the land and impose their identity on it. They argue that the Palestinian novelists are aware of this threat and reflect it on their literary works in the article. First of all, Israeli occupation in Palestine and the impacts of it have reflections in Palestinian literature as well. The works especially published in the 21th century, rather than the 20th century

reflect many political and socio-cultural changes in a clear way as a result of Israeli policies starting from Nakba Day and continuing to the present and there are many works reflecting national identity of Palestinians, their attachment to it and sorrows that they have had to face with because of living in an occupied region. Secondly, besides the characters feeling sense of belonging to Palestine, there are also characters suffering from identity confusion in the works which can be considered an impact of Israeli policies in the region. For instance, *Imreetu'-Risale*, written by Palestinian author Reza Bekriyye is a work centering around a character called *Neşva* who suffers from discrimination and oppression in an occupied land, yet showing her attachment to the Palestinian nation unlike other characters, is an example of it. Thirdly, it is also mentioned there are many places not remaining same and losing its characteristics because of the Israeli policies. Finally, there is another work written by Selam Abbasi who is a Palestinian author and one of the characters in his work argues what the Israelis try to do is nothing but destroying their identity. In short, there are many literary works including short stories and novels focusing on the reflections of Israeli occupation and their policies to change the identity of the land in general and Palestinian people in particular, but the Palestinian authors are aware of it and they stand against it. They also aim at raising people's awareness on the issue as it can be seen in the examples mentioned in the article which literary criticism is employed. However, besides everything mentioned in the article, what policies that Israelis use to change the characteristics of the places are not revealed in the article and the policies and tools used by the Israelis in this regard is the gap that the researcher will be fulfilling in the thesis.

**Title:** "Language Use, Attitude, and Linguistic Identity Among Palestinian Students in East Jerusalem"

**Authors:** Kristen Olsen, Holly Olsen

**Year of Publication:** 2010

There are many ways to change characteristics of a nation. What the researcher means by characteristics of a nation, it includes almost every component that constitute a nation. Identity, culture, history, even custom and values of a nation and its society are

just some of them in this sense. Language itself is one of these components as well. However, language can be considered one of the most effective factors having a dramatic impact on the aforementioned elements. Approaching from this aspect, language distinguishes itself from the others. This article published in International Multilingual Research Journal is remarkable in this regard. The article is written by Kristen Olsen and Holly Olsen that both of them work at English Language Institute in Utah State University. The focus point in the article is a study conducted by Olsen sisters. They put forward that language and its usage frequency, one's attitude and even both linguistic and personal identity are influenced by current, social, political and ethnic conflicts. They conduct a study so that they see whether the premise is true or not in a sense. The participants of the study are the female students from a private high school in Beit Hanina located in the eastern side of the city. It is the Palestinian curriculum followed and Arabic, Hebrew, English and French are the languages taught in the school. The way of the study works shortly is that two forms are given to the participants who are asked to fill out the forms for 7 days and they need to "record language-switching throughout the week, giving specific information regarding where and why they switched from their native language, Arabic, to another language", English or Hebrew in this case. After completing it, the participants are asked to answer some questions reflecting their perceptions on the language they use. What they are asked to report are majorly the following questions:

1. Where and why are students speaking secondary languages?
2. What are students' perceptions of Arabic, Hebrew, and English?
3. What do students think about language as it relates to identity and power?

The results are quite important regarding the role of language and the intimate relationship between language and identity in addition to culture. However, considering the format of a literal review, the researcher finds suitable not to elaborate it here in a detailed way, as it is scrutinized in the related section of the thesis.

Moreover, the role of language in terms of power relations is another fact underlined in the article. There is a close relation between language and identity. Within this context, linguistic identity and ethnolinguistic identity are highlighted in the

work as well. Taking the Israelis will to become the upper hand in the region in every possible way into the consideration, language can be considered as an important instrument in this sense. In addition, the role of language and its impact on culture, identity and even lifestyle of individuals dramatically cannot be ignored. Approaching from this perspective, it can be argued that language is one of the most prominent and effective tool that can be used to change the characteristics of a nation. Within this context, language is used by the State of Israel as an instrument to change the identity of the whole occupied territories in Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular. It is also significant regarding strengthening the Israeli hegemony in the region considering the intimate relation between language and power as it is underlined in the article. However, what is not covered in the article is the question that whether its consequences are permanent or not. What use of Hebrew in the society, has lead and will possibly lead to, basically the impacts of it are unveiled in the work as well. The aforementioned missing points, however, will be touched upon by the researcher in the thesis.

**Title:** “Water as a Political Tool in Israeli-Palestinian Dispute”

**Author:** Elif Kutsal

**Year of Publication:** 2009

There are many major and minor factors and elements affecting the Israelis behavior both after and prior to the occupation of the Palestinian territories. Although major ones within this context is well known by the majority of people, there are some factors that are either rarely highlighted publicly or ignored by bulk of the people. What is emphasized by Elif Kutsal is important in this regard. Her article published in Bilge Strateji Journal in 2009 is worth highlighting within this context. In her work, she draws attention to the importance attached water and water supplies and its role politically and economically in the worldwide in general and the conflict between Israel and Palestine in particular. She highlights water scarcity is a global issue and currently one third of the whole world population suffers from it. Besides, it is predicted that the number will be double in a recent future. Water is a critical issue in the West Asia as well considering the general climate and characteristic of the region and because of the same

reasons it can be considered a distinctive factor in economic growth. Jordan River is vitally important regarding water and water supplies. The occupied territories of Palestine has access to the river and its access to the territories that are rich in water and water supplies considering the lack of such territories in the region due to its general climate turns it into an open target because of its richness geopolitically, economically and religiously. In addition, the Israelis' attempt to set the boundaries determined with the declaration in 1919 one more time by putting forward the water supplies are located within the Palestinian territories proves the role of water in the relation between Palestine and Israel and it can be considered a distinctive factor regarding the Israelis policies in a sense. Moreover, the methods and policies applied by the Israelis to take over the water supplies' control within the boundaries of Palestine are also underlined in the article. However, the researcher prefers to highlight such policies in the related sections of the thesis rather than elaborating it here considering the main function of literature reviews. In short, Israel considers water as a factor both contributing to their development and serving their interest regarding economic growth whereas it limits advancing Palestine economically and makes the life difficult for them considering the cruciality of water in everyday life and hardships of carrying on a life with limited consumption of water, because the aggressive policy of Israel limits water consumption in the occupied territories and the available water per person is seven times larger than the occupied territories. In addition, water is a distinctive factor regarding being determined the Israeli policies. Water and water supplies in the occupied region serves their interest and make a possible peace agreement between Israel and Palestine much more difficult besides the other factors in this regard. Besides, water and the access to water supplies are turned into a tool by the Israelis to make the life difficult for the Palestinian considering the policies that will be discussed in the related sections of the thesis. However, what is not covered by the author and will be discussed by the researcher is the possible solution ways to turn the tables within this context.

**Title:** "War and Peace: Palestine-Israel Question in 1990's"

**Author:** Özge Özkoç

**Year of Publication:** 2009

The author's main argument in the article is to show that what the Israelis do is nothing but acting according to their own interests instead of making peace with Palestinian side when they gather to negotiate considering the policy that the Israelis has been using since 1967 and she also argues that Palestinian economy depends on Israel in some ways considering the restrictions and policies that the Israelis use to prevent Palestine's development. First of all, Özkoç argues Six-Day War in 1967 and the consequences of it have many negative impacts for Palestinians. Majority of the working class of Israel was Palestinians in the 1970s. They worked for relatively higher prices in Israel, rather than working in an occupied land in the 1970s and it led to an autonomous Palestine economy considering Paris Protocol. Secondly, negotiations between two parts remain ineffective. Although the Israelis have to retreat from the lands that they occupied according to Oslo Accords, they retreated their troops from only 3% of the territories and it has negative impacts on Palestinian economy considering the statements of Mahir el-Masri arguing Israel restricts Palestinian's negotiation with other Arab countries in economical way so that they are dependent on Israel. Finally, the Israelis tried to destroy territorial integrity in West Bank and Gaza, rather than making peace with the Palestinians considering Camp David Accords. To sum up, the Israelis are always up to act according to their own interests, rather than making peace with the Palestinians in the negotiations and Israel try to make the Palestinian economy dependent on them by restricting their economic freedom. The author argues lack of economic freedom or following a policy for this specific purpose is a way of occupation as a different, yet effective method in this regard. However, besides everything mentioned in the article that historical methodology is used by Özkoç, the other policies and methods that are used to occupy the region are not mentioned in the article and this is the gap that will be fulfilled by the researcher in the thesis.

**Title:** Introducing Islamicjerusalem

**Author:** Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi

**Year of Publication:** 2007

It is an undeniable fact that Bayt al-Maqdis is quite significant for Islam, Christianity and Judaism. People from different religions attach importance to it mainly because of its holiness and rich history. However, when it comes to contribute to knowledge and produce valuable works related to it, Muslims' contribution generally remains limited to works expressing their feelings or love towards Bayt al-Maqdis, rather than putting remarkable works on the table that either raise people's awareness on what has been going on in the Occupied Palestinian Territory or reflecting Muslim rights and ties to the land. However, what is produced by Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi stands out among the others. The work titled Introducing Islamicjerusalem is worth highlighting in this regard. First of all, considering the year it is published and the lack of such a work on Muslim's side in that years, the work is considered a reference book within this context. Another noteworthy fact related to the work is that anyone whether he/she is well versed or not in issues related to Bayt al-Maqdis benefits from it, because it is also an introduction to Islamicjerusalem as it can be understood from its title.

To begin with, it can be said that the establishment of Bayt al-Maqdis, Islamicjerusalem Studies is highly significant in terms of its contribution to spreading the knowledge dramatically. With that, it is turned what El-Awaisi dedicates his life into something that is everlasting and makes contribution to spreading the knowledge. The study aiming at filling the gap in literature enables not only many young and promising students, but also anyone who is interested in it to learn about Bayt al-Maqdis from the founder of it.

Secondly, "The Barakah Circle Theory of Bayt al-Maqdis" is one of the most remarkable issues mentioned in the work. El-Awaisi proves that al-Masjid al-Aqsa which is in the Holy Land is the center of the barakah and the barakah spreads in different amounts in form of invisible waves.

Thirdly, it is underlined that Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey is a turning point for both Muslims and Bayt al-Maqdis. Besides, the prophet develops a strategic plan to liberate Bayt al-Maqdis. It is a quite comprehensive plan and it can be divided into three main categories as knowledge, politics and military actions. The process and the events related to it are elaborated in a detailed way in the book.

Fourthly, what Umar Ibn al-Khattab manages in the land in terms of both liberating Bayt al-Maqdis and turning it into a very desirable and livable region is scrutinized in the work as well. Before the arrival of Muslims, there was an ongoing conflict between Christians and Jews resulting in the expulsion of the Jews and there had been even disunity between the Christian communities in Aelia. However, Umar manages to establish a multicultural society from different religions and races, yet living in peace with mutual respect. One of the most important events leading him to manage it is his assurance called Umar's Assurance of Aman to the people of Aelia which guarantees them safety of their lives, properties, churches and gives them freedom in religion and worshipping according to their own religious beliefs without any kind of compulsion. Moreover, it is stressed that it can be considered a model for both conflict resolution and multiculturalism.

Last but not least, El-Awaisi puts emphasis on the lack of valuable works related to Bayt al-Maqdis and the Palestinian cause. He underlines that although there are many works published within this context, very few of them can be considered academic writings. Besides, producing works for different reasons and for specific audiences in addition to the ones highlighting beauty of the Holy Land and their love and attachments to it is not the best way to liberate Bayt al-Maqdis or contribute to the cause.

In short, the book titled Introducing Islamicjerusalem is quite important considering the context of it. It stands out among the others and it can be considered a reference book because of the aforementioned reasons. Besides its contribution to knowledge, it draws people's attention and raises their awareness on the issues related to Bayt al-Maqdis and Palestine. However, as a natural outcome considering the main theme and function of the book, what else it can be done to raise people's awareness on the issue and other possible solution ways to put an end to the misery in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and liberate Bayt al-Maqdis are not discussed in the work and such issues will be scrutinized in the related chapter of the thesis by the researcher.

**Title:** "Performing Palestine: Resisting the Occupation and Reviving Jerusalem's Social and Cultural Identity through Music and the Arts"

**Author:** David A. McDonald

**Year of Publication:** 2006

There are many tools to spread any sort of movement, ideology and expression. Cultural activities such as music, art and film should not be overlooked in this regard. On the contrary, such events serve very well and effectively considering the globalization of the world that we live in. David A. McDonald touches upon it in his work titled “Performing Palestine: Resisting the Occupation and Reviving Jerusalem’s Social and Cultural Identity through Music and the Arts” and published in *Jerusalem Quarterly* in 2006. The author highlights the role of cultural activities in spreading and drawing attention to any issue in general and the Palestinian cause in particular. Contributions of the aforementioned activities within this context are exemplified through three cultural organizations, namely “the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music (ESNMC), the Markez al-Fann al-Sha’bi (Popular Arts Centre) and Yabous Productions”. The impact and contributions of it are twofold. The author highlights the importance of such activities in enhancing and developing cultural life through music, movie and art. The researcher, however, finds suitable to scrutinize the other aspect of it considering the main theme of the thesis and its relevance within this context. What is underlined by the author in this regard is the role of cultural activities and its contribution to the Palestinian cause. First of all, it is significant in terms of being conveyed the national senses and constituting a collective identity. Works, especially the ones produced after 1980, having an artistic value and chiefly focusing on historicizing the Palestinian people, their past and their struggles against the occupying forces, are produced by nationalist historians, artists and poets. It can be said that such works can be considered a reminder, because it revives what they have been fighting for and the reasons they have to resist and stand against what has been happening in the region for years. In addition, being revised music culture and turned into something as a tool to spread national notions especially among the Palestinian youth by the production of nationalistic songs are important in this regard. Secondly, it provides a platform for the discussion of the Palestinian cause and to spread the facts related to what really has been going on in the region and the misery caused by the occupiers as it is exemplified and elaborated in the related section of the thesis. Finally, it contributes to raising

awareness on the issue and it draws people attention from all over the world including the ones who are not particularly interested in the events in the West Asia in general and the occupied lands in particular. To sum up, the author touches upon a subject that is either ignored or overlooked by majority of the people and highlights the importance and role of such cultural activities in both reviving national feelings and constituting a collective identity besides an unified society that is fulfilled with hope, courage and power to resist and stand against the injustice and the oppression that they have had to face with and endure for years. It also contributes to spread the tragedy in the occupied lands and the rightness of Palestinian in the conflict between Israel and Palestine and raise awareness on the issue. However, what is not mentioned by the author and will be discussed by the researcher are the other tools and methods to contribute to the Palestinian cause and preserve their identity, culture and values besides preventing the State of Israel from Judaizing the region in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular.

**Title:** “Old and New Walls in Jerusalem”

**Author:** Menachem Klein

**Year of Publication:** 2005

It can be said that there are many articles written by Menachem Klein and what he mainly focuses on is the West Asia and Israel-Palestine relations. An article titled “Old and New Walls in Jerusalem” and published Political Geography is one of them in this regard. Although what is mainly argued in the article shifts from one issue to another, what is mainly focused and emphasized is the different sort of walls taking place in the Holy Land. The walls in the city stand for many things and play an important role because of the following reasons: Firstly, there is a connection between national identity and the walls. Secondly, what divides the city into two is the walls and it does not just separate it demographically, it separates one part of the city from another economically, socially and politically. Furthermore, it is hard to miss the huge differences between the two sides of the city regarding education, prosperity, the policies and implementations that are forced to the Palestinians by the state of Israel in addition to resources and facilities provided by them and such differences can be observed clearly in healthcare industry. What majorly causes it is the uncompromising

attitude of the Israelis and the laws and policies serving it, yet this is a fact that is not mentioned in the article considering the background of the author who is an Israeli professor in the Department of Political Science at Bar-Ilan University. Thirdly, it can be said that there is a strong relation between the walls and the ontological identity. It provides distinguishing “us” from “the others” which is quite significant regarding creating collective identities.

Moreover, different types of walls are mentioned in the article. Five different types of walls are highlighted in the article. Prison wall type of walls, barricade walls, walls of separation, sheltering walls and castle walls of domination are the ones mentioned in this regard. However, it should be noted that it is difficult to categorize the city under one of these types because of the variable dimensions of the city as it will be discussed profoundly in the related section of the thesis. Furthermore, what is also underlined in the article is the fact that the Israeli and the Palestinian societies are pole apart in their lives and one society’s perspective to the another. After listing a couple of incidents causing it according to his own point of view, the author exemplifies how at the opposite poles the people from different societies are. For instance, a taxi driver from the western side of the city refuses to take a passenger to the eastern side of it except some specific locations and it clearly shows how divided the city and the people living in the same land are. In the article, it is highlighted what majorly causes it is the walls and it is mentioned that there are also invisible walls segregating one part of the city from the another and the incidents mentioned above is an outcome of such invisible walls.

Finally, another wall stressed in the article is the wall segregating from the Jewish neighborhood to the Arab neighborhoods. Within this context, the wall symbolizes ethnic-national identity. This is the reason why, the Palestinians rarely cross the wall to settle in a Jewish neighborhood and vice versa expect a small number of groups that can be considered minority in this regard. By such walls, they create their own separate areas where they can protect their particular identities, values and culture in a sense. Finally, the Israelis attitude towards the Palestinians, and vice versa, the policies, projects and regulations that are put into action by the State of Israel to keep and secure the Israeli domination in the region and possible solution ways to provide

being covered the region under one absolute identity are the other issues discussed in the article, yet the researcher finds suitable to focus on what is already stressed above as the core of the article. To sum up, the author highlights how divided the city is and argues the identity crisis in the region. He also stresses there are many walls separating one part of the city from another and the walls does not have to be necessarily physical, concrete walls that are perceivable, there also invisible walls that distinguish one society from the another acutely and cause polarization among the societies in city. In the article, Israel-Palestine relations, the attitudes and perspective of one societies towards the another living in the same land and what separates them economically, politically and socially in addition to identity are scrutinized through majorly walls. Yet, what is ignored in the article deliberately by the author and identified by the researcher in the thesis is the fact that it is Israel and its people chiefly causing such an environment in Bayt al-Maqdis in particular and in Palestine in general by paving the way for it.

**Title:** “Jerusalem Between the Local and Global”

**Author:** Saliba Sarsar

**Year of Publication:** 2002

Saliba Sarsar highlights the relations between Israel and Palestine and solution ways to resolve the conflict in his article. His main argument is to show that what is necessary for the sake of Bayt al-Maqdis and people from both Palestine and Israel to put an end to violence, sorrows and injustices is to realize the fact they have a common heritage from the past, they are neighbors considering the borders and they need peace and he argues mutual recognition and honest cooperation will advance compromise and reconciliation between them. First of all, the ways of solutions for the conflict between Israel and Palestine on Bayt al Maqdis and whether it is possible to be applied or not are discussed in the article. Secondly, he also highlights the policies that are used by the Israelis to increase their dominancy on the city so that they are able to change the identity of the city according to their interests. Trying to be superior to the Palestinians by claiming they outnumber them and destroying their houses to build new ones reflecting their own cultures are some examples of it. Sarsar gives statistical informations and examples from the past to support his own argument and he uses

historical methodology in the article. Finally, another policy that is used by the Israelis is to urge the world and they use their own economic, political and military power to accomplish their goals. In addition, demography of the region, world organizations' ineffectiveness in settling the status of Bayt al-Maqdis, American policies on it are the other issues mentioned in the article. In conclusion, there are many different policies that are used by the Israelis to increase their dominancy on the region so that they change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis easily. However, everything is futile without peace and making peace is a must to resolve the conflict and put an end to violence. There are policies used by the Israelis to change the characteristic of the city according to their own interest as mentioned above, yet all policies used for this purpose are not mentioned in the article. The gap that the researcher has to fulfill in his thesis is the missing ones in the article.

**Title:** "Territories and Identities in Jerusalem"

**Author:** Shlomo Hasson

**Year of Publication:** 2001

Territory is quite important for both a nation and its people and there is a strong relation between territory and identity. An article titled "Territories and Identities in Jerusalem" and published in *GeoJournal* is significant in this sense. What Hasson majorly focuses on in his work is the role and importance of a territory regarding construction of cultural, national, ecological and social identities in Bayt al-Maqdis. He also emphasizes that there are many different groups in the land varying from each other ethno-nationally, socially and culturally. Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs as ethno-national groups, ultra-Orthodox Jews and non-Orthodox Jews as cultural groups, ethno-social groups and economic and ecological groups are some of them in this regard. All these groups do not show up and constitute suddenly, it is an outcome of a long process having many dimensions and reflecting many things. Within this context, it can be said that the groups are different from each other in many ways. What is significant for them, values, traditions, culture, their way of life and even dress style and the way they perceive the world are quite dissimilar from each other.

Moreover, what is deduced from the article is the fact that there is an identity issue in Bayt al-Maqdis and it is not only between the Israelis and the Palestinians as the major ethno-national groups in the region. It is a matter among the Jews as well. Haredi Jews attempt to isolate themselves from the rest of the society. To achieve it, they majorly settle in the northern side of the city. They also wear special dresses that are unique to them. Besides, they desire to carry on a segregated life voluntarily by attempting to separate themselves from the others by walls and one of major reasons bringing about it is to preserve their cultural identity and prevent any external factor that may possibly corrupt their values, traditions and culture in a sense. It can be also argued that Haredi Jews is an introverted group and their struggle to prevent being opened cafes, restaurants and theatres on the Sabbath and holidays in late of 1980s clearly proves it. Moreover, one of the most important issues deduced from the article and that is quite important considering the general theme of the thesis is the fact showing the unfairness of the Israeli government and the discrimination that the Palestinian society has to expose by taking the incident related to green zone project into the consideration which is elaborated in a detailed way in the related section of the thesis.

Finally, the different groups that are unique from each other in every aspect differ from each other as well in terms of their utmost goals and struggles. For instance, the Palestinians are in pursue of justice and getting what already belongs to them and they are in a battle for the sake of liberation. The Haredim seeks to find ways to segregate themselves from the rest of the society and carry on an isolated life by also aiming at preserving their own culture, identity and values. What the Israelis up to does not even have to be identified at all. It is well known by everyone. The Mizrahim desires to mobilize more resources and attain “socio-spatial integration” with the rest of the society. In short, it is highlighted that every group that are completely different from each other culturally, socially and identically are dissimilar to each other regarding what they are up to and their struggles. To sum up, the different groups and different identities that are constructed as a result of it are what is focused in the article, and it is highlighted the territorial identity is mixed with ethnicity. Besides, the importance attached to territory considering its role and what it serves in many different ways is another focus point in the work. However, what is unveiled in the article is what policies and methods employed by the State of Israel regarding constructing an identity

and their struggle to achieve that it covers the whole region, especially the Holy land. In addition, the impacts of such segregations are what is unrevealed in the article that will be touched upon by the researcher.

**Title:** “National Identity and the Other”

**Author:** Anna Triandafyllidou

**Year of Publication:** 1998

Anna Triandafyllidou shows the place of “the other” by major theories of nationalism in her article. The main objective of being written the article is to investigate the role of the other in re-defining and transforming national identity and her main argument is to show the necessity of recognizing the others and not excluding them to create the sense of nationalism thoroughly with an example from the emergence of a new Greek nationalism. She also stresses what national identity and nationalism are and the elements of it which is the area that makes the article significant in terms of the subject that will be discussed in the thesis. First of all, she argues national identity has more than one dimension and the notion of the other is inherent in the nationalist doctrine itself. Secondly, she argues nationalism and the nation itself appear in diversity of forms and configurations. Thirdly, she highlights the fact that each nation has its own culture, history and destiny that make it unique among other nations which is important considering the content of the researcher’s thesis, because what the Israelis try to do is to destroy the culture and history of Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular which are the main elements making a nation nation. Finally, she claims linguistic homogeneity is a tool to reinforce the national identity, yet it cannot operationalize the concept of nationality on its own. In short, the importance of the concept of “the other” to establish nationalism and the identity of it thoroughly is discussed in the article which methodological nationalism is used by Anna Triandafyllidou. She also stresses the elements of nationalism and national identity with the descriptions of it and the gap the researcher has to fulfill in his thesis is the impacts of being destroyed the identity and culture of Palestine which are the main elements of a nation as mentioned in the article.

**Title:** Orientalism

**Author:** Edward Said

**Year of Publication:** 1978

Publishing a work focusing and addressing a specific issue is quite common. However, what is rare is to come up with a work that covers a quite comprehensive and controversial issue and turns it into a masterpiece. Within this context, Edward Said's Orientalism that is firstly published in 1978 is one of them.

First of all, Edward Said argues that it is the Europeans dividing the world into two as the East and the West or the civilized and the uncivilized. It always has been and it probably will be. It is human beings creating invisible walls and segregating one from another based on some factors. The same can be said for the orient and the occident. Europeans consider themselves superior to others, the orientals within this context. With that ideology, they justify what they do as if it was a duty for them to civilize the uncivilized world. Hence, Said, in the introduction, argues "the Orient was almost a European invention" considering the fact that European colonial domination expanded from roughly 35% of the Earth's surface to 85% of it from 1815 to 1984.

Secondly, Michel Foucault's thoughts especially on concept of discourse and power relations are influential and significant regarding Said's way of approach to the issue. In addition, what Said deals with in his work is the fact that the West considers the orient as the others. What brings about division as the East and the West or the orient and the occident is not merely geographical facts. The epistemological ones should not be ignored in this regard. Social, cultural and ethnic differences and factors must be taken into the consideration within this context. The Europeans have preconceptions and they are prejudiced against the East. According to them, the orientals are irrational and violent, but they are also exotic and mysterious as well. Besides, what is highlighted in the first chapter is that Orientalism is fundamentally a political doctrine and it always has been related to a political and cultural agenda.

In the second chapter, Said describes the shift in Western attitude towards the Orient in modern times. It takes a new form in modern times and what they see in the East is an unspoiled and innocent form of human existence when it is compared with highly civilized Western world. Considering what is highlighted in this chapter of the

book by Said, it reminds the researcher of the way that the New World is perceived by the Europeans and their approach to it. America was called the New World after Columbus' discovery and comparing with the Europeans, they were so naïve and unspoiled in a sense. Eventually, their greediness resulted in being exploited of what is pure and untouched which is rich in natural resources and it can be said that there is a similarity between their perspective towards the New World once and the East in modern times considering the events highlighted by Said and the researcher.

In addition, Said also analyzes the works of eminent Orientalists such as Silvestre de Sacy and Ernest Renan and shows the bias and prejudices in their works explicitly.

The third and final chapter in Edward Said's Orientalism majorly focuses on the most recent developments in Orientalism and the way the Orient is perceived and treated by the Occident. In addition, Said discusses the politics in the 20th century and the relation between the West and the East. He argues important Orientalists like Massignon and Gibb tend to take a more liberal position, yet their approach and preconceptions towards it stand still. It is attempted to depict Islam as a weak and inferior religion. After the World War I, the United States becomes the center of Orientalism over Europe and it is associated with social sciences in the United States unlike linguistics as it was in Europe. Moreover, Orientalism as a field of study is used to find different ways to control non-Western societies.

In short, one of the focus points of the work is that although colonialism is allegedly over, actually what happens in reality is the fact that it is not over, it just takes a new form and it still exists. What makes the book so valuable is the fact that it is quite important to comprehend the Western point of view towards the East and their way of approach to it through and through. It broadens the researcher's horizon and enables him to approach to the conflict between Palestine and Israel and the methods that are employed by the Israelis to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis from a different and wider perspective. What should not be ignored within this context is the function and cruciality of what is emphasized by Said. However, although what is discussed in the work is quite valuable, he does not specifically narrow it down to the relation between Israel and Palestine. Instead he presents a broader perspective. However, by taking what

is discussed in the book into the consideration, it will be the researcher that narrows it down to the relation between Israel and Palestine in the light of what is argued by Edward Said in his work.

In a nutshell, although there are many significant works related to the conflict between Israel and Palestine such as the aforementioned ones, most of them shed light on different aspects of it, analyzing and approaching from different dimensions in varying degrees. What is missing in the aforementioned works or to be precise, the issues that are either ignored or must be elaborated profoundly will be covered in the thesis in a detailed way. Besides, it is a sheer fact that there are not many studies made on Israeli policies on changing the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis and there is a gap in available literature in this regard. So, it can be said that it will contribute to knowledge and fill the gap in the available literature in this sense. Moreover, building up people's awareness is one of the major aims in this regard considering there are a lot of biased works and disinformation related to the issues highlighted in the thesis, because the more conscious people become, the quicker they will realize the actual facts and the rightness of Palestine which eventually lead to a collective solidarity to change the direction of the wind in a sense. Last but not least, the researcher's approaching issues from an analytical point of view will allow the reader to see the events from a different perspective which will broaden his/her horizon in this regard. What is scrutinized in the following chapters can be considered a concrete example of it.

### **Structure of the Thesis**

Chapter I can be considered an introduction as it is titled that way. In this chapter, what is aimed with the thesis, what distinguishes it from the others, in other words the significance of it is presented. Besides, literature reviews take place in this specific chapter as well. In chapter II, what makes the Holy Land sanctified for Islam, Christianity and Judaism are elaborated. In addition, Bayt al-Maqdis in different period of times, namely under Muslim sovereignty and under the British mandate are scrutinized so as to draw the reader's attention to the sharp contrasts within this context. Chapter III makes up the bulk of the work. There are numerous Israeli policies and methods to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis and these are unveiled in this chapter. Moreover, the question that the impacts of Israeli policies in Bayt al-Maqdis are

whether permanent or temporary is quite important, because the destiny of Bayt al-Maqdis will be shaped according to its situation in this regard and it is also discussed in this section. To minimize the impacts of what has been done by the Israeli occupation, possible solutions are more than important and what possibly leads to the salvation and liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis are scrutinized in Chapter IV. Last but not least, Chapter V can be considered a wrap-up in a sense. In this chapter, what is discussed in the whole thesis is summarized and developed further.



## **CHAPTER II: ONCE UPON A TIME IN BAYT AL-MAQDIS AND THE CONCEPT OF THE HOLY LAND**

There are many significant places in the world in many different ways. The religious places are also part of it, yet the importance attached to it changes in varying degree from place to place. The holy sites and areas are at the top of the list in this regard and it can be said that the Holy Land is worth taking into consideration in this sense. However, the way it is perceived by Christians, Muslims and Jews and what makes it holy are quite different from each other. Hence, comprehending it through and through will be quite beneficial for the rest of the thesis.

What will be mainly discussed in the thesis is oppressive and unjust way of government of the dominant and occupying authority besides the methods and tools paving the way for it. Bayt al-Maqdis, however, has not been governed all the time as it is now. There are times that it has been governed in an inclusive manner reflecting the basis of Islamic teachings and the principles of it. The researcher finds suitable to touch upon such times so that it sets a good example and shows the way of government that Bayt al-Maqdis deserves and it is also a model for a future vision of governance. Within this context, the period of times with the first Muslim conquest and under the reign of Suleiman that is considered the golden era for the Ottoman Empire are worth highlighting. Last but not least, Bayt al-Maqdis under Ottoman sovereignty can be considered the continuation of the first Muslim conquest regarding the way it is governed and the multicultural society that everyone can live in peace. Therefore, the period, marking the end of the Ottoman sovereignty and beginning of the British Mandate in Palestine will be also scrutinized in this chapter so that the contrasts after and prior to the occupation can be seen explicitly.

### **2.1. THE CONCEPT OF THE HOLY LAND IN ISLAM, CHRISTIANITY AND JUDAISM**

The Holy Land is quite significant for three major religions, but the concept of it and the way it is perceived by the believers of Islam, Christianity and Judaism and the major elements what makes it holy for them vary from religion to religion. Considering the main focus point of thesis and what is majorly discussed is centralized around the

Holy Land, the researcher finds suitable to discuss the concept of the Holy Land by comparing and contrasting it in terms of Islam, Christianity and Judaism by giving specific examples of it so that the reader can comprehend what is discussed in the rest of the thesis in a more conscious way.

First of all, there are many important events and miracles taking place in Islam. All of them are remarkable without doubt and some of them are related to the Holy Land and one may clearly realize the importance attached to the land by taking the events that will be mentioned in this section into consideration. First and foremost, Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey and his ascension to heaven are significant in this regard. His journey starting from Makkah to the Holy Land is called "Isra" and his ascension to heaven is called "Mi'raj" Although there are some orientalist doubting whether the event has really happened or not, the researcher argues the companions hearing it from the Prophet and their narrations that are similar to each other besides the fact that it is mentioned in the Qur'an which is the primary source for Muslim and the hadiths related to it are more than enough to prove that it has really occurred. The events, taking place after the years of sorrow the Prophet has had to face with many struggles in his ultimate path, prove the importance of the land for Muslims in many ways (El-Awaisi, 2007a, pp. 38-39). It can be said that Bayt al-Maqdis is a bridge between heaven and earth considering the direction of the journey and his arrival to Bayt-al Maqdis in the middle of his journey rather than a direct journey from Makkah to heaven and it also shows the importance attached to the land by God. However, there are a lot different claims related to the events. For instance, Uri Rubin states that there is a similarity between Prophet Muhammad's journey to Bayt al-Maqdis and Ezekiel's experience and some scholars claim that Al-Aqsa Mosque stands for a heavenly place, rather than what is perceived by the Muslims which is an earthly structure. Uri Rubin also claims the minority believes Al-Aqsa mosque stands for something earthly. Yet, the researcher puts forward what he does by misleading people with the claims that does not reflect the actual truth or calling the ones believing the actual truth "minority" is nothing but a struggle of reducing the importance of the land for Muslim and loosening the strong connection between the Holy Land and Islam considering the important events and what the events stands for to Muslims. Moreover, the background of Uri Rubin who is an Israeli professor at Tel Aviv University and the arguments he supports

or criticizes in his works may bring about the necessity of double check of what is written in his works in terms of credibility and objectivity. Secondly, the researcher dares to say Rubin is biased and the researcher underlines the fact that the scholars, claiming the journey is to heaven rather than Bayt-al Maqdis, strive for decreasing the value of Bayt al-Maqdis in terms of Islam and what they aim at is nothing but turning al-Masjid al-Aqsa into something insignificant in terms of religious value and by doing so, they also attempt to reduce the connection between the Holy Land and Muslims. However, what is mentioned above besides the verses and the hadiths are more than enough to show what they claims is nothing but quite absurd and meaningless.

Secondly, the struggles of many prophets including Prophet Muhammad are significant to understand the importance attached to the Holy Land and its concept for three major religions. Although Prophet Muhammad is aware of the fact that he passes away before the conquest of Bayt al-Maqdis and does not see the harvest what he has planted, he dedicates his life to liberate Bayt al-Maqdis and he gives hope to people at the same time as well. So, Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi coins the term “the land of hope” for Bayt al-Maqdis (El-Awaisi, 2007b, p. 4). The researcher stresses even the Prophet’s dedicating his life, mostly his prophethood to this goal is more than enough to digest the importance attached to the Holy Land by the Prophet of the prophets considering his leading the prayer in Bayt al-Maqdis and being imam of the other prophets during the prayer. Besides, it must be kept in mind that al-Aqsa Mosque is the Qiblah before it is changed. Hence, Bayt al-Maqdis is called the first Qiblah (Alrabi, 2009, p. 8). It is the “first direction of prayer” (Armstrong, 1997b, p. 10). The Prophet also used to face Bayt al-Maqdis in his earlier prayers and it is his Qiblah ten years before the Night Journey (Alrabi, 2009, p. 9). Approaching from this perspective, the importance attached to it can be clearly seen. Yet, there is more than that. Prophet Muhammad develops a strategic plan to liberate Bayt al-Maqdis which its significance is intensified with the Night Journey and the ascension (El-Awaisi, 2017, p. 8). The plan can be divided into three main categories as knowledge, politics and military actions. The Prophet and the Muslim army have had to experience many wars for the sake of the ultimate and divine goal. In addition, it can be said that the strong feelings and attachment towards the Holy Land and will to take over what belongs to them and put an end to the misery in this blessed land bring about a series of wars, strategical plans etc. considering the details of

the process to liberate the land and the researcher comes to conclusion that the concept of the Holy Land and spiritual attachment to it are turned into something physical and worth dying for.

Thirdly, the researcher finds quite beneficial to approach and examine the concept of the Holy Land for Muslims from different angles. The researcher believes the way it is perceived by people and their behaviors are also important to comprehend the concept of the Holy Land thoroughly considering the concepts or ideas are shaped by people and their behaviors reflect the way it is perceived. Therefore, what Prophet Muhammad and his other companions do and their actions related to the land are significant in this regard. The Prophet as the Messenger of Allah reflects and spreads the essence of Islam like the concept of *Adl* (justice), the principle of not excluding others and the constructive argumentation as El-Awaisi argues (El-Awaisi, 2017a, p. 96). The peace agreements, his letter to King Heraclius and his struggle to invite him and his people to Islam to avoid a possible war by doing so are the incidents that are related to the Holy Land which is quite important, because the researcher argues that by doing so, the Prophet shows only way to be victorious or accomplish a goal is not shedding blood even it is for his ultimate goal that he dedicates his life. He also proves the peace or anything serving it is also significant part of it as a teaching of Islam and the Prophet reflects the best possible way the concept of the Holy Land is perceived. What is done by Umar Ibn Al-Khattab is also crucial in this regard, because the researcher argues anyone, who is willing to embrace and carry on the legacy left to true believers by God, should do it in God's way which means by following his way and obeying his orders. Therefore, establishing a multicultural society for different religions and races, yet living in peace with mutual respect in the Holy Land which strives for it, considering the history of it, is also important as much as the conquest of it. Hence, Umar's document called Umar's Assurance of Aman to the people of Aelia which guarantees them safety of their lives, properties, churches and gives them freedom in religion and worshipping according to their own religious beliefs without any kind of compulsion is quite significant in this sense (El-Awaisi, 2000, pp. 53-55). The researcher also puts forward that what is done by Umar Ibn Al-Khattab basically is nothing but the practice what the Prophet preaches, because Umar as a companion of Prophet Muhammad stands as a living figure reflecting the basis of Islamic teachings

and the principles of it. Besides, he perceives and approaches the Holy Land as it should be, unlike the Jewish Zionists who take the idea of the Holy Land to another dimension of exclusivity where there is nothing but conflicts, misery and oppression in both contemporary and current times as it will be discussed in the following sections of the thesis in a detailed way.

Fourthly, the researcher stresses that scrutiny of the names and terms used to refer to the Holy Land is crucially important to understand what the Holy Land stands for according to the Muslim people. Bayt al-Maqdis, consisting of two words, is significant in this regard. Bayt stands for house as it is used to refer to Ka'bah as well in the Qu'ran (2:125, 127, 158; etc.) besides its usage for houses, mosques and etc. (K. El-Awaisi, 2007, pp. 21-22) and al-Maqdis or al-Muqaddas means holy, blessed and pure. "As for the name Bayt al-Maqdis, it was the name preferred by the Prophet Muhammad and he used it constantly" (K. El-Awaisi, 2019b, p. 25). Therefore, using this term is quite proper rather than using other terminologies addressing to the same land. The terminology used is also crucially important in terms of constituting a Muslim connection or giving a Muslim identity to the land and strengthening the Muslim rights on the land besides raising the awareness of people and spreading the knowledge in a sense. In addition, the land of raising and gathering is also significant to understand the Muslim Holy Land with all extensions and what it refers to. Although it covers a larger area, it is mainly the Holy Land where people will gather when the time comes (K. El-Awaisi, 2007, pp. 45-46) and the following verse is also important in this regard although there are different opinions on this verse as Khalid El-Awaisi highlights in his work (K. El-Awaisi, 2014, pp. 21-22): "And listen for the Day when the Caller will call out from a place quite near" (Qur'an 50:41). Moreover, the Land of Barakah is another term mentioned in the Qur'an in the early times of advent of Islam. The one of the major facts related to the Holy Land is that it is the center of barakah. The following verses in the Qur'an are nothing but the evidence of it: the verses 21:71, 17:1, 21:81 and 7:137. The barakah can be seen in both spiritual and material forms including people, lands, plants etc. (Roslan, 2017, pp. 43-45). The theory developed by Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi and called "The Barakah Circle Theory of Bayt al-Maqdis" is important in this sense. El-Awaisi proves al-Masjid al-Aqsa which is in the Holy Land is the center of the barakah and the barakah spreads in different amounts in form of invisible waves by

scrutinizing the related verses in the Qur'an (A. El-Awaisi, 2019, pp. 13-15). Although there are other names used to refer to the land such as Aelia, the researcher ignores the ones irrelevant in terms of reflecting the idea of the Holy Land for the Muslims or what makes it holy in this regard. In short, the researcher argues the concept of holiness to the land is granted by God considering its being "Mubarak" and "Muqaddas", the land of raising and gathering, the land where barakah centralizes and spreads and it is strengthened by the events related to the land as mentioned above. However, it must be stressed that what distinguishes the concept of the Holy Land for Muslims from the others is the way it is perceived and approached by the believers of Islam. The way it is perceived by Christians, Muslims and Jews and the concept of the Holy Land are quite different from each other (Armstrong, 2005, p. xv). Muslims and the way of their approach to the land turn the Holy Land into something that the essence of Islam and basis of Islamic teachings are reflected in a sense considering the examples related to the Prophet and Umar Ibn Al-Khattab besides the importance attached to the land by the Muslims.

Besides, the Holy Land is also remarkable for Christians. It is called the Holy City in the following verses in Matthew 4:5 that is about a conversation between Jesus Christ and the devil and Matthew 27:53 that is related to Jesus' resurrection and entering the holy city. In addition, the researcher himself also identifies there is a reference to the city in the verse 11:2 in Revelation. However, the concept of the Holy Land for Christians is characteristically dissimilar to the others. First and foremost, the researcher underlines the fact that what makes the land holy for them is Jesus Christ himself. The Prophet of Nazareth is considered the salvation of the city (Luke 2:30) and the redemption of it (Luke 2:38). The researcher argues a holy idea is transformed to a human being in Christianity unlike the concept of the Holy Land in Islam and the Promised Land in Judaism. It is said that "Jesus is the new temple and has taken place of the Temple" (Chapman, 2004, p. 42). First believers of Jesus say that they see the face of God in a person that is flesh and blood. Therefore, they feel the same attachment for the city as well (Chapman, 2004, p. 52). The researcher argues the following statements are also significant to support the idea on the concept of the Holy Land for Christians and its relation to Jesus Christ: "The principal motive which draws people to Jerusalem is the desire to see and touch the places where Christ is present in the body"

and “visiting the holy sites helps us to live the holy events of salvation as we see and feel them not only with our eyes and senses but with our hearts and souls” (Chapman, 2004, p. 51) and because of the same reason after his assumedly crucifixion, the importance attached to the Holy Land by Christians is different as it can be seen in the following statements: “with his resurrection..., the city’s losing its distinctive theological status as “the holy city”, “... glory has finally disappeared” and “it is no longer the Holy City” (Chapman, 2004, pp. 41-45). Jesus Christ, who is a messenger to the Children of Israel (The Qur’an 3:49) and importance attached to him are mentioned in the Qur’an as well considering his relation to the Holy Land and the following verse is an example of it: “We gave Jesus the son of Mary clear (signs) and strengthened him with the holy spirit” (Qur’an 2:87). In addition to everything mentioned above, the researcher argues that Christians tend to ignore what is said in the Old Testament related to the land and what they argue is important to understand the concept of the Holy Land for them. They attach importance to Jerusalem above which obviously proves the concept or the importance attached to it by Christians are completely different than Muslims or Jews.

In addition, it can be said that there is not exact borders of the Holy Land for Christians, because they believe the Holy Land is where Jesus walks. Hence, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is important in this regard considering the two holiest sites in Christianity; the site where Jesus is crucified, at the site known as “Golgotha” or “Calvary,” and Jesus empty tomb, where tradition marks his burial and resurrection. The Mount of Olives is another prominent location for Christians. It is most known and referred in the New Testament as where Jesus teach his pupils and he weeps over for the Holy City (Matthew 26:36-39), and where Jesus ascends to heaven. The Mount of Olives hosts to several important churches and holy sites such as Church of All Nations and the Chapel of the Ascension which is also significant for Muslims as a similarity in terms of the importance attached to the structures within the Holy Land. Via Dolorosa - Way of Sorrow in English- is where Christian pilgrims walk by following the route of Jesus after his condemnation as he carries his cross. In short, although there are many other important sites and buildings related to Jesus, hence, related to the Holy Land, the researcher finds more than enough the ones mentioned above.

There are also a lot of maps showing the Christian Holy Land. Anything except religious motifs is eschewed in this kind of maps (Collins, 2005, pp. 263-264). The Madaba Map and the maps used by Theodosius showing up in the early sixth century and describing a lot of journeys to different places in the Holy Land (Tsafrir, 1986, pp. 129-130) are important in this regard, yet the researcher finds suitable not to elaborate it and stress the only part serving the main theme of this section of the thesis for the sake of sticking to the point. The maps reflecting Christian point of view and the way of being perceived the Holy Land by Christians are significant, because the researcher puts forward the reason why there are so many Christian Holy Land maps is that they attempt to establish a sense of belonging to the land and their ultimate goal is the construction of an ethnic identity in the land. 25 of 28 contemporary religious maps related to the land belong to Christians (Collins, 2005, p.265) and it supports what is proposed by the researcher in a sense. In short, the researcher argues the concept of the Holy Land and its transfer from place to a human being is unique to Christianity comparing with idea of the Holy Land in the other religions and it characteristically distinguishes from the others.

Moreover, the concept of the Promised Land in Judaism is also quite important. Jews keenly base their claims on religious motives, although Jerusalem is not mentioned in the first five books of the Hebrew Bible (Armstrong, 1997b, p. 5). First and foremost, the Jews claim that this is the Promised Land granted to Abraham by God and they are the rightful owner of the land by birth. The following verses are important in this regard considering their claim mainly bases religious motives: "If the Lord is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us" (Numbers 14:8) and "...I would not bring them into the land I had given them- a land flowing with milk and honey" (Ezekiel 20:15). Besides, what is said in the verses 31:20 in Deuteronomy and 3:8 in Exodus is similar to the ones mentioned above. The verses 5:20-21 in the Qur'an are also important, for it is a controversial issue and the researcher attempts to shed light on it, because Jews take the verse into the consideration to support their claim on the right of the Holy Land by stressing even the primary source of Muslims argues that it belongs to them. However, what they do is to take one part of it serving their interest and ignore the rest which changes the meaning of it dramatically. In addition to what is mentioned above, it is said that the Promised Land extends from

Nile to Euphrates (Genesis, 15:18) and the researcher argues the concept of the Holy Land in Judaism is more different than the others in terms of its boundaries, they believe the whole city is holy as God's temple rather than the building itself (Chapman, 2004, p. 78). In addition, the territories in the Promised Land cannot be sold permanently and agriculture is prohibited in every seven years. Besides, shedding blood is also another action that is not allowed within the Promised Land which contradicts with the current policy of Zionist state though and it will be elaborated in a detailed way in the following sections of the thesis.

Last but not least, the concept of the Promised Land and Jews' approach to it are problematic. Jewish Zionists aspire to turn the land into something that is only exclusive to them unlike Muslims who are on the side of diversity and plurality and Muslims argues the blessed land is for all nations considering the verse 21:71 in the Qur'an. However, "...in its recorded history of 10,000 years, a large series of conquerors, inhabitants and coexisting traditions have maintained their presence whether harmoniously or precariously. It would be illogical therefore to claim that the predominant influence in the city over the whole period had been Jewish" (Yousef, 2017, p. 1495). Moreover, the researcher puts forward another problem with the concept is that Jewish Zionists take it to another dimension and abuse it by causing nothing but conflicts, wars and misery for decades. Hence, the researcher argues the fact what matters is to protect and keep the land as pure, clean and holy as it has been left to people by God at the first place rather than whom it has been granted first.

To sum up, the Holy Land for Muslims and Christians or the Promised Land for Jews are quite important, yet it is completely different from each other characteristically or in terms of what makes it holy. For Muslims, the holiness of the land is given by God and the significant facts such as the first "Qiblah" and the important events like "Isrâ" and "Mi'râj" intensify the importance attached to the land. It is the Land of Raising and Gathering, the Land of Prophets where the Barakah centralizes and spreads and most importantly the Holy Land is where the basis of Islamic teachings and the principles of it are reflected in the best possible way considering the incidents related to Prophet Muhammad and Umar Ibn al-Khattab. For Christians, the idea of holiness is transferred from a place to a human being which is quite different from the others in this regard and

what makes the land holy is Jesus Christ. Where he walks or leaves a mark are considered the Holy Land. Another important fact related to it is the maps produced by Christians, because their intention is to establish a sense of belonging to the land and their ultimate goal is the construction of an ethnic identity so that the Christian characteristics are given to the land. Finally, for Jews, it is the land given to them by God and they are the rightful owner of the land by birth based on what is written in their holy book. They attempt to make the land only exclusive to themselves regardless of the tools used on this purpose. They have some restrictions that they supposed to obey, yet what they have done recently contradicts with it. Moreover, Jewish Zionists, that many of them are secular, exploit the religious factors for their own ends. Besides, they take the concept of the Promised Land to a different level and abuse it by causing nothing but conflicts, war and sorrow and the researcher underlines the fact that the way of approaching and embracing the Promised/ Holy Land and the struggle to keep and protect it as it should be by following the path of God are above anything else, because the ones acting that way are the ones who deserve it most and perceive it as it should be.

## **2.2. THE CITY OF TOLERANCE: BAYT AL-MAQDIS BEFORE THE ZIONIST OCCUPATION**

It can be said characteristics of Bayt al-Maqdis that make it unique are what distinguish it from anywhere else in the world. Within this context, multicultural aspect of Bayt al-Maqdis under the Muslim regimes besides its cultural diversity deserves to be highlighted as well. The arrival of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab at Bayt al-Maqdis in 16AH/637 AD' (Kazmouz, 2007, p. 66) and the following events can be considered a touchstone in this regard. What is argued by El-Awaisi is significant in this sense: "Umar's Assurance of Safety an important reference text and a theoretical framework which laid down the foundation principles and the essential criteria to establish and manage a multicultural society in Islamicjerusalem for the first time." (A. El-Awaisi, 2008, p. 7). El-Awaisi stresses what makes possible to be established a multicultural society is Umar's Assurance and the cruciality of it cannot be ignored within this context. Islamicjerusalem is a quite proper term that reflects the characteristics of Bayt al-Maqdis as it will be scrutinized in the following sections. To understand it through and through, its geographical, historical and religious contexts should be comprehended (A.

El-Awaisi, 2007, p. 14). Without it, neither what it suggested by El-Awaisi, nor what is covered in the thesis can be comprehended. The researcher puts forward that uniqueness of the city and inclusive aspect of it embracing everyone without discriminating one from another comes from its nature and the following hadith clearly proves it: “The land which we had blessed for all human beings (Qur’an 21:71). This also enables the multicultural aspect of the land to rise to the surface and it can be considered a key factor in this regard. “Recognition and equality of cultures could be understood as processes of multiculturalism” (Kazmouz, 2007, p. 62). Besides, dealing with cultural diversity and establishing a heterogeneous society is a part of it (Hall, 2000, p. 209). Basically, it provides a fruitful environment that different identities, individuals from various races, ethnics and religions can exist within the same boundaries without facing with any sort of problem and compulsion. This is what is achieved with the first Muslim conquest and it is explicitly stressed by Armstrong. She underlines that it is the Muslims establishing a system that makes Jews, Muslims and Christians’ living in peace possible for the first time (Armstrong, 2005, p. 245). The researcher, however, puts forward the fact that what paves the way for it is the attitudes of Muslims towards the others and the following incident, that is highlighted more than once by Armstrong, clearly shows it: “Once the Christians had surrendered there was no killing, no destruction of property, no burning of rival religious symbols... and no attempt to force the inhabitants to embrace Islam” (Armstrong, 2005, p. 228). “He left the Christian in undisputed possession of their holy places, and there was no loss of life when he conquered Jerusalem in 638 CE” (Armstrong, 1997, p. 114). Basically, all of them are considered the citizens of the Muslim state and behaved accordingly; no one is discriminated and everyone is equal. The region has been exclusive for centuries since 132 and Jews have not been allowed to enter the region. However, when it is conquered by Umar Ibn Al-Khattab who is faithful to inclusive vision, “unlike the Jews and Christians, Muslims did not attempt to exclude others from Jerusalem’s holiness (Armstrong, 1997b, p. 14). This is the exactly what is eagerly hoped by everyone for Bayt al-Maqdis considering the current situation of it and approaching from this perspective it can be said that these are the times everyone longs for.

The researcher puts forward that the attitudes of people from different religions - Christians within this context considering they were the inhabitants of the city and Jews

got expelled- towards the Muslims worth scrutinizing to comprehend the environment ending up as a multicultural society that everyone can live in peace. Christians in the region can be categorized in two different classes, namely “a high-ranking, influential and propertied upper class, marked by Greek language and culture and lower classes who spoke Syriac” (Abu-Munshar, 2008, p. 30). Besides, they were divided into many different groups and sects. There were problems and divisions among themselves, yet comparing with the persecutions they had to endure, it can be considered trifle in a sense. Monophysite Christians suffered from religious persecution, because they were forced to adopt their beliefs in a way that Emperor Heraclius dictated to (Runciman, 1987, pp. 12-13). Approaching from this perspective, it is generally argued that it is welcomed by Christians and one of the major reasons of it is the dramatic differences between the way they get treated by Muslims and Byzantines persecuting them (Armstrong, 2005, p. 232). In the same vein, Runciman stresses the same point by saying that it is much preferable for them, because persecution was not something they had to be afraid of any longer and their lives were spared (Runciman, 1987, 21). That is why, Christians, especially Arab Christians, considering Muslims as their saviors, helped them during the war. To be precise, there were Christians fighting beside Byzantines and standing against the Muslims, but they were fewer in number comparing with the rest (Abu-Munshar, 2008, pp. 32-33). Christians were happy and satisfied to be ruled by the Muslims because of several reasons. Abu-Munshar puts forward that another reason is the religious disagreement between the patriarch and the emperor (Abu-Munshar, 2008, pp. 35-37). Theological and ethnic reasons cannot be ignored within this context, because the number of people, thinking that carrying on their lives under Muslim rule that make up of majorly Arabs like themselves, are too many to ignore in this regard (Abu-Munshar, 2008, p. 37). What is highlighted above can be considered the major reasons that Christians welcomed the Muslims at the first place. However, the crucial point that should be stressed is the following actions taken by the Muslims to establish an environment reflecting the multicultural aspect of Bayt al-Maqdis considering the fact that “the religious integrity of their appropriation of the Holy city would depend on the way they treated the previous inhabitants” (Armstrong, 1997, p. 114). First and foremost, each sect is “treated as a semi-autonomous community” in the city (Abu-Munshar, 2008, p. 36). Besides, they are allowed to reflect

their distinctive characters and carry on their lives freely according to their cultural entity and values (Kazmouz, 2007, p. 64). Above all, the assurance, that guarantees them safety of their lives, properties, churches and gives them freedom in religion and worshipping according to their own religious beliefs without any sort of compulsion, plays a major role in this regard (El-Awaisi, 2000, pp. 53-55). What is put forward in the following is an explicit and concrete example of it: “Four centuries after the Muslim conquest the urban landscape of Jerusalem was still dominated by Christian public and religious buildings” (Peri, 1999, p. 111). It is the opposite of the Zionists’ way of approach to such issues considering their attempts to either wipe out what is significant and associated with Muslims and Palestine or undermine the value and importance attached to it. The researcher, however, finds suitable not to elaborate the assurance and the following events which turn Bayt al-Maqdis into an exceptional and unique city that sets an example in many aspects considering it will be scrutinized in the related section profoundly. Besides, in the light of what is discussed in the thesis, the researcher underlines that what is generally ignored and not put into words is the fact that the Muslims under Umar Ibn-Al Khattab’s command established a multicultural and diverse society on their own and behaved accordingly; allowing Jews to settle in the region after a long period of time is a remarkable example within this context. To be precise, they created out of nothing, because conquering and governing a multicultural city is one thing, turning a city, that chaos reigns into a unique place that everyone can live in peace regardless one’s identity, race and religion, is another. This is why, comprehending the period that Bayt al-Maqdis used to be governed in a way it deserves through and through is quite significant to see the dramatic gap between two different era, namely Bayt al-Maqdis during the first Muslim conquest and Bayt al-Maqdis under the Jewish hegemony currently. It can be also observed by examining a relatively recent past. By doing so, the contrasts after and prior to the occupation can be seen explicitly and it takes the reader to the period of time that Ottoman sovereignty reigns in Bayt al-Maqdis for the last time.

Bayt al-Maqdis under Ottoman sovereignty and the way it is ruled can be considered the continuation of what is laid foundation with the first Muslim conquest, yet in different conditions. Bayt al-Maqdis is the capital of an independent district, in other words sanjak and it is “directly accountable to the government in Istanbul”

(Cohen, 2011, p. 1). It is an unarguable fact that the Ottoman Empire has always welcomed people from different religions, cultures and races without discriminating one from another and everyone is treated in an equal way. Considering the attitudes of the Ottomans towards non-Muslims, not only the ones living in Bayt al-Maqdis, but also everyone else in the whole empire, it can be argued that there is an homogeneous society that people from different communities besides cultural values, beliefs and every sort of differences are intertwined and welcomed. The “millet” system plays an important role to establish a multicultural society within this context. Before the Tanzimat period, there was a fair system in this regard. After it, it can be said that everyone is treated in an equal way considering the idea of citizenship. Christians and Jews are considered a part of the millet regardless of one’s religion or race. There is a harmony in the society and the characteristics of the city that reflect its uniqueness in many aspects are untouched considering “the spiritual and symbolic meanings linked to the city of Jerusalem and its urban spaces have had a special and important place in shaping the city’s architectural identity” (Rajjal, 2001, p. 447). Moreover, the Ottomans establish an environment that everyone carries on their lives freely according to their culture, traditions and religious beliefs. It should be kept in mind that it is the order in the city and the Ottomans’ way of approach to such issues that makes it possible. In a nutshell, it can be argued what has been done by them is nothing but “recognising difference, observing difference, tolerating difference and actively engaging difference” (Kazmouz, 2007, p. 64). It can be observed explicitly regarding population distribution and 1905 Bayt al-Maqdis Census in the “nufus books” showing the families distribution by religions and quarters is a clear example of it (Arnon, 1992, p. 39).

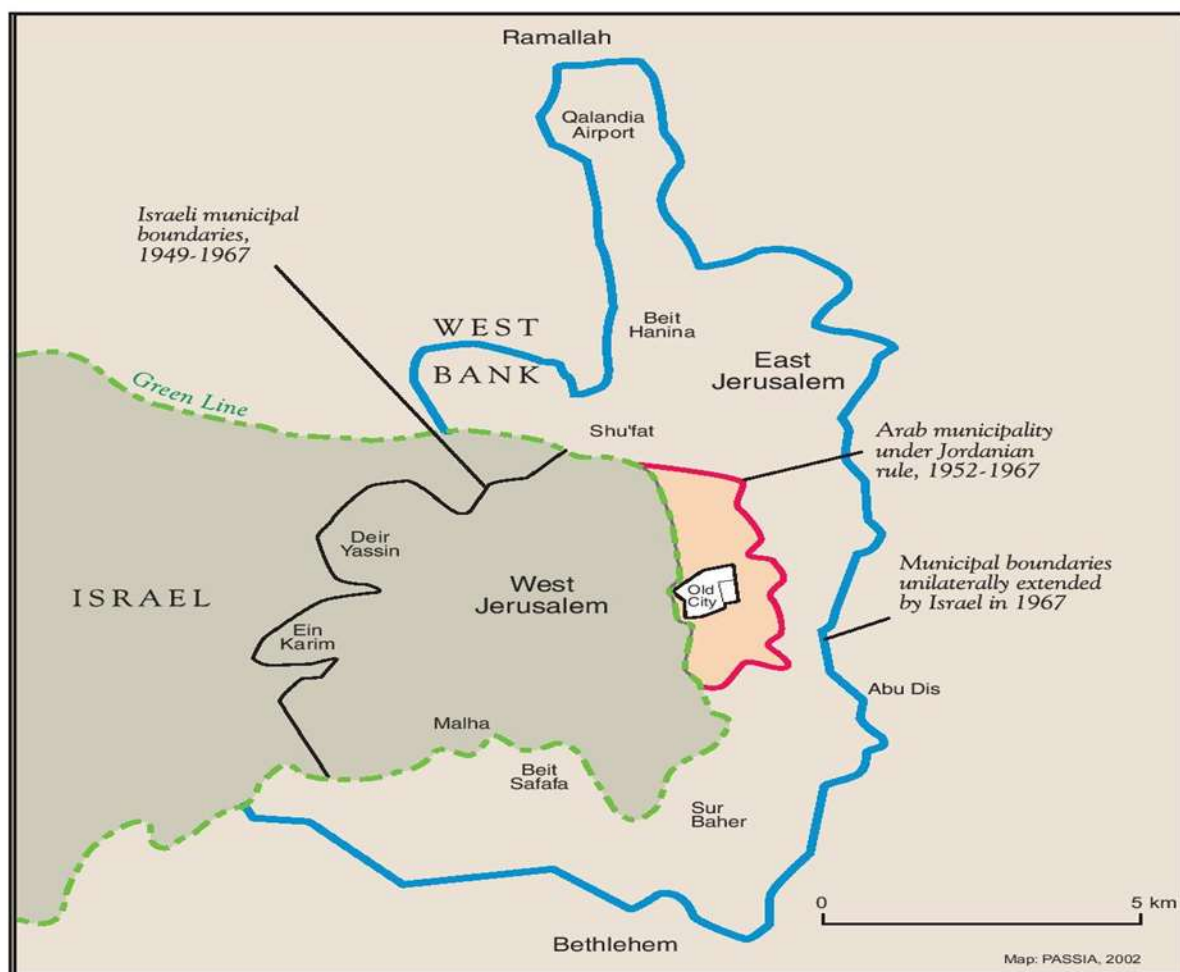
Table 1

| 1905 JERUSALEM CENSUS IN THE NUFUS BOOKS – FAMILIES BY RELIGIONS AND QUARTERS |       |      |      |  |                   |  |            |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------|------|--|-------------------|--|------------|--|
|                                                                               | Total | %    | Jews |  | Moslems           |  | Christians |  |
| Total in Jerusalem                                                            | 7954  |      | 3701 |  | 2566 <sup>1</sup> |  | 1687       |  |
| Non-Ottoman Nationals                                                         | 398   |      |      |  | 300               |  | 98         |  |
| Ottoman Nationals – Old City                                                  | 4272  |      | 1250 |  | 1934              |  | 1088       |  |
| %                                                                             |       | 56.5 | 29.1 |  | 45.2              |  | 25.7       |  |
| Ottoman Nationals – New City                                                  | 3284  |      | 2451 |  | 332               |  | 501        |  |
| %                                                                             |       | 43.5 | 74.6 |  | 10.1              |  | 15.3       |  |
| Quarter                                                                       |       |      |      |  |                   |  |            |  |

Note. Retrieved from “The Quarters of Jerusalem in the Ottoman Period”, by Arnon, A., 1992, p. 39

Moreover, it can be said the tolerance and freedom that is granted to every single individual living in Bayt al-Maqdis regardless of Muslim or non-Muslim can be seen in many various aspects and such developments provide a fruitful environment regarding the constituting the cultural identity in the city (Rajjal, 2001, p. 439) that encompasses the differences in beliefs, values, traditions and embraces them. What is mentioned above can be seen in education system as well. The Ottomans, unlike Zionists that turns education and its system into a lethal weapon serving their interest as it will be elaborated profoundly in the related section, do not limit non-Muslims regarding education and they are allowed to establish schools freely. It is reported that there are 72 private schools in Bayt al-Maqdis sanjak according to the records held in 1904 (Çelik, 2020, p. 223). Apart from it, the Ottoman Empire realizing the cruciality of education attaches importance to it since the second half of the nineteenth century and many schools and *kuttabs* are established in Palestine as well (Furas, 2020, pp. 22-23). It can be said that the Ottomans prefer to a more secular curriculum through the end of the Ottoman sovereignty (Furas, 2020, p. 27) and “they articulated a pedagogical discourse and programmatic platforms for educational progress in Palestine” (Furas, 2020, p. 27). Throughout this process, it must be underlined that Ottomans provide the same opportunities for non- Muslims without discriminating one from another. The same tolerance that actually matches with the plurality and diversity of the city can be seen in cultural developments. Besides the fact that non-Muslims are allowed to publish newspapers and books, there are libraries founded by Christians and Jews and it can be considered a huge privilege and it also shows that the Ottomans do not have an agenda such as strengthening Muslim hegemony or wiping out what is associated with Jewish and Christian culture and values considering the cruciality of such developments regarding preserving or erasing a particular nation’s identity. One can comprehend what is argued by taking the following fact into the consideration: After the occupation, one of the first actions of the Zionists was to organize a special unit to search and find any sort of materials that is related to Palestine and reflect their culture, history and values. The books, documents, records, basically everything found in this regard were kept and burned by them. 40.000 written materials were stolen and 26.000 books were burned by the Israelis in a short period of time (K. El-Awaisi, 2019a, pp. 164-165). Anyway, going back to the point, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate Library is one of the most

noteworthy and significant libraries in Bayt al-Maqdis under the sovereignty of Ottoman Empire. St. Savior Library that is generally associated with Catholic Christians and Saint Mark's Monastery Library that one of the oldest libraries in the city can be put on the list in this regard (Çelik, 2020, pp. 228-229). There are also research libraries founded by European countries. French School of Biblical and Archeological Research, Jerusalem Literary Society founded in 1849, American School of Oriental Research, Jerusalem's Municipal Russian Library founded in 1900 as the biggest library outside Russia are some of them within this context (Çelik, 2020, p. 230). Considering everything discussed related to Bayt al-Maqdis prior to British Mandate for Palestine and the occupation following it, it is argued that Bayt al-Maqdis is ruled in a way it deserves. The order and peace are restored and a multicultural society that everyone can live in peace with mutual respect is established. Basically, there is a harmony in the society in Bayt al-Maqdis under the reign of Ottomans. However, it has changed by the several attempts of Europeans and Jews. The period, marking the end of the Ottoman sovereignty and beginning of the British Mandate in Palestine, coincides with the times that nationalism intensifies and Bayt al-Maqdis is an important center regarding Palestinian nationalism (Cohen, 2011, p. 6). Nationalism, however, is manipulated by the external factors and the researcher puts forward that what is aimed to achieve by that is to disturb the order, twist people's mind and turn it into something serving their interest. Ultimately, they have achieved what they are up to in a way considering the society in the region was convinced that the Ottomans were their enemy and the British were their savior. Besides, "the rise of nationalism, both Arabism and Zionism ... affected relations between Jews and Arabs in the country" (Jacobson, 2011, p.11). The unrest is unveiled and it can be even seen in minor incidents. For instance, anti-Ottoman and Zionist views are expressed publicly through newspapers. The Hebrew newspapers accused are shut down (Jacobson, 2011, p. 24). The researcher argues that what starts with the interference of the British has changed the course of history regarding Bayt al-Maqdis and the order and tranquility in the city are gone for good in a sense considering the successive events following it. As it will be scrutinized in the related section, one of the most concrete consequences of it is the dramatic changes taking place in the structure of the city (Rajjal, 2001, 445). The following map is nothing but a clear proof of it.



**Map 1:** Bayt al-Maqdis after Six-Day War, **Source:** Passia 2002.

It can be said that the changes in what reflects the Palestinian history, values and culture, basically everything constituting a nation and lead to collective identity are the most crucial ones within this context. The following are some of them in this regard:

- “Al- Haram al-Sharif → Temple Mount
- Ha’it al-Buraq (Al-Buraq Wall) → Wailing Wall
- Bab ‘Abd al-Hamid (‘Abd al-Hamid Gate) → New Gate
- Bab al-Asbat (Tribes Gate) → Lions’ Gate
- Bab al-Nabi Dawud (Prophet David Gate) → Zion Gate
- Tariq al-Wadi (Valley Road) → Hibai Road” (Rajjal 2001, pp. 449-450).

Moreover, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), adopted the Muslim names for the sites, namely al-Aqsa Mosque /Al-Haram Al-Sharif and the Buraq Plaza in a number of its resolutions. The UN cultural agency removed any references to the “Temple Mount” in its resolutions. (UN, 2016).



**Figure 1:** Being vandalized an Arabic sign by an Israeli soldier after the war.  
**Source:** Picture History of Jewish Civilization, Bezalel Narkiss.

In short, what starts with the first Muslim conquest as a city setting an example in many ways continues with the Ottoman Empire in the 20th century. It can be argued the multicultural aspect of the city besides the characteristics reflecting its uniqueness are maintained under the Ottoman sovereignty. Bayt al-Maqdis is ruled in a just way as it deserves and people from different religions and races live in harmony and peace without facing with any sort of oppression. However, the events brought about by British Mandate for Palestine change the structure and nature of the city dramatically. By touching upon two different periods of time in the city, what is aimed with this particular section is to draw the reader’s attention to the distinctive differences between prior and after the arrival of British and the events following it.

### **2.3. BAYT AL-MAQDIS AFTER THE FIRST MUSLIM CONQUEST**

It can be said that the history of the city is full of conflicts and bloody wars before the first Muslim conquest. Thus, it makes dramatically difficult to establish the order and the ideal community that Umar Ibn Al-Khattab was willing to manage. There was an ongoing conflict between Romans, later Byzantine Christians and Jews resulting in the expulsion of the Jews and there had been even disunity between the Christian communities in Aelia before the arrival of Muslims. However, Umar manages to establish a multicultural society from different religions and races, yet living in peace with mutual respect. One of the most important events leading him to manage is his assurance called Umar's Assurance of Aman to the people of Aelia which guarantees them safety of their lives, properties, churches and gives them freedom in religion and worshipping according to their own religious beliefs without any kind of compulsion. Umar as a follower Prophet Muhammad and acting according to Islamic teachings behaves non-Muslims as they are one of them without discrimination and it can be said that his attitudes towards people from different religions and communities and his ultimate goal in establishing a society living in peace bring prosperity to the region as it will be scrutinized in the following passages.

First of all, majority of the population in the city before the conquest is generally Christians that consists of people from different nations dividing into different sects and groups which cause conflicts between the Christian communities and Arabs converted to Christianity considering the encouragement of the Emperor Constantine. Basically, the researcher argues environment that is full of conflicts and unrest and the population making up of people from different religions and races in that time are similar to the current environment and situation of Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular. Maher Abu-Munshar states the Christians are Monophysite in the region and oppressions beginning with Heraclius, forcing people to believe and worship like the way he does in Christianity, continue increasingly in the period of Byzantines which causes nothing but intensifying the conflict between the Christian communities (Abu-Munshar, 2007). What the city needs is peace and prosperity considering the bloody history of Bayt al-Maqdis that has been full of conflicts and wars and it can be said that the arrival of Umar and Muslims become a milestone in the city in this sense. The first

step, that is applied by Umar who arrives the city in simple clothes which reflects his humble characteristic, is his assurance to the people of Aelia. The document, based on plurality and diversity which can be considered the framework of Umar in a sense, assures the safety of people of Aelia in terms of each individual's life, religion and property without discrimination (A. El-Awaisi, 2000, p. 49). It also reflects the way of treatment of Muslims to the people from a different religion.

Secondly, Umar forbids treating them bad in his document by saying "...nor any one of them to be maltreated..." (A. El-Awaisi, 2000, p. 54). The document also reflects the tolerance of Muslims to the others. Moreover, the conquest of the region by Muslims brings about some radical changes in Bayt al-Maqdis (Abd Rahman, 2004). There has been a conflict between the Jews and the others dating back to the period of reign of Roman in the first century CE. resulting in the expulsion of the Jews from the region for almost 500 years ago. However, it is Umar Ibn Al-Khattab who allows them to reside in the region again by letting 70 Jewish families to settle in the region and it can be said that the Jews welcome being taken over the control of the region by Muslims considering the conflicts between them and the Christians. The researcher, however, underlines that what is currently done by the Zionists is the opposite of what is done by Umar considering the policies and laws put into action in this regard as it will be highlighted in the related sections of the thesis.

Thirdly, what Umar Ibn Al-Khattab has achieved by establishing a multicultural society making up of people from different religions, cultures and nations living in peace and re-establishing the order in the region after a long period of time is something remarkable and it can be said that what brings Christians, Jews and Muslim together is the policy applied by Muslims (Abu-Munshar, 2007, p. 107). Umar does not compel non-Muslim to anything in terms of religion. The religious freedom and worshipping according to their own religious beliefs are granted to them by Umar. Umar's rejection to pray in the Church of Holy Sepulcher by saying that it may be converted to a mosque after his death because of his prayer in the church and his order to reconstruct al-Aqsa Mosque inside the walls of the city show his tolerance and respect to the other religions. It can be clearly seen the huge difference in terms of mind set and approach to such issues between Muslims in the lead of Umar and the Zionists

presently taking their attempt to destroy al-Aqsa Mosque and reconstruct a temple where the mosque is located. In addition to everything discussed, it can be said that each sect is treated as a “semi-autonomous” community in that time. They have their own religious leaders having some responsibilities. Another significant event showing the trust and the good relations between them is being delivered the keys of the Church of Holy Sepulchre to Umar Ibn al-Khattab. It can be deduced that the Christians entrust Muslims on their holiest place by taking the Muslims’ approach and respect towards them and their religious right into consideration (Abu-Munshar, 2007, p. 111). Moreover, the Muslims do not interfere with Christian’s pilgrimage (Abu-Munshar, 2007, p. 115) and it continues throughout the Muslim rule. The treatment of Muslims to the others and Umar’s permission to the Jews to settle in the city, especially the southern part of it as it is requested by them also enables the Jews to come to the city so that they can pray and study in Jerusalem in that time (Gil, 1992). It can be also said that the principles followed by Umar who is called Commander of the Faithful because of his noble qualities are the basis teachings of Islam and what is told by Prophet Muhammad is important in this regard “He who hurts a Dhimi hurts me, and he who hurts me hurts Allah” (A. El-Awaisi, 2007a, p. 98). However, it is sad that there is a world of difference between the perspective of Muslims in the light of Islam in that time and the Israelis’ way of handling the issues.

Finally, what Muslims do by allowing *dhimmis* to work in several different administrative duties in the city shows how people from different religions and nations get used to live and work together unlike the current environment in the city considering the aggressive policies of Israel in this regard. In addition, Umar makes great effort to develop the city in terms of safety, justice and the relationship between the communities (Abd Rahman, 2004, pp. 135-136). It is argued that the majority of the population in the city even after the following years of the conquest consists of the Christians and the estimated Muslim population is in a range between 20.000 to 30.000 considering the other cities in the region (Abd Rahman, 2004, p. 145). The total Christian population, however, is in a range between 120.000 to 240.000 in both inside and outside of the walled city. According to Moshe Gil there are 580 Christian families during the period of the conquest. The fact, that the majority of the population consist of the Christians, indicates that Muslims do not have an intention to outnumber the others to become the

dominant population and oppress the non-Muslims in the region which refers to the fact that what is aimed by Umar is nothing but establishing peace and prosperity in the region.

To sum up, Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, with what he has done, portrays a utopic city in a sense that it is quite rare to see presently such a way of order and modest approach to any community and anyone regardless of one's race, religion and ethnicity. He establishes the order and peace in the city which strives for it for a long period of time. He also establishes a multicultural community from different races, religions and cultures as a step to manage to establish the mutual respect between the communities which is not an easy task considering the bloody conflicts and the incidents between the Jews and the Christians. Umar assures the safety of people of Aelia in terms of their lives, properties, religion and religious practices in his assurance that can be called the peaceful coexistence and mutual respect. Umar as a companion of Prophet Muhammad stands as a living figure reflecting the basis of Islamic teachings and the principles of it. He shows tolerance and respect to the people from other religions by not abusing his power and letting them worship freely according to their own religious beliefs. He treats non-Muslims in a just way as they are one of them without discriminating one from another. Muslim's way of treatment to the non-Muslims provides an environment for living in peace for people from different beliefs and nations which is nothing but a significant success of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab and this is exactly what is necessary presently considering the current environment of Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular. After the period of times following it can be considered a reflection of what is established by Umar Ibn Al-Khattab apart from some specific periods such as the Crusaders which will be scrutinized in the related section of the thesis. Multinational society that anyone can carry on their lives in peace is established under the Muslim rules. Suleiman the Magnificent and Bayt al-Maqdis under his rule is a noteworthy example in this regard and it takes the reader to the following chapter that it will be discussed in detail.

## **2.4. BAYT AL-MAQDIS UNDER THE REIGN OF SULEIMAN**

The period of time under the reign of Suleiman is the golden era for the Ottoman Empire. The same can be said for Bayt al-Maqdis conquered by the Ottomans in the 16th century. There are many developments taking place in that time and the importance attached to Bayt al-Maqdis is also important in this sense because of the holiness of the city witnessing many significant events throughout the centuries.

First of all, even the purpose of being erected the walls is completely different from what is aimed by the Zionists as it will be discussed in the related section of the thesis. It is argued the entire project for the city walls completes in a short period of time (Cohen, 1989a). Cohen says that “to overcome the economic and demographic decline which Jerusalem had undergone during the late Mamlük period, an element of stability, buttressed by the enforcement law and order, had to be introduced. The reconstructions of the walls was intended to provide the town and its inhabitants with all of these, thus directly affecting the immediate conditions of life...”(Cohen, 1989a, p. 469). The researcher stresses the construction of the walls is the first step to improve the conditions of the city where people from different nations, religion and culture can live together in peace.

Moreover, the researcher argues the fact that the Ottoman Empire shows tolerance and respect to other religions and buildings that are used for religious practices by people from different religions as a teaching of Islam. The synagogues or churches in Bayt al-Maqdis are not turned into mosques or used for other purposes by the Ottomans. Besides, not interfering in their religious rituals, practices or their right to pray according to their own religious beliefs can be considered good examples in this regard.

The researcher also argues what the Ottoman Empire does in Bayt al-Maqdis especially in the 16th century cannot be underestimated and the major purpose of it is the prosperity of the population making up of people from different religions and nations. It is even argued by the ones that can be considered on the side of Israel and biased in a sense as it can be seen in the following example: “...domestic prestige were highly important to the new rulers, but they were also aware of the practical advantage

to be gained from improving conditions in these recently acquired territories... The government was indeed interested in the welfare of the local population” (Cohen, 1989b, p. 8).

Secondly, the Ottoman Empire always hosts people from different religions, cultures and races. The Ottomans never discriminate one from another regardless of being Muslim or non-Muslim and behaves in a fair way. The millet system takes a crucial role to establish a multicultural society in this regard. Millet stands for religious confession, community or nation in general and it is argued the Ottoman Empire makes great effort not only to establish a prosperous society, but also the order in that society making up of people and communities from different religions, cultures and nations (Caruso, 2007). Besides, the way that the system works can be understood from the following narration: “...a specific community residing within the Ottoman domain, once it recognized the Muslim-Turk authority and submitted to its rule, received protection in exchange for the payment of a specific poll tax (*jizya*) and was thereby eligible for administrative, legal, religious and educational autonomy” (Caruso, 2007, p. 43). The millet system can be defined as a system of diversity and plurality in different groups and communities in the Ottoman Empire. Mark A. Epstein defines it as the idea of communal independence for religious minorities. There are also some opinions objecting what is argued regarding millet system and the way it works. Benjamin Braude is one of them in this regard. He accuses of the Ottoman Empire of failing in practice regarding the millet system and he claims the empire even in its golden era, which refers to the reign of Suleiman in the 16th century, “denote an autonomous protected community of non-Muslim Ottoman subjects” (Braude, 1982, p. 70). Braude also attempts to undermine the value and importance attached to it by claiming that there is not a general administrative system or structure dealing with non-Muslims and the millet system is not an institution, but a set of arrangements (Braude, 1982, pp. 69-70). However, the researcher stands against what is claimed in this regard, because the millet system is a well-known and quite famous system that can be considered the solid ground of well designated Ottoman regime. Besides, anyone who is interested in the Ottoman history knows the functions of the millet system and the way it works and distinguishes facts from biases as it can be seen in the aforementioned example within this context.

Thirdly, it can be said that people from different nations and religions live in the same empire in peace and they are a part of the millet. The Ottomans customarily consider Christians and Jews, whether within or without Muslim rule, a part of millet. They are also allowed to work in remarkable positions in the empire considering there are many Jews and Christians having a crucial position in the empire including the ones working beside the sultans. Hekim Yakub who is also known as Jacopo of Gaeta is a significant man and can be a good example in this sense, although he lives in the period of time under the reign of Mehmed the Conqueror, not Suleiman the Magnificent. He is the first Jewish physician and he is also a court physician. The researcher argues working a non-Muslim just beside the sultan indicates he is trusted by the Ottomans. There is even a quarter in Istanbul called Hekim Yakub Quarter and even Benjamin Braude himself agrees with the fact that Hakim Yakub is considered as an Ottoman citizen and he is respected in the society although he is from a different nation and religion (Braude, 1982, pp. 110-111). Considering everything discussed, the researcher puts forward all these incidents prove that everyone is treated in the empire in a fair way regardless of one's ethnicity, religion and nation. In addition, what is done by the Ottomans, especially the environment and the order established in Bayt al-Maqdis, their way of treating to the others and being followed a policy embracing everyone without taking the differences regarding race, nation and religion into the consideration, should be considered an utmost example of a great way of governing and establishing a multicultural society living in peace which is similar to the period of time with the first Muslim conquest as it is scrutinized in a detailed way.

Fourthly, what Oded Peri argues is similar to this argument. He argues the Ottomans allow non-Muslims to practice according to their religious beliefs as long as they obey to the laws and do not anything breaking the law which is quite similar to what is done by Umar Ibn al-Khattab within this context, for they are considered *dhimmi*s in Islam in both cases. Amnon Cohen also argues "as religious minorities, the Jews and Christians maintained their own internal legal systems" in his work titled Jewish Life Under Islam: Jerusalem in the Sixteenth Century. He also argues Jews and Christians voluntarily come to Qadi so that he judges the matters which indicates even the non-Muslims trust to the Muslim courts and judges because of its just and unbiased way of work and the examples of such matters can be seen in many records. He also

argues “on the whole the Muslim court respected the rights of the Jews and protected them from injustice without unnecessary recourse to bribery” (Cohen, 1984, p. 126). Moreover, the researcher puts forward that living in the same city in peace, the mosques and synagogues or churches that are located very close to each other and being respected to the other religions and their religious practices are major steps in terms of plurality and diversity which are the key terms to establish a multicultural society. Amnon Cohen argues differences of non-Muslims and especially the Jews are tolerated by the Muslims as long as they do not offend the Muslims and Islam. In addition, although he claims some negative arguments, he also accepts the fact that the Muslims in the city do not attempt anything to keep the Jews from practicing according to their own religious beliefs which indicates the tolerance showed by the Ottomans (Cohen, 1984, pp. 72-76). Besides, the researcher argues both Muslims and non-Muslims live in peace and practice their religious necessities without interfering in each other’s religious beliefs at all considering the fact that the Ramban Synagogue which is the major synagogue of the Jews and the al-Umari Mosque are located very close to each other.

Moreover, there are many quarters in the city in the 16th century and the researcher argues their living in peace in the same city proves the fact that co-existence and mutual respect are established in Bayt al-Maqdis in the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent and for centuries to come. Adar Arnon says “the residential quarters in a medieval Islamic city were a mosaic of territories inhabited by different populations distinguished by religion or sect, common stock or common place of origin” (Arnon, 1992, p. 1). He also puts forward that the same idea is maintained throughout the centuries by the Islamic empires. Jerusalem is divided into four quarters, namely Muslim, Christian, Armenian and Jewish quarters (Arnon, 1992, pp. 1-5). One of the most important issues indicating that there is not a discrimination between Muslims and non-Muslims is the fact that there is not a record calling this quarters as Jewish quarter or Christian quarter and what Adar Arnon argues by saying that “the Ottoman authorities did not want to recognize officially that sections of the city were called after Christians or Jews” (Arnon, 1992, p. 11) which directly points out all quarters and the areas in the city are the same without distinguishing one from another in the reign of Suleiman. In addition, it also hosts people from different religions coming to the city for pilgrimage and the safety of them in both within the city and the roads are assured by

the Ottomans and the researcher argues it indicates that Bayt al-Maqdis under the reign of Suleiman is a city where people from different nations and religions can settle or visit for different purposes in a safe way.

Last but not least, the Ottoman Empire has a tradition that its origin dates back to the early times of Islam. The tradition is basically “distributing a daily meal of lentils cooked in olive oil to all the residents and pilgrims, rich and poor, in the city” and “the Ottomans so reliably continued the tradition, which involved baking ... bread daily, that the houses built during this period had no kitchens” (Vitulo, 2003, p. 70). Moreover, the Ottomans allow non-Muslims to establish waqf in Bayt al-Maqdis as long as it serves religious purposes according to Islamic laws. Considering the policies followed by the Israelis currently, it is nothing but a huge privilege granted to the non-Muslims in that time, because the State of Israel does not even want the Palestinians to erect a building in the city and makes things difficult for them taking what will be discussed related to that issue in the following sections of the thesis.

In short, the researcher argues anything that can be possibly done to establish a society that everyone can live in peace and prosperity without discriminating one from another is done by the Ottomans in the reign of Suleiman in the 16th century. What is done by Umar Ibn al-Khattab is not different within this context. The framework for both is Islam and Bayt al-Maqdis in these specific period of times is considered an exemplary model that has been governed in a way reflecting the basis of Islamic teachings and the principles of it. Hopefully, the days that Bayt al-Maqdis is governed in a just and peaceful way will be in a near future.

### **CHAPTER III: ISRAELI POLICIES TO CHANGE THE IDENTITY OF BAYT AL-MAQDIS**

There are not many cities that people have fought, shed blood and died for throughout the history. Obviously, Bayt al-Maqdis is at the top of the list considering the endless wars that the city has witnessed for centuries. Although there are many facts that make it so special and unique, hosting three major religions –namely Islam, Christianity and Judaism- and the rich history of it are the major factors in this regard. It can be clearly said that it is a multicultural city that one respects to another regardless of his/her religion, race and ethnicity taking its history into the consideration, especially the centuries under Muslim hegemony. The first Muslim conquest and the period after it can be considered a clear example of it. It is a city of tolerance and peace. Actually, to be precise, it is better to say that it was a city having that sort of privileges once considering firstly the Crusades, then the occupation and what has been done by the Israelis. The actions taken by the Israelis since 1948 clearly shows that the agenda followed by them is quite opposite and far from the one under Muslim sovereignty. Actually, it is not an agenda coming out suddenly when the occupation starts. The root of it dates back in time and it can be said that first concrete and physical actions can be seen in 1917. It can be clearly seen just after 5 weeks after the Balfour Declaration bringing an end to the Muslim sovereignty that lasted for 13 centuries and starting a new era for the fate of the city. First visible impacts of a major tool that is used by the Israelis to change the identity of the city take place during this time and this is what will be scrutinized in the following section. There are numerous tools and policies followed by Israelis within this context. Changing the physical and demographic structure of Bayt al-Maqdis is one of them. However, what has been done by Israelis is much more than this. Language and its role regarding changing the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis is also quite significant considering the intimate relation between language and identity. The role of education and the way it is turned into a tool serving their ultimate goal cannot be ignored in this regard as well. Taking cruciality and possible consequences of such attempts into the consideration, the question that the impacts of Israeli policies in Bayt al-Maqdis are whether permanent or temporary is quite critical, because the answer will be playing a major role regarding the destiny of Bayt al-Maqdis in a sense.

### **3.1. A LIFE-LONG STRUGGLE: JUDAIZING BAYT AL-MAQDIS**

It can be said that Israel makes great effort to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis and Judaize the city. It is argued that it is a goal that Israel has been pursuing since the very beginning of the occupation. Within this context, there are many tools employed by the Israelis to change the identity of the city dramatically and “unilaterally possess a territory and a place that it asserts is uniquely its own” (Said, 2011, p. 63). In other words, they aim at turning it into a land that belongs to the Israelis exclusively. Increasing the Jewish population and outnumbering in the land while decreasing the total number of Palestinians simultaneously is one of the major tools used in this regard. “The creation of a Jewish majority in Jerusalem has always been a high priority of the Israeli government, after 1948 in West Jerusalem and after 1967 in East Jerusalem” (Yousef, 2017, p. 1494) and it can be even seen in the early years of the 20th century. After the Balfour Declaration, number of waves of Jews immigration is multiplied. The Jewish population that was 56.000 in 1918 is 608.230 in 1946 (Zink, 2009, p. 123). Tenfold increase in a relatively short period of time proves that it is done deliberately as an attempt serving their ultimate goal. Besides, their intention within this context is declared publicly by the former Prime Minister Ehud Barak: “Maintaining our sovereignty over Jerusalem and boosting its Jewish majority have been our chief aims, and toward this end Israel constructed large Jewish neighborhoods in the eastern part of the city, which house 180,000 residents, and on the periphery of Jerusalem, like Ma'aleh Adumim and Givat Ze'ev. The principle that guided me in the negotiations at Camp David was to preserve the unity of Jerusalem and to strengthen its Jewish majority for generations to come” (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2000). The second leg of it is to widen the gap between Jewish and Arab population in the land which is attempted to accomplish by forcing them to leave, basically driving Palestinians out from their own land and this is what happened in 1948, even before the final withdrawal of British mandate. 80.000 Palestinians are forced to leave the western side of the city and what is underlined by Rashid Khalidi and argued by Edward Said shows how dramatic the situation is: “Much of what today is commonly thought of as 'Israeli West Jerusalem' in fact consisted of Arab neighborhoods before the fighting of the spring of 1948, when... their inhabitants were driven out or fled from their quarters like Baq'a, Qatamon and Talbiyya” (Said, 1995, p. 60).

Besides, some heartbreaking incidents also have occurred. Slaughtering 93 people in Deir Yassin which is a village on the outskirts of the city is an example of it taking place in 1948 (Zink, 2010, p. 123). The researcher puts forward what is also aimed by the Israelis with that such events is to evoke an image that the land is not secure to live for Palestinian people and lead them to leave the city unwillingly as natural instinct triggered by the fear, yet it is not enough for them obviously and the residents preferring to keep living there anyway are forced to leave and they are expelled (Wenger, 1993, p. 10). Besides, what is told by Henry Cattani, a famous jurist, clearly identifies what the Israelis want to achieve: "Here then in Israeli hands was the whole of modern Jerusalem, emptied of its inhabitants. It was a simple matter to Judaize the city by allowing Jewish settlers to move into the Arab homes"(Zink, 2009, p. 124). The researcher puts forward that basically, two actions mentioned above are just the cogs in the wheel that serves a greater purpose or it can be said that it is just a tip of the iceberg and what lies behind is a much greater problem. Therefore, the researcher finds suitable to read between the lines. At first glance, it may look as a tool used to alter the identity of the land, make the Jews superior in numbers and enhance the Jewish hegemony in Bayt al-Maqdis. Yet, it comes with a couple of sub consequences in the long term that changes the dynamics of the land and reshapes the future and fate of it. Outnumbering in population brings about being heard their voices louder and makes them superior to the rest of the population living there. Secondly, it also allows Israeli Jews to justify what is done by them regardless of the fact that it is true or not. Thanks to the population and the power that they retain, media is turned into a tool securing their interests and spreading the misinformation. Basically, the wind blows where they direct metaphorically and it enables for them to justify what they do more easily and effectively. Thirdly, it is vitally important to change the identity of the land, because the land is shaped by the environment and population is a major factor in this regard. Therefore, it affects streets, foods, tourism, even minor things like souvenirs dramatically and the Jewish traditions and culture possess the city in the long term. The researcher also underlines the huge impact of it regarding language and terminology which is one of the most important tools that can be used for their "ultimate goal" as it will be analyzed profoundly in the following sections of the thesis. It affects the language used in the signs, street names. What is more crucial in this regard is the fact

that the population has an important role in terms of the major language used in education and the general curriculum. The actual threat is that once is achieved thoroughly, the consequences of it will be irreversible in terms of the fate of the city including the identity, history and tradition of it. Last but not least, the local inhabitants of the land, the Palestinians, may force to carry on an isolated life in their own homeland which is not something desirable naturally. These are just some possible threats of a major tool employed by the Zionist state that must be underlined considering that these are not even noticed by the majority of the society, yet the impacts of it are vital.

Moreover, it can be clearly said that it is not enough for the Israelis and they try to change the boundaries of the land in their own favor by following a quite detailed policy in this regard and the researcher puts forward that it is the footprints of a mischievous plan that would change the whole fate of a land in addition to inhabitants of it. Basically, they embrace the land and claim that they are the rightful owner of a land that they were not even allowed to settle once. To achieve what they aim at, boundaries are judiciously set in way excluding the Palestinian centers like Abu Dis and al-Ram (Halper, 2002). By doing so, the new boundaries are determined for the city that never appears any map throughout the history of it! Although, most of the countries in the world prefer to remain silent to the issue, United Nations objects to it and Resolution 267 is adapted declaring “all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel which purport to alter the status of Jerusalem, including expropriation of land and properties thereon”, are invalid (UN Security Council, 1969). However, it does not stand as an obstacle between Israel and their never ending policy and the Absentee Property Law is put into effect. The main reason behind it is to manage to drive more Palestinian people out of their homeland and it can be said that it is “a ruthless weapon to strip Arabs in East Jerusalem of their homes and the law became a tool not for finding homes in Jerusalem for displaced Jews but for driving Arabs out of the city” (Cheshin, Hutman, Melamed, 1999, p. 217). Moreover, the researcher highlights that the law is nothing but a reflection of the aggressive policy followed by the Israelis considering the details of it, because it makes impossible for the Palestinian to claim anything contradicting with the law in a sense. It basically takes whatever they have, title, money, land even the permits that it is a must to reside within

the new boundaries of the city regardless of what their excuse is. Leaving the land for work, holiday or just because of fear as a natural instinct of human being considering the environment during the years of occupation and the war does not mean anything and affect anything either in the eyes of the law. In addition, it affects the dynamics of the land in a very short period of time as it can be seen in the following statics: “This resulted in the expropriation of roughly one-third of the land annexed to Jerusalem in 1967 and the displacement of over 100,000 Palestinians” (Zink, 2009, p. 125). How could they have done such a thing and almost everyone looked the other way and preferred to remain silent except the minority? It is nothing but a shame of humanity and what leads them to remain silent and ignore what has been happening in the Holy Land for almost a century is actually what should be analyzed in a detailed way and it will be discussed profoundly in the following sections of the thesis to make everything clearer. However, going back to what is focused in this section of the thesis, it can be said that everything is planned judiciously and the strict instructions given by the Prime Minister Golda Meir to the officials to limit the Arab population in the land and in a way that does not exceed %28.8 of the overall population of it is a good example of it reflecting the importance attached to the issue (Abunimah, 2006, p. 28). In addition, the Israelis are encouraged to erect new buildings and increase the population in the land whereas Arab population is subjected to several restrictions and juridical laws. In short, “the idea was to move as many Jews as possible into East Jerusalem, and move as many Arabs as possible out of the city entirely. Israeli housing policy in East Jerusalem was all about this numbers game.” (Zink, 2009, p. 126). In other words, it is a part of Judaizing the region as a process that “Israel has followed to transform the physical and demographic landscape of Jerusalem towards a fundamentally Jewish city under Israeli sovereignty primarily by creating the largest possible Jewish majority” (Yousef, 2017, p. 1494). Moreover, one third of the eastern side of the city is expropriated for the Jewish residents and four fifths of what remains left is prohibited for the Arab settlement. Green zone project is one of the major excuses in this regard. The researcher prefers to say excuse, because there is no other city in the world reserving such a huge territory for green zone. Greening the territories is not a bad thing though, yet greening is one thing, choosing a land where people are supposed to settle and restricting the area that they can live is another. Especially the fact that it is the land occupied by a nation

following an agenda regarding increasing their own population in the land whereas attempting to decrease the number of Arab inhabitants simultaneously by different methods and tools makes the things more awkward. Therefore, one may say that this is too much of a coincidence to be a coincidence. It must be also underlined that these green zones became settlements later on. Rooting olive trees is another issue that must be discussed in this regard. Israel over a forty year period has uprooted in Palestine over 1 million olive trees besides the hundreds of thousands of other fruit trees (Karkar, 2010). Zionists attempt to justify their actions and right on the city by basing it on religious motives and olive trees are one of them. Within this context, the first biblical mention of it is seen in story of Flood (Genesis, 8:11). Olive trees are one of the first ones reaped in the city by the Jews and “during the period of the Judges (ca. 1412-1038 BCE, from Joshua to the King Saul, biblical chronology), the olive tree is one of the most honoured trees from the Holy Land” (Terral, 2012, p. 885). Olive trees are considered a symbol of fertility, beauty, prosperity and sovereignty (Terral, 2012, p. 885) and what is written in the Hebrew Bible is in parallel with this particular belief in a sense: “The Lord called thy name, ‘A Green Olive Tree,’ fair and of goodly fruit. With the noise of a great tumult He hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken” (Jeremiah, 11:16). Basically, it can be said that they intend to turn the whole occupied territories in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular into a region possessed by Jewish identity reflecting its culture and values.

Apart from it, what is even more bizarre is a plant that does not yield fruit or serve anything beneficial is planted by the Zionists, the Gharqad or Boxthorn tree. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu was photographed planting this tree (Solway, 2012). So, the researcher comes to conclusion that what they are up to is quite clear considering everything mentioned above in this regard. However, the bitter fact becomes much more visible statistically: “Palestinian Jerusalemites are permitted to live on only 7% of the total land mass of East Jerusalem (Zink, 2009, p. 126). It is mostly in Palestinian settlement and even within these neighborhoods, they generally cannot get the necessary permits to erect a building or cannot afford the high expense of it (B’tselem, 2006, p.10).

What the researcher calls as the frustration policy is another method used by the Israeli government. By making the life harder for the Arab population, they force them to either carry on a frustrating life or leave the city and move another land or a country. To achieve it through and through, it takes 10 years on average to be approved of a new settlement plan for the Palestinians whereas it takes much less than 3 years for the Jews besides the fact that the government builds for them (Zink, 2009, p. 126). In addition to the unfairness, construction and settlement plans in the region are another issue. "Although over 60,000 housing units in 8 settlements have been built for Jewish settlers in the last 32 years, not one subsidized public housing unit has been constructed by Israel for Palestinians" in the city (Abowd, 1999, p. 35). Moreover, this is not the only policy to make themselves the upper hand and keep the land secure by employing different sort of methods and tools which can be called as an aggressive policy in terms of population and settlement in this case. Hence, they take advantage of the overall economic condition of the Arab inhabitants living there by making building permits almost unaffordable for them. It can be clearly seen in the report issued by the European Union: The cost ranges from US\$25,000 to \$100,000 (The EU, 2005). It is a good example to comprehend the chief reasons leading the researcher to call what has been done by the Israelis as a frustration policy. What makes it even worse in this case is the fact 70% of the Palestinians in the land carry on their lives below the poverty line. Moreover, another bitter fact is that in the Old City, new constructions are not permitted outside of the Jewish Quarter (Wenger, 1993, p.12). It can be said that the same policy is in operation in the recent past considering the following incident: Even the ones who can afford the cost of building permits are not allowed to have it. The Municipal Tax Collection Department states that only 481 out of 5300 residential buildings are approved taking the necessary permits into the consideration (ICAH, 2007, p. 8). Besides, once a Palestinian builds without a permit, he is forced to demolish the house and pay its expense (Abdulhadi, 1990, p. 60).

Finally, it can be said that the issues of citizenship and residency are other quite important problems in this regard. "The annexation of 1967 incorporated 70,000 Palestinians from East Jerusalem and villages in the West Bank into the new municipal boundaries of Jerusalem." (Zink, 2009, p. 127). What is bizarre regarding citizenship is what they offer to the Palestinians within this context is far from what generally people

have with a citizenship. "Citizenship encompasses legal status, rights, participation, and belonging." (Bloemraad et al., 2008, p. 153). Besides, normally what is offered with a citizenship is "a potential force of justice, equality, and national cohesion" (Bloemraad et al., 2008, p. 154). However, what is offered is quite different within this context as it can be seen in the following events. They are held responsible for the same taxation like the Israelis, yet with a huge difference. They do not have the same rights granted to the Israelis. What is even worse is the fact that their permit to live in the land can be revoked by the Israeli government. Considering the new regulations with the occupation, blue identity cards are provided to the Palestinians living in the city. However, the ID cards are completely different for the ones residing in the West Bank in terms of the conditions. As it is argued in the 19th article of the EU report, Jerusalem ID cards are subject to annual renewal, "lengthy, cumbersome and at times humiliating process to be carried out every year at the East Jerusalem office of the Israeli Ministry of Interior" (The EU, 2005). Moreover, the ones who do not have a valid ID card are subjected to legal actions (Dolphin, 2006, p. 20). The residency permits of over 3.000 Palestinians are taken away in three years in this regard (Dolphin, 2006, p. 24). The scenario behind it, however, is much more complex than this. Therefore, the researcher finds suitable to dig into it deeper and analyze it profoundly to uncover the bigger picture in this case. First of all, providing different ID cards to people from different nations and races is nothing but an act of discrimination. Marriage is not even possible across the boundaries, namely Eastern Jerusalem and West Bank. By doing so, the Israelis aim at distinguishing the Palestinians from themselves and it may lead them to carry on an isolated life far from the environment that they attempt to reshape with a Jewish population and settlement. They divide the city into two and duality covers the Holy city, yet the problem is that what is done by the Israeli government turns the rightful inhabitants of the land into a minority. It can be also perceived as an act of superiority, basically they consider that they are the upper hand in the land and want people to think that the Israeli citizenship is a privilege considering the rights they have whereas the others cannot. Moreover, it is also a part of the frustration policy, because restricting the residence and working permits, the charges and problems that the Palestinians have to face and endure in everyday life in checkpoints in addition to social and economic injustice, which is an issue that will be discussed in the following

sections in the thesis, makes the life within the boundaries of Jerusalem much harder and lead them to leave the land and move somewhere else which is exactly what is desired by the Israelis. What is done by them is nothing but discriminating one from another. In other words, it is apartheid and it is considered a crime against humanity besides persecution (Human Rights Watch, 2021, p. 3). Within this context, what is taken into the consideration is chiefly restrained by the ones committed by them after Six-Day War (Aral, 2019, p. 24) and approaching from this point of view, it is a problematic issue that needs to be discussed in international platforms profoundly. The same can be said for the fact that Palestinians are being deprived of self-determination (Aral, 2019, p. 31). Anyway, going back to the gist of the argument, apartheid is defined as “inhuman acts committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group of persons over any other racial group of persons and systematically oppressing them” (Human Rights Watch, 2021, p. 5). It is clearly stressed that what has been done by the State of Israel is apartheid and the following article underlined by Human Rights Watch can be considered a short summary of what they do in a way serving their interest: “Any legislative measures and other measures calculated to prevent a racial group or groups from participation in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the country and the deliberate creation of conditions preventing the full development of such a group or groups” (Human Rights Watch, 2021, p. 32). Considering what is discussed in the thesis in general, the researcher underlines the fact this is the whole point of every measure and action taken by the Israelis in addition to the laws and policies serving the same goal. The same thing can be said for the cost of building permits and the rate of being granted of it for the ones who can afford it that can be called as minority taking the economic conditions of the local people into the consideration. It leads them to erect buildings without having the necessary permissions and it ends up with the destruction of the building and revoking the ID cards in some cases. Eventually, the Palestinians cannot bear that sort of inequalities and may leave the city, maybe even the country and immigrate somewhere else unless they have been driven out of their homeland by the government already. In short, it can be said that the possible scenarios for the two cases serve their interest and contribute them to secure the Jewish sovereignty in the land. It also serves as a tool to change the identity of the

land in the long term taking everything discussed and highlighted in the thesis into the consideration.

### **3.2. THE ECONOMIC ASPECT OF ISRAELI POLICIES**

The Israeli government employs a well thought out plan to isolate the city from the rest of the West Bank territories. What they aim is to “destroy its trade movement in order to tighten the loop of hegemony around the vital economic and social sectors” (Al-Deen, 2017, p. 346). Making the life difficult for the local inhabitants of the Holy Land and lead them to leave the city are other major goals in this regard. It can be said that it is a part of voluntary immigration policy to Judaize the land and settle the Jewish population and outnumber in the region by forcing the Arab residents to abandon where they have lived for years. The following statistics clearly shows how difficult life is for the Palestinians in the region: “approximately 75.3% of East Jerusalem residents and 82.2% of children live below the poverty line (Al-Deen, 2017, p. 346). After the first leg of what is aimed by the Israelis, they attempt to limit the activities of the Palestinians in the land by military checkpoints. The access of them to some areas and worksites are restricted by the Israeli government and by turning even working in their own homeland into something complicated, the flow of income for the Palestinians is limited. Moreover, it can be said that it has an impact on trading and tourism sector dramatically because of being restricted mobility from and to the occupied territories. It also brings about “bankruptcy and the shutting down of 250 economic enterprises or their internal ‘immigration’ to Ramallah and other territories controlled by the Palestinian authority” (Al-Deen, 2017, p. 346). Besides, the increase in the rate of poverty and unemployment can be seen as natural consequences of it in this regard. Basically, the researcher argues that every single development within this context leads to another obstacle and outcome that makes life much more difficult for the Palestinians and eventually they reach a point that they cannot bear it anymore and once they come to that point, they have no other choice but to leave the region and move somewhere else which is something serving the Israelis interest. Moreover, it can be said restrictions on economy and being confined freedom and mobility of the Palestinian people block other issues as well. First thing occupying the Palestinian mind is to survive and take care of their families and carry on their lives in one way or another as a

natural instinct of human being. Contributing to the cause, spending time on what to do to solve it and being active in this regard comes after that. It is even connected to economic freedom, because such things require both social and economic freedom to stand against what has been done by the Israelis to Judaize the region. It is also a must to resist the occupation. However, unless a solution way is found and the Israeli government pulls the strings regarding economy and freedom, it allows them to secure their sovereignty on the land and make everything easier considering their goals.

It can be said that the taxes and charges imposed on the Palestinian business men and merchants are another burden on their shoulder. Therefore, Bayt al-Maqdis has witnessed refraining by the private sector from investing in the city or in its surroundings, except for individual enterprises and efforts. The number of taxes imposed by the Israeli government are countless: income, employer, national insurance, properties health insurance, welfare, added-value, commercial placards, pension, fund, savings and obligatory compensation and it equals %40-55 of a trader's income roughly (Al-Deen, 2017, p. 347). Considering the disparity between overall income and taxes, the researcher puts forward that it is quite challenging and it seems like a difficult task to manage to make profits under these conditions. In addition, although tourism is the main source of revenue which equals to approximately %40 of the overall economy of the city, the contribution of it in Palestinian GDP is below %4 due to aggressive policy of the State of Israel in this regard. They also make things difficult for the Palestinian by not granting the licenses that are necessary to establish hotels or expand it. The cost of it is another issue as it is discussed earlier in the thesis. It also leads tourists to stay in a hotel run by the Jews considering the fact that the number of hotels belonging to Palestinian decreases from 40 to 29 since 1969 (Al-Deen, 2017, p. 347). Basically, the things have gone from bad to worse due to the implementation of the Israeli government. As for taxes, arnona tax is another problematic issue that needs to be highlighted. Palestinians finds it problematic and protest it firmly (Vitullo, 1998, p. 11). The way it works and the unfair system of it lie at the bottom of the problem. As it is mentioned and discussed in the thesis, living standards of many Palestinians are far from being good in many aspects. Although they carry on their lives in houses having poor conditions, it is taxed from higher assessment rates and classified in the same category with Israeli buildings having better conditions as relatively new constructed

houses considering most of the Palestinian buildings are constructed prior to the occupation (Vitullo, 1998, p. 13). Expecting same tax from Palestinians despite the dramatic differences in income between the Jews and the Palestinian living in the same city is one of the most challenging issues in this regard (Vitullo, 1998, p. 14). Apart from what is done by the Israeli government, considering what is discussed in the thesis in general, such implementations can be considered a part of systematic discrimination (Aral, 2019, 24). Moreover, numerous taxes imposed by the Israeli authorities after the occupation are another burden on their shoulders. "Income tax, taxes to cover absorption loans and a civil defense levy" are some of them and all these taxes and payments make Palestinians lives much more difficult than it should be (Vitullo, 1998, p. 14). Besides, the following years of the occupation is also the period of time that new regulations are put into effect regarding arnona tax. Number of rooms in a house is one of the criteria within this context and "the taxes were gradually imposed at yearly rates of 35%, 60% and 80%. By 1972 East Jerusalemites were charged the full municipal arnona tax rate" (Vitullo, 1998, p. 15). 50% of arnona tax is collected for even closed shops. Sometimes it is even seen that the annual arnona tax paid is more than the annual rent for the families having lower incomes (Vitullo, 1998, pp. 15-17). Such policies can be considered a part of what is called a frustration policy by the researcher and what it serves is distinctly obvious as it discussed in the thesis many times: By making life harder for the Arab population, they force them to leave the city and move another land or a country. The following incident can be considered an example in this regard: "The arnona officials tried to convince me to leave Jerusalem ... if I can't pay my debts" (Vitullo, 1998, p. 18). In a nutshell, taxes imposed in general and arnona tax in particular are nothing but a burden on Palestinians' shoulders as one of the policies serving Israelis' ultimate goal and interests. Considering what is mentioned in this chapter in general, it can be said that having economic power is quite significant. The cruciality of economic freedom and power regarding not only the prosperity of Palestine and its inhabitants, but also the fate of Bayt al-Maqdis must be underlined in this regard. In addition, by checking the current conditions of the countries that lack economic freedom and power, one may comprehend what is stressed by the researcher through and through and how vital the issue is.

The only sector impacted dramatically due to the economic restrictions is not tourism or the enterprises. It also affects erecting building in Bayt al-Maqdis and settling legally within the borders of the region taking the following facts into the consideration: The high costs of building houses besides the difficulty of having the necessary licenses due to both the costs of it and the policies implemented by the State of Israel turn building houses legally into something a difficult task to achieve (Al-Deen, 2017, pp. 347-349). Moreover, the current statistics clearly show the difficulty of having building licenses:

The total number of building licenses issued in the first quarter of 2021 decreased by 18% compared with the fourth quarter of 2020 and increased by 2% compared with the first quarter of 2020, where the number of new building licenses decreased by 29% compared with the fourth quarter of 2020 and decreased by 17% compared with the first quarter of 2020 (PCBS, 2021).

Besides, “the number of new dwellings in the first quarter of 2021 decreased by 32% compared with the fourth quarter of 2020 and decreased by 15% compared with the first quarter of 2020” (PCBS, 2021). Apart from it,

By implementing discriminatory measures to police and partition space in the city, Palestinian villages and neighborhoods in East Jerusalem have become impoverished ghettos. Growth and expansion are seriously constrained. Investment and services from the Israeli Municipality are nearly non-existent in Palestinian areas of Jerusalem, in stark contrast to the neighboring hilltop settlements, islands of relative privilege. In East Jerusalem, Palestinians are permitted to build on less than 10 percent of their own land while nearly 40 percent of the city's east side has been expropriated for settlement construction (Abowd, 1999, p. 35).

The researcher highlights that all these policies and restrictions imposed on the Palestinian society by the State of Israel force them to live in buildings without the licenses that are in danger of being demolished by the Israelis. Even if it is not identified by the Israelis, it brings about living in old houses suffering from inadequate conditions. Hence, it can be said that these are cogs in the wheel in a sense. One outcome follows another and one major problem brings about many minor problems as it can be seen in the example mentioned above. Furthermore, it can be also said that being confined the

territories that they can settle, taking the implementation and policies such as green zones and The Absentees' Property Law used as a main instrument by the Israelis to take possession of the land belonging to the Palestinians into the consideration, is another negative factor in this regard. The researcher underlines that the difficulty of establishing buildings legally and living in such buildings due to the aforementioned reasons and generally being demolished the buildings lacking such permits leads the Palestinian people to leave the region and settle somewhere else and this is exactly what is desired by the Israelis to secure the region under their sovereignty and Judaize Bayt al-Maqdis easily without facing any resistance.

The separation wall is also worth scrutinizing in regard. Construction of the wall is allegedly based on security considerations, yet the function of it is far from what is claimed by the Israeli government within this context. Bayt al-Maqdis has been considered a diverse city throughout the history considering the specific period of times under the reign of Ottomans and after the first Muslim conquest that are elaborated in the previous sections of the thesis to set an example. However, what is done by the Israeli government is nothing but an attempt to exclude more Palestinians from the Holy City and divide families as an act of discrimination. It also creates a sense of alienation. Approaching from this perspective, the wall serves as an object of exclusion (Shlome, 2011, pp. 55-56). Taking "huge investments in building fences and walls, increasing refusal to provide transit visas and residence" into the consideration, it makes the transition from one side to another harder and monitoring activities and population in the city easier (Shlome, 2011, p. 56). Above all, it is a shame that they attempt to control and restrict Palestinians through barriers and checkpoints as if they are a security risk for the Jewish population. The researcher underlines that it can be also considered a tool serving their interest by twisting people's mind and evoking a false image in this regard considering the fact that it evokes a sense that Israelis are the upper hand as the majority in the city whereas the actual inhabitants of it are the minority and it may lead people to think that this is an Israeli city under their hegemony which is something aimed by the them. Apart from what is discussed in this regard, the State of Israel desires united Jerusalem under their own sovereignty, rather than splitting it into two as West and East Jerusalem. However, they attempt to divide the East Jerusalem into two in a way serving their interest with the separation wall (see Appendix 2)

covering approximately 700 kilometers and annexing Palestinian land inside the West Bank (Rokem, 2014, p. 230).

Moreover, the separation wall even affects everyday life and makes things difficult in many aspects within this context. It has a dramatic impact on daily activities and it restricts the access to essential places such as schools, hospitals and workplaces. It also restricts free movement and transportation. The wall “disconnects the main travel routes between Bethlehem and Ramallah, creating an artificial separation between the north and the south of the West Bank ... thus cuts vital connections between the economy of these cities and the Jerusalem economy” (Sabella, 2007). It has a negative impact on economic activity in the city and the surrounding areas which brings about being closed down many business places that leads automatically Palestinians to face with economic difficulties (Shlome, 2011, pp. 58-60). Eventually, it results in business owners’ leaving the city or it causes that enterprisers hesitate to make an investment in the city (Rayan & Yanai, 2007). In short, taking everything discussed in this section into the consideration, it can be clearly said there are many different policies and regulations that are put into effect by the State of Israel. It brings about nothing but making Palestinians’ lives much more complicated and difficult than it already is. They have had to endure and face with numerous difficulties in everyday life that lead them eventually to a point that they cannot bear it and may leave the city and move somewhere else which is something desired by the Israelis to strengthen their hegemony in the occupied territories and Judaize Bayt al-Maqdis.

### **3.3. IN THE DARKNESS: UNEDUCATED SOCIETY**

In addition to the methods that are more visible and can be realized by majority of the people such as the ones scrutinized above, there are other methods employed by the Israeli government as tools serving their ultimate goal and it can be said that education and its system are quite important in this regard. It can be also turned into a lethal weapon, changing the whole future of Bayt al-Maqdis unless it is prevented by Palestinians, because of the several reasons which will be clarified by the researcher in the following sections of the discussion. Before coming to that point, the researcher finds suitable to summarize the changes in the education system starting from the occupation in 1948 resulting in being occupied 78% of the territory of the historical

Palestine including the western part of the city. 11% of the Jerusalem municipality was under the Jordanian administration until the dramatic events breaking out in 1967. Therefore, the Palestinian students inhabiting in West Bank were educated by the Jordanian education system (Al-Deen 2017, pp. 340-341). Total number of the schools in the region establishing in this specific period of time is 82 as 44 private schools, 27 state schools and the rest, 9 out of 82 schools, were the schools affiliated to UNRWA for the Palestinian refugees. All these schools and the education curriculum were supervised directly by the Jordanian Ministry of Education. The obligatory education was free thanks to 1964 Jordanian law of education and it covers elementary stage referring to from 1st to 6th grade and preparatory stage referring to 7th to 9th grade (The Jerusalem International Foundation, 2010). However, successive dramatic changes occurred with the occupation of the rest of Palestinian lands in 1967 including the territories where Jordanian education system was applied. Israelis interfered in the education system and Israeli Ministry of Education had influence on the education system. Besides, it can be said that Israel still attempt to enforce their curriculum through funding which is something Palestinian schools are deprived of. What follows it was to be shut down of education bureau in Jerusalem governorate and arrested many officials (The Jerusalem International Foundation, 2010). In short, Israelis attempt to interfere the education system which is the system that determines the way Palestinian students are educated. One may think that it is not that much critical or it may be overlooked easily by majority of society, yet the fact is nothing but quite opposite and the researcher underlines the fact that it is crucial because of several reasons. First, it is quite effective to change the identity of the city which is something desired eagerly by the Zionists since the very first day. It also sets a proper screen for them to impose their own culture and traditions on the Palestinian students, although they have failed in their attempts in this regard. Moreover, the researcher puts forward that education system and curriculum can be used as a tool to transfer so-called facts made up by the Israelis to the next generations and justify it as well and the only thing transferred is not restricted with it obviously. Everything related to the land including its culture, history, even the major reasons making the land holy and so unique among the anywhere else in the world is perceived from the Israeli point of view and conveyed into the Palestinian students in the same way. The point of view is crucial in this regard, because it changes

everything dramatically. One may comprehend what the researcher means by that by considering what makes the Holy Land holy for the Jews and the Muslims or the history of Bayt al-Maqdis and how different it is when it is narrated by a Muslim or a Jewish historian. Basically, it enables for them to recreate the past and even the possible future like the way they desire and in a way serving their interest most. It also allows them to wipe out national feelings and Palestinian traditions and values which bring about judaizing the land easily in every possible way. Moreover, the importance attached to the education and its cruciality are also highlighted in lectures by Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi and he argues it is one of the most important solution ways that can put an end to the misery in Palestine in the long run as it will be scrutinized in “The Possible Solution Ways” section in the work. It can be said that foundation of such attempts can be traced back to the mandate period considering the fact that education is seen as a tool serving their interest by the British (Furas, 2020, p. 15) and they attempt to use it “as a part of their collective, national, and political identity construction project” (Furas, 2020, p. 15). Advocating Zionism is also a part of it. However, what is ultimately aimed within this context is to shape the future and narrate the past in a way they desire (Furas, 2020, pp. 16-20). Besides everything mentioned above, another possible threat is its irreversibility. Unless it is solved in one way or another, it will cause unrecoverable damages that are quite difficult to erase the impacts of it. Basically, this is a major threat for Bayt al-Maqdis that have negative impacts that will last for years. However, to look at the bright side, they have not succeeded in their interest thoroughly in this regard. Especially, it can be clearly seen in the young generation standing against what has been done by them. The traces of such resistances date back to the First Intifada. Universities such as Birzeit University take an important place as the local points of resistance. Within this context, the young generation did their best to be heard by the others and raise people’s awareness. They even come up with a web portal (Khoury-Machool, 2007, pp. 22-23). The same can be said for the Second Intifada as well. Use of technology makes things easier for them. Considering what is done by the young generation through internet and technology, it can be called e-resistance as a pattern of unarmed resistance (Ahmad, 2013, p. 9). Radio stations, having access to computers and internet allow them to get into more people and keep the others updated with notices and materials sent via such portals (Khoury-Machool, 2007, p. 23). Apart from the ones

made online, the youth plays a key role regarding communication. They reach the ones around them and spread the word to draw people's attention and raise awareness by meetings, petitions, daily reports, and organizations (Khoury-Machool, 2007, pp. 25-26). What is also significant in this regard is the fact that they consider it a national priority and standing against what has been by the Zionists is their responsibility (Ahmad, 2013, p. 14). One of the noteworthy outcomes that can be implied from the young generation's struggles is the fact that it reflects their characteristics and mindset (Giacaman, 2019, p. 369). Besides, it is quite important considering such struggles pave the way for having a collective unity and solidarity to stand against the tragic and unfair events in Occupied Palestinian Territories (Giacaman, 2019, pp. 371-372).

Furthermore, it affects the education system and the literacy rate in Palestine in general and the territories controlled by the occupying authorities in particular. The decrease in number of students attending to the state schools during the years between 1966 and 1972 is a clear sign of it (Al-Deen, 2017, p.341). The major reason behind is nothing but the concerns of Palestinian parents about allowing their children to attend state schools where the students are educated by the Israeli curriculum mostly. However, mostly because of the resistance to this situation, they compromise and so-called unified curriculum is adapted by adding parts of "the Jordanian secondary stage curriculum to the Israeli curriculum taught at Israeli schools" (Al-Deen, 2017, p.341). The researcher puts forward that it brings about increase in the overall classroom hours that intensifies the burden on the students shoulder and it impacts their efficiency in the courses in a negative way obviously. Therefore, the outcome of this so-called unification is not different in terms of the reaction of the families. It ends up with decrease in number of students attending to state schools. The families that can afford the costs of private schools which the Jordanian curriculum is still on the operation prefers that way, yet it is not a privilege that most of the society cannot have taking the statics related to the rate of people living below poverty line that are emphasized in the earlier sections of the thesis into the consideration. Considering everything mentioned above so far, the researcher finds suitable to underline the fact that what is aimed by the Israeli Jews, taking into the developments regarding education and its curriculum into the consideration, is handed them everything on a silver platter systematically. Firstly, the literacy rate in Palestine decreases because of the aforementioned reasons. It

eventually leads to an uneducated society in a relatively short period of time and it can be said that an uneducated society equals death and the hope for the cause vanishes once and for all which is one of the ultimate goals in the Israelis agenda. Secondly, the efficiency in the state schools decreases dramatically due to major changes caused by the occupying authorities. Thirdly, the number of families who can afford the costs of the private schools and provides a quality education for their children are not many and it takes us through the first and the second possible way discussed above which does not end up well for the Palestinian students at all. Therefore, it can be said that it is a win-win situation for Israeli government and that is why it serves their interest perfectly.

The problems related to the issue are not limited with the ones mentioned above. Although Jordanian curriculum is reapplied in Bayt al-Maqdis successively in “the secondary stage in 1973, the preparatory stage in 1978 and the elementary stage in 1981”, some parts of it are changed such as omitting Palestine from the maps in history and humanities coursebooks, and using Hebrew place names, such as ‘Yerushalem’, ‘Judea and Samaria’. In addition, importing books from Arab countries was banned” (The Jerusalem International Foundation, 2010). Besides, “the occupying authority also stipulated teaching the Hebrew language and ‘The State of Israel’ book; revising books of humanities literature by replacing the word ‘Palestine’ in the geographical maps and in the curriculum with ‘Israel’, so as to obliterate the name Palestine, and replacing ‘Al-Quds’ with ‘Jerusalem’, as ‘the eternal unified capital’ of the Israeli entity. The occupation authority also stipulated adopting Hebrew place names instead of Arabic names for geographic and archaeological sites; and blotting out Arab-Islamic ancient monuments, demonstrating instead presumed Jewish antiquities and fabricating Hebrew designations for many Arab Islamic sites claiming that the origins of the said sites are Hebrew”. Moreover, the logo of the Palestinian Authority is removed from the covers of the coursebooks and the historical and geographical facts related to Palestine are also omitted through the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Al-Deen, 2017, pp. 341-342). “Sanctifying Hebrew as a language and as an old-new culture, establishing a spiritual connection to the land through its cultivation and mystification ... were the pillars of the Hebrew curriculum” (Furas, 2020, p. 9). Considering everything discusses within this context, the researcher argues that it is nothing but an attempt to impose their own identity on both the land and the mind via the students in every possible way whereas wiping out

the values and the history of Palestine. The researcher also underlines the fact that terminology is quite important on this subject. In the same vein, its cruciality is also stressed frequently in lectures by both Khalid El-Awaisi and Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi and it cannot be overlooked in this regard. The bitter fact is that it is imposed on the students starting from the 1st grade and they are not capable of distinguishing right from wrong considering their age range. Hence, raising the awareness of people by using every possible tools and methods such as media, politics and academy is a must in this sense.

Inequality caused by the Israeli government takes place in education system as well. The government discriminates between schools of the western and the eastern side of Jerusalem in terms of allocated budgets, facilities, applying law of obligatory education and even the staff working in schools (Al-Deen, 2017, p. 343). It is an attempt to make things difficult regarding education. It is an obvious act of discrimination and it clearly shows how ironic the so-called unified curriculum is.

What is aimed by the Israeli government in this regard is the Jewish youth that would grow up with an education based on values of the Israeli tradition and culture, cultivating the national feelings and notions towards the state of Israel and justifications of what has been done by them as a struggle of regain what belongs to them already considering they are the chosen people and it is the Promised Land granted to them by God (Al-Deen, 2017, p. 343). The researcher, however, stresses a fact that may be ignored by majority of the people and it is that what is in the coursebooks has an impact on the Jewish students as much as it has on the Palestinian students. The Israeli government also targets a Jewish generation endowed with national notions and love profoundly towards Israel. It is quite important for them, because there are people who do not feel sympathy for what is done by the Israeli government and criticize the actions made by them severely among the Jews. Even it is a minority, the number of them cannot be overlooked. There are even people standing on the Palestinian side and support it (Said, 2001, p. 247). The number of people in the United States of America criticizing what has been done by the Israelis cannot be underestimated within this context as Edward Said argues: "There is an important sector of the population that is perplexed and angry that Israel should be getting away with so many infractions of what

are stated U.S. policies, policies about human rights abuses, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, illegal annexation of territory, and so on.” (Said, 2001, p. 247). Having support of the ones criticizing and standing against what has been done by the Israelis is a noteworthy suggestion to raise people’s awareness on the issue and contribute to the Palestinian cause that will be discussed in the related section of the thesis, rather than elaborating it here considering the main theme of this section. Anyway, going back to what is discussed here- what is aimed with that by the Israelis- they want that sort of feelings and approaches to fade away and grow up a generation providing full support for their ultimate goals and serving and securing their interest as well. Basically, it shows one more time how important and crucial education is.

There are also many challenges having to be faced by the Palestinians in education system. First of all, the Israeli government endeavors to Judaize the education system legally both in practice and administrative ways. Secondly, “the racial policy of the occupation has prevented around 10,000 students in Jerusalem from pursuing their studies, out of 93,000 students attending schools in eastern Jerusalem” (Al-Deen, 2017, p. 344). Hence many students could not attend to the schools for secondary education (see Appendix 5). Thirdly, anything related to Nakba is omitted from the coursebooks. Fourthly, lack of classrooms in schools located in the eastern side of the land brings about overcrowded classes and it leads automatically to decrease in overall efficiency throughout the courses (Al-Deen, 2017, pp. 343-344) which is quite important considering it is not allowed to establish a fruitful environment to improve conditions regarding such issues taking lack of funding and other factors into the account (Ide & Tubi, 2019, p. 10). Above all, the researcher puts forward it is education that lies at the bottom of every remarkable development regardless of what it is about. Basically, making conditions bad regarding education and by doing so, preventing Palestinian students from having a good education, they actually put an obstacle on their way. In other words, the occupying authority prevents them from achieving possible developments that can be made possible through education. Insufficient conditions also bring about an increased rate of dropping out of school. The rate of it is enormous and it cannot be overlooked (Al-Deen, 2017, p. 345). Moreover, it can be said that attitudes of the officials in military checkpoints besides psychological oppression that the students have to bear in everyday life plays an important role negatively in this regard. It also

make the process much more complicated for the ones who can manage to keep attending to the schools by standing tall against all the obstacles caused by the Israeli government intentionally. The researcher underlines one more time that it is nothing but frustration policy serving their interest, because one may argue that it would be a rare achievement to attend schools by overcoming all these obstacles and what is even rarer would become successful regarding education under these conditions. All these obstacles also cause an insufficient environment in the courses and an uneducated society suffers from lack of vision for future, the cause, economy etc. in the long run considering the fact that knowledge is the absolute power. In short, it can be said that making things more complicated and difficult for the Palestinian youth regarding education is a method used by the Jews to keep the land secure under the Israeli sovereignty in the long term.

### **3.4. THE MOST LETHAL WEAPON IN ISRAELIS' ARSENAL: LANGUAGE**

There are many factors playing an important role regarding any countries' development and prosperity. However, it can be said that education is at the top of the list in this regard and its cruciality not just in terms of the aforementioned issues in the thesis, but also for the fate of Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular in the future can be neither ignored nor undermined. The researcher puts forward that it is the most important distinctive factor for anyone or any country aiming at advancing any field regardless of what it is. The role of education cannot be restricted with the aforementioned reasons and it cannot be considered a simple component. It is the most effective weapon in one's arsenal to direct things and impose anything on anyone. Hence, it can be said that it may be possibly turned into a lethal weapon depending on the way it is used. Moreover, there is a strong connection between education and language. Basically they are two sides of the same coin. Approaching from this perspective, it can be deduced that education can be used as a tool to impose a specific language on students. The education is not the only factor regarding what determines a language's usage frequency and possibly makes it necessary to talk. Current condition and the environment besides the other factors are quite significant within this context. For instance, there are many languages that are primarily spoken in the history of Bayt al-Maqdis. Arabic, Turkish, English, Latin and Greek are some of the languages used in

Bayt al-Maqdis in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Olsen, 2010, p. 32). However, the radical events occurring in the 20<sup>th</sup> century come with several changes including the language. Since the period marking the end of the Ottoman sovereignty and beginning of the British Mandate in Palestine, Hebrew steps up among the others and the importance of the environment and the conditions at that time cannot be ignored in this regard as it is highlighted above by the researcher.

There are many factors affecting domination of a language. Land and environment that language is spoken are important in this regard. For instance, “although in Israel Arabic is marginalized on public and private signs and Hebrew is the dominant language, in East Jerusalem, Arabic is the predominant language, English is secondary, and Hebrew is hardly present” (Olsen, 2010, p. 33) and the reverse can be said for the western part of the city. The chief reason bringing about the difference on the major language spoken between the two sides of the city is the population. The majority of the population in the eastern side of the city is the Arabs. Therefore, Hebrew is rarely spoken there whereas hearing someone speaking Arabic is something quite common. On the contrary, Hebrew is the dominant language in the western side of the city because of the same reason basically. The researcher clarifies it in a detailed way to connect the dots and one can easily comprehend the importance and cruciality of the Israelis’ aggressive policy on increasing the Jewish population in the land and the local Arab population’s being driven out of their homeland or expelled from the territories they settle as a tool serving their interest as it is scrutinized profoundly from different perspectives in the thesis as well. Approaching from this point of view, it can be clearly said that the aforementioned policy contributes to the Israelis interest regarding the language that is spoken dominantly as a quite important factor changing the identity of the region and strengthen the Israeli hegemony in the land dramatically. Apart from everything discussed so far, what is done by the Israeli soldiers after the Six-Day War is a clear example of it that cannot be ignored in this regard. The first thing Israeli soldiers did at the Buraq Wall was to destroy Arabic signs in 1967. In short, increasing the Jews population in the region and decreasing the Arab population simultaneously allow them to have the whip hand regarding the language that is spoken majorly, Hebrew in this case and having such an advantage is vitally important considering the importance of the language and the impacts of it as it will be highlighted in the following sections.

Language is one of the most important factors regarding constituting a society and it is one of the core elements that defines a nation. Moreover, the researcher stresses that there is a linear relation between language and power and it can be said that such a relation can be observed more obviously in the countries where conflicts and identity crisis take place severely. From this perspective, language can be considered a sign of domination and power. “Wherever more than one language or language variety exists together, their status in relation to one another is often asymmetric. In those cases, one will be perceived as superior, desirable, and necessary, whereas the other will be seen as inferior, undesirable, and extraneous”(Shannon, 1995, p. 176). Besides, in different definitions of power relations, “we notice the concepts of domination and suppression of the other” (Yousef, 2017, p. 1493).

What is argued is quite remarkable and should be noted, because the researcher puts forward not only evoking a sense of superiority, but also making it a reality are significant for the State of Israel considering having such an asset can be very beneficial regarding changing the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis and strengthen the Jewish hegemony in the land. Hence, language should be considered a valuable asset that can be used as a method serving the Israelis’ interest in Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular. Therefore, they have not missed the opportunity and made great efforts to get the most of it. For instance, although English is not the official language, it is written below Hebrew and above Arabic on the public signs in the region (Olsen, 2010, p. 33). The aforementioned case seems irrelevant or to be precise, it is related to the universality of English language. However, one, reading between the lines, can deduce much more than this easily. First and foremost, the researcher puts forward that writing it below Hebrew indicates Hebrew is the primary language in the region and being written Arabic lowermost, in other words below both Hebrew and English, shows Arabic is in an inferior position comparing with the other languages. Hence, it can be said that it is an attempt to increase the value and importance attached to Hebrew whereas what is done serves nothing but undermining Arabic. Furthermore, it can be argued that how important universality is. That is why English is written slightly larger in the signs, although it has nothing to do with Israel or Palestine except the fact that it is an universal language and there are so many tourists from all over the world visiting the Holy Land. Moreover, what is done by the Israelis is not done by coincidence. It can

be said that after the establishment of the State of Israel, they aim at Judaizing the region and language is one of the most vital elements in this regard. Hence, they have sought ways to turn Hebrew into the prior and superior language both practically and officially (Amara and Al-Rahman Mar'I, 2002, p. 4).

What is mentioned above is a quite significant issue and it deserves to be extended and scrutinized profoundly. Street signs or place names and the language used for it can be considered an expression of authority and power. Even the order of placement according to languages plays a key role in this sense and such implementations are crucial to reflect an ideology as a part of a bigger picture serving a deliberate interest within this context (Azaryahu, 2012, pp. 461-462). It can be also turned into a tool used for identity, ethnic identifications and historical claims (Gade, 2003, p. 431) which is one of the major reasons that the State of Israel attaches importance to this particular issue. In the same vein, it is doubtless that what is called banal nationalism is a remarkable factor as much as the aforementioned ones in this regard (Azaryahu, 2012, p. 462). Before proceeding any further, the researcher finds it noteworthy that language and its role, especially in post-colonial regions besides the nations that resistance and conflict take place, is an important component regarding self-assertion and reflecting one's culture and values. One may comprehend better by taking Catalans' struggle and insist on their language into the account. In addition, Palestinians' insist on speaking their own languages and resistance to Hebrew is another good example in this regard.

Order of languages in street signs signifies hierarchy in a sense in multinational countries as it mentioned profoundly in this section. It is one of the prior issues in Israelis' agenda and great effort is made by them in this regard. Changing the order of it and following an aggressive policy to make sure it happens is one of the first ones in this sense and Hebrew is placed at the top of the signs. It is also larger in comparison with English and Arabic (Azaryahu, 2012, pp.468-470). Considering it is a distinct indicator reflecting political, administrative and demographic changes, what is done by them is important. Trilingual street signs are affixed in a quite short period of time, yet the same cannot be said when it comes to Palestinians' demands regarding adding Arabic to the signs that is deficient from this aspect and after a long delay, the

occupying authority claims that it is majorly because of budgetary constraints. However, they even take it to another dimension considering the following incident taking place in 2002: The Mayor of the Upper Nazareth asks then Russian should be displayed on the signs as well by putting forward that there are Russians settling in the city (Azaryahu, 2012, p. 474). This particular action is nothing but an attempt to undermine the value of Arabic. The first street sign in the city is erected by the British in 1922 and it is them making Hebrew one of the official languages of the British Mandate in Palestine (Azaryahu, 2012, p. 466). Before elaborating it profoundly, the British' role in paving the way for what has been done by the Israelis cannot be ignored. First and foremost, what they do even in the times they settle the city is to twist people's mind and Sherif Hussein as their pawn is a concrete example of it as it will be discussed in the following sections of the thesis. In the same vein, what General Allenby stresses with his entry to the city in 1917 can be considered another attempt in this regard: "I make known to you that every building, monument, holy spot ... whatsoever form of the three religions, will be maintained and protected according to the existing customs and beliefs" (UN, 1930, p. 11). Basically, he assures that such beliefs and traditions will be protected and their rights will be preserved. In reality, however, it turns out the opposite and their actions serve completely different purposes considering the incidents following it during the mandate period and the establishment of Israel. Even one day before the British mandate ends, they help Zionists to make sure that a designated operation regarding occupation of particularly Central Jerusalem ends up in a successful way. Many Palestinians' leaving where they live by either force or fear is what follows it (Krystall, 1998, pp. 12-13). It can put forward that the actual inhabitants of the city are not only attacked physically, but also they expose psychological pressure as well considering the following incident: "Nearly every house was empty: set tables with plates of unfinished food indicated that the occupants had fled in ...haste, and fear" (Krystall, 1998, p. 12). What is chiefly aimed with that is to change the demography of the city in a way serving their interest and it is done deliberately by the British taking the following statics into the account: The number of Jews, that is equivalent to 12% of the total population of Palestine in 1922, makes up of 31% of the total population (Halawani, 2015, p. 26). Besides, considering the main theme of this particular section,

they also contribute to Judaize place names and street signs as it will be elaborated in this section.

Apart from what is stressed above, such attempts play a crucial role to serve what is called the ultimate goal of the Israelis by the researcher taking its importance to create a cultural heritage into the consideration. It is also significant to evoke a wrong image in people's mind as if it is a city that belongs to the Jews purely. Besides, its role in constituting a collective memory cannot be ignored. What is put forward by Pierre Nora is similar to this argument: He argues "social groups consciously construct and cultivate social and cultural memory and individual and collective identities (Masalha, 2015, p. 10). Within this context, it can be said that it is the British paving the way for it and they make great effort to establish a fruitful environment for that. Within this context, Palestine Exploration Fund established by the British makes a detail investigation and identifies more than 1150 place names allegedly related to Old Testament to use for naming sites and places (Masalha, 2015, p. 11). The reverse actions, however, are taken on the Palestinian side and they attempt to erase what reflects Palestinian culture and heritage (Masalha, 2015, p. 14). What will be highlighted in the following is some of what is done by the British Mandate and the State of Israel after its establishment regarding changing place names and street signs: Palestinian place names are replaced with the ones from religious books that are claimed to be related to Israel, its heritage and values so as to create an "authentic collective Zionist-Hebrew identity rooted in the land of the Bible" (Masalha, 2015, p. 16). One of the other methods employed by them is the fact Arabic is the transliteration of the new Hebrew place names instead of direct translation of actual Arabic names that are already associated with that particular places (Masalha, 2015, p. 22). What is aimed with such attempts by them is distinctly obvious considering the main theme of the thesis. Besides, their intention and its basing on fabricated facts are even expressed by the Prime Minister of the State of Israel in 1949: "It is essential to give a Hebrew name to these places. An ancient Hebrew name if there is one, and if not—a new one (Golan & Azaryahu, 2001, p. 186). Making changes and affixing streets signs or giving new names to places are not the only ones done by them within this context. Moreover, destruction of countless Palestinian villages and buildings is another method majorly to erase the traces of what is related to Palestine and its heritage and reconstruct a pure

Jewish city upon it (Masalha, 2015, p. 43). The researcher underlines that the consequences of it are twofold. It serves not only the fact that Israelis' interest to turn it into a city possessed by Jewish identity and characteristics besides strengthening their hegemony, but also plays a crucial role to wipe out what is left related to Palestinian history and culture. Basically, what reflects such values is destroyed and the actual history is erased and retold in a sense (Masalha, 2015, p. 30).

In addition to the role of language in terms of power relations, its impact can be seen in education system. Language and culture teaching are remarkable indicators reflecting the power relations (Olsen, 2010, p. 33). The significance and the effects of environment and the current situation, basically all sort of internal and external factors play a role in language usage and its frequency. A well designed study conducted by Kristen Olsen and Holly Olsen worths scrutinizing in this regard. They argue spoken language and its frequency, one's attitude and even both linguistic and personal identity are influenced by current, social, political and ethnic conflicts. In other words, it is shaped by the environment as the researcher defines. Within this context, what is asked the participants to do is to track the language usage. In addition, they are to make a note of locations and reasons for "secondary language-switching" (Olsen, 2010, p. 32). The restrictions and barriers politically, socially and culturally, that make the life much difficult for the Palestinians in general and young local students in particular within this context, make using several languages to express themselves and cope with the everyday problems necessary for them. Exploring ethnolinguistic identity and the relation between language and other external factors besides its reflection in the society are exactly what they want to find out by conducting such a study.

Students in the eastern part of the city are taught three languages, namely Arabic, Hebrew and English and the study "examines the reasons and location of 10th-grade female students' language-switching on a daily basis, as well as the impact of language usage on their identities and their perceptions of language and society. Specifically, the particular study examines the following questions:

1. Where and why are students speaking secondary languages?
2. What are students' perceptions of Arabic, Hebrew, and English?

3. What do students think about language as it relates to identity and power?”  
(Olsen, 2010, p. 36).

The participants of the study are the female students from a private high school in Beit Hanina located in the eastern side of the city. It is the Palestinian curriculum followed and Arabic, Hebrew, English and French are the languages taught in the school. The way of the study works shortly is that two forms are given to the participants who are asked to fill out the forms for 7 days and they need to “record language-switching throughout the week, giving specific information regarding where and why they switched from their native language, Arabic, to another language”, English or Hebrew in this case (Olsen, 2010, pp. 37-38). After completing it, the participants are asked to answer some questions (see Appendix 1) reflecting their perceptions on the language they use as it is mentioned above.

62 out of 77 students complete it thoroughly and first of all, it is revealed that English is the most common secondary language used in every category except “commercial-entertainment” and “checkpoints” that Hebrew is at top of the list in this regard. Before mentioning the details and the other outcomes of the study, the researcher finds suitable to stress that the major language used in their everyday life is Arabic and the researcher comes to the conclusion that if Palestinian society manages to gain economic and social freedom, then the identity can be preserved besides the culture and the traditions. However, the more interaction with the Israeli Jews happens, the more possibility for the risk of a smooth passage to their culture and adaptation increases in this sense. By the way, it should be noted that what the researcher means by that, it does not stand for a completely isolated life separating themselves from the rest of the world. What is referred within this context is to retain the power of free will regarding economic and social conditions such as working.

Secondly, the study shows that participants generally switch to Hebrew when a secondary language use is a must in commercial and entertainment locations and Hebrew is used for 55 times whereas English is used 18 times in such areas. Furthermore, the following evident is quite important and it is that a sense of requirement in use of Hebrew is observed. Most of the students write down as “I had to speak” (Olsen, 2010, p.38). First thing coming to the researcher’s mind while reading it

is necessity and he puts forward that necessity is the KEYWORD. The Israeli Jews make the use of Hebrew necessary. They have followed different methods to achieve it and by doing so, they turn it into a must and as a result of it, Hebrew is to be spoken one way or another. Considering the role of language regarding shaping both the past and the future of a society, anything done to enhance the use of Hebrew not only in particular areas, but all over the region is nothing but an attempt to Judaize the region from a different aspect. The same cannot be argued regarding English, the students speak English generally, just because they find it fancy to talk or because of social reasons like talking friends etc. That is why, it is reported that it is spoken 126 times whereas it is 7 times for Hebrew (Olsen, 2010, p. 40). It is significant, because it proves that the use of Hebrew is due to necessity, rather than any other factor.

Thirdly, “for services, such as medical and dental, we anticipated that Hebrew would be the most commonly used secondary language because it is the dominant language of the region and in commercial areas in Jerusalem” (Olsen, 2010, p. 40). Moreover, another commonplace that Hebrew has to be spoken is checkpoints. It is reported that the only spoken language in these cases is exclusively Hebrew and the major reason the students have to switch to Hebrew is the problems showing up between them and the soldiers who are in charge there. The incidents are reported as the following:

\* “the soldier refused to let me pass...” (Olsen, 2010, p. 40).

It is obvious that there are not any positive statements regarding Hebrew and this is an experience that not only the students, but also majority of the society has to face and endure in their everyday life unfortunately. Their approach to Hebrew is far from being positive as it can be observed in the following example:

\* “I hate this language, but i should speak it, it’s not optional.”

In addition, the necessity of speaking Hebrew is considered an example of “linguistic hegemony in this region because the majority language group is controlling the language used by the minority language group” (Olsen, 2010, p. 40). Approaching from a different perspective, it can be put forward it is the language majorly spoken by the occupiers, their enemy in a sense and it is highly possible that it brings about such a

hatred about Hebrew considering it is the “language of their enemy”, a concept referred to by Aneta Pavlenko. What is written in the forms by the participants clearly shows that:

\* “It’s not a nice language to talk+it’s my enemy lang” (Olsen, 2010, p. 41).

Taking the students’ feelings towards Israel in general and Hebrew in particular into the consideration, it can be clearly deduced that they shape linguistic value by connecting the language with their enemy majorly because of what has been going on in the region for years. Besides, the researcher puts forward that the importance attached to a language, in other words, its linguistic value is affected by many factors. Hence, it cannot be considered separately from both external and internal factors having an impact on it. Basically, the researcher puts forward that language and its value are shaped by political, economic and social conditions and conflicts. It is a reflection of it and it can be considered an extension of identity as well. In other words, “one’s perception of a language can be both helpful and harmful. Depending on the contexts, certain languages can remain emotionally neutral or positive” (Olsen, 2010, p. 35). However, it should be noted that such values that are related to a language is complicated, for languages are generally “accompanied by ambivalent and contradictory feelings, positive in some situations, and negative in others” (Pavlenko, 2005, p. 215).

Their attitude towards Arabic can be considered a crosscheck in a sense of what is proposed by the researcher. What they write in the reports regarding Arabic is positive unexceptionally because of the national and religious reasons majorly. Besides, it can be said the fact, that people tend to place a high value on their native language naturally, plays an important role within this context. However, the researcher underlines the key point here that should not be ignored is that why does Palestinian society have to speak a language that they do not even want to? This is the question having to be answered and if the problem is solved once and for all, it will be vitally beneficial for both Palestinian society and Palestine in the long run more than one can imagine, because when it is solved, it means there is a huge advance for Palestine society economically and politically. It also means that Palestine gains power and the prosperity of the Palestinian society increases. One may be confused or wonder what makes it so important and crucial within this context. The researcher prefers induction

method by going step by step and it allows the reader to comprehend the issue thoroughly. First and foremost, what should be elaborated is the answer of the aforementioned question that is related to the factors leading them to speak Hebrew although they are not happy with it. The education system in the region makes it an obligation. The policies followed and the measures taken by the State of Israel bring about it as well. For instance, not only students as it is discussed within this context, but also anyone else who has to pass the checkpoints have to speak Hebrew because of the attitudes of the ones who are in charge there making the things difficult for them most of the time. People, who have to work where Israeli population is intensified or with them, have to speak Hebrew to communicate with them or express themselves at least. The same scenario can be observed in medical sector as well. Speaking Hebrew to express himself/herself is a must for a Palestinian going to a hospital in the western side of the city. The examples can be multiplied easily. However, the point is they have to speak it, because circumstances demand it in short. Basically, they have to go to a hospital in the western side of the city because of the better facilities provided there. They have to express themselves in the checkpoints so that they can pass. Examples can be multiplied in this regard. However, what is important is the fact that it happens majorly because Palestine society falls behind in many issues comparing to the Israelis and they are the upper hand in the region. There are numerous internal and external factors bringing about it, the occupation itself in addition to the atrocity and oppression that they have had to face with for years is more than enough to cause such a consequence. However, this is another topic that should be put aside within context and discussed afterwards. In short, these are the major elements forcing them to speak Hebrew in the region. After elaborating it in a detailed way, the researcher finds suitable to move to the second phase so that one can comprehend the cruciality of solving the issue through and through. Considering the factors turning speaking Hebrew in the region into a must in many occasions, solving the problem means they can see the light at the end of the tunnel. It means they have made great improvements and the balance of power in the region has changed and they are powerful economically, politically and socially enough to preserve their values including language. Approaching from this point of view, one can clearly see how important language is and its role indicating

power relations in the land and because of the same reason solving the problem is crucially important for the sake of Palestine and Bayt al-Maqdis.

Moreover, there is a strong relation between identity and language. Before elaborating the cruciality of language regarding both the Israelis' interest in the occupied region and the fate of Palestinians, the researcher finds suitable to touch upon a few remarkable points related to the connection between language and identity so that what is discussed in this section of the thesis can be comprehended thoroughly by the reader. First of all, language is one of the most prominent factors regarding shaping one's identity and character. Besides, language, culture and national history are the core values to constitute a nation (Kuzio, 2002, p. 250). What is argued by Pavlenko worths highlighting: "The languages we speak or refuse [to speak] have a lot to do with who we are" (Pavlenko, 2005, p. 223). It is argued by the researcher as well. Approaching from a linguistic perspective, it can be said that there is a close connection between language and national, ethnic and racial identities. Besides, language cannot be considered separately from the aforementioned factors. A language that is spoken affects one's identity, culture and tradition. There is a strong relation between language and culture as well. That is why, most of the language departments in universities prefers to teach language and culture at the same time. The researcher himself experiences it twice both in English Language and Literature and American Culture and Literature. What is taught is not merely language. English culture, tradition, values and history are taught as well.

The same scenario is seen in American Culture and Literature considering they are different undergraduate departments. The situation is not different in primary and secondary schools as well. The researcher prefers not to elaborate it due to the fact that it is scrutinized in a detailed way regarding the role of education and its cruciality in terms of changing the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis and imposing their own culture and tradition on the Palestinian youth in the related section of the thesis. However, one, recalling what is discussed there, can easily argue that language, culture and identity are intertwined. It is also argued that the coursebooks used in both Palestinian and Israeli education systems and curriculums "reflect the conflict in which they are both engaged, and are also part of a wider societal mechanism to ensure that the conflict becomes part

of the development of children's identities" (Adwan & Firer, 2002, p. 1). Moreover, the researcher puts forward the coexistence between language and the aforementioned factors are not merely peculiar to education. Actually, it can be seen in everyday life, yet people are not aware of it or just do not ponder. It can be observed even in trifle things. For instance, the idioms in a language reflect its culture. English TV series, news or Hebrew, Arabic ones within this context can be considered a mirror reflecting the values, culture and even identity of a nation, because such components come together and constitute an identity eventually and people learn more about the culture, values or the history of a nation indirectly by speaking a specific language.

The importance attached to a language and its function depend on conditions and environment as well. "...what functions well in one such unit may suddenly cease to function or lose parts of its functions in another such unit" (Blommaert, 2005, p. 69). Moreover, linguistic value and its validity are shaped by the environment (Bilaniuk, 2003, p. 64). For instance, Turkish has not any value in an African country whereas it can be considered almost an official language in Azerbaijan. The same can be observed for other languages as well. Portuguese is spoken in Brazil, however one speaking Portuguese fluently cannot even communicate in any European country. Hence, the environment and conditions are remarkable regarding language and its linguistic value and validity.

It can be said that ethnolinguistic identity is another important term regarding the relation between language and identity. What is argued by Jan Blommaert, who is a Professor of Language, Culture and Globalization and Director of the Babylon Center at Tilburg University, is important in this regard: Ethnolinguistic identity can be defined as a "complex notion covering both linguistic and 'ethnic' features. An ethnolinguistic identity would emerge at the confluence of a sense of belonging to a language community and a sense of belonging to an 'ethnic' community. As for the latter, language usually features among the core criteria for defining ethnicity" (Blommaert, 2005, p. 214). Basically, language's role on identity cannot be overlooked in this sense. Blommaert is not the only linguist highlighting the intimate relation between language and identity, what is stressed by Pavlenko is similar to what he argues: "identities are constructed... through FL policies and practices which are influenced by shifting

national identity narratives (Pavlenko, 2003, p. 314). Considering what is mentioned above in addition to everything discussed in this section of the thesis, the close relation between language and identity that are inextricable from each other is a fact unequivocally and taking the importance attached to use of Hebrew in the region by the Israelis, its impact and the aforementioned policies and measures leading to it into the consideration, the researcher puts forward that language is considered an instrument serving their interest regarding changing the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis. What makes it so vital and crucial comparing to the other policies and tools that are employed by the State of Israel to get them closer to their ultimate goal in the region is the fact that the impacts of language unlike the most of the other tools used in this regard are permanent and irreversible. Language cannot be considered on its own. It affects culture and identity dramatically as it is probably comprehended by the reader, because it is underlined many times by the researcher. In addition, when people learn languages, “the perception of their culture, their society, and the world changes according to the importance given to those languages within their society. Groups of people express themselves and their social identities through language” (Olsen, 2010, p. 35). It is important regarding linguistic identity as well, because “language choice, code-switching and formal/discursive/rhetorical variation all play a part in linguistic identity” (Joseph, 2004, p. 166). The relation between language and identity besides culture can be observed explicitly in the following statements as well:

\* “Yes, it reflects the Arabs identity and history.”

\* “Our language represents our identity” (Olsen, 2010, pp. 42-47).

To sum up, the intimate relation between language and identity cannot be overlooked and it is crucial in many ways as it is elaborated above in a detailed way. It affects culture as well, to be precise, it affects everything largely, because speaking Hebrew or switching to it on some occasions may not mean anything to the speaker and does not bother him/her either. However, what starts with language continues with adaptation to the Jewish culture and custom. At the end of the day, after one generation, what has been struggling for years for the liberation and regaining what already belongs to Palestine besides everything done to preserve the culture, history and identity are going to be in vain. That is why, Palestinians try to resist using Hebrew as a tool to slow

down Judaization. One may think it is a dystopic future or it is exaggerated. The researcher, however, finds suitable to remind them of the current condition of colonial countries. Most of them are still under the impact of the colonized countries and speak their language. In addition, cricket that is a British origin sport is quite popular in India as a country affected severely by the British colonization. The same scenario can be observed in the Republic of Mali that was called French Soudan prior to 1960 as a French colony (Kömürcüoğlu, 2016, p. 43). Traces of colonization period are even seen in the country currently. The official language of the country is French and the ones who are not able to speak it have to face with several difficulties and it turns learning this particular language into a necessity in this regard. Besides, there are many French culture centers in the Republic of Mali and what is aimed with such centers is to strengthen the French hegemony in the country. Therefore, French is taught and several different cultural events are organized in these centers (Kömürcüoğlu, 2016, pp. 44-45). In short, language is quite important regarding identity, culture and traditions. Taking its cruciality into the consideration, it can be considered one of the most lethal weapons in the Israelis arsenal to change the identity of the whole occupied territories in Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular.

### **3.5. THE ROLE OF WATER IN ISRAELI POLICIES**

One of the most prominent policies that is applied by Israel is the one related to water. This one, however, is different from the rest, because what is done by the Israelis within this context is too cruel considering water is one of the most important substances on earth and it is essential for human life. However, Israel attempts to limit Palestinian's water usage as it will be elaborated in a detailed way in this section.

To begin with, water scarcity is a global issue and currently one third of the whole world population suffers from it. Besides, it is predicted that the number will be double in a recent future (Kutsal, 2009, p. 89). Water is a critical issue in the West Asia as well considering the general climate and characteristic of the region and because of the same reasons it can be considered a distinctive factor in economic growth. Approaching from this perspective and taking what is highlighted related to the cruciality of water, it can be argued following such a policy serves Israelis' interest well although it is against human rights.

Within this context, the role of water is not something showing up recently and its origin dates back to the 20th century. It has played a major role on the conflict between Israel and Palestine since 1917 as it can be seen explicitly in the following example: In 1919, two years after the Balfour Declaration, Chaim Weizmann wrote to British Prime Minister David Lloyd George: “The whole economic future of Palestine is dependent upon its water supply for irrigation and for electric power, and the water supply must mainly be derived from the slopes of Mount Hermon, from the headwaters of the Jordan and from the Litani river ... [We] consider it essential that the northern frontier of Palestine should include the valley of the Litani, for a distance of about 25 miles above the bend, and the western and southern slopes of Mount Hermon ...” (Frederiksen, 2003, p.71). Setting these boundaries for the future Jewish State was deliberate and they also tried to fit in with the Biblical narrative of the borders of the Promised Land. Considering the aforementioned action taken by the Israelis, the researcher argues the water issue is twofold. Water, as it is highlighted, is significant for Palestine’s economic growth. So, limiting the Palestinians’ water usage by taking over control of the water resources not only prevents them from development economically, but also contributes to Israelis’ economy and future. Having such an important and essential substance for life increases the prosperity of the Israeli society whereas the Palestinians, suffering the lack of it, find themselves in a predicament in this regard.

Israel reserves most part of water obtained for their own citizens due to the policies and regulations that are put into action. To achieve it, firstly, Israel hastens their deportation policy and forces approximately 750.000 Palestinian to leave the region. Secondly, the law enacted related to citizenship is noteworthy in this regard. Water service is exclusive to the Jews, not the others (Kutsal, 2009, p. 91). Basically, the service is not available for the Palestinian society and their water usage is limited in this sense. In addition, “the UN Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights in the POT states in his report of August 2005 that the Israeli settlers consume seven times per capita more than individual Palestinians” (Abdallah, 2007,p. 298.)

Approaching the issue from a different aspect which is generally overlooked or ignored, it is argued that what is done is against human rights (Kutsal, 2009, p. 97). Most of the actions taken by Israel towards Palestine are against law and human rights

though. However, what distinguishes this one from the others is the fact that water is essential for human beings. Without it, one cannot carry on his/her life and survive as a natural consequence of it. Hence, the researcher finds too cruel to follow such a method, just because it serves their interest. In addition, it can be considered a crime against humanity in a sense. Within this context, there are many crimes committed by Israel considering what is argued in the Article 7 of Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court:

“For the purpose of this Statute, "crime against humanity" means any of the following acts when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack:

- (d) Deportation or forcible transfer of population;
- (e) Imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law;
- (f) Torture;
- (h) Persecution against any identifiable group or collectivity on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender as defined in paragraph 3, or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law, in connection with any act referred to in this paragraph or any crime within the jurisdiction of the Court” (International Criminal Court, 2011, p. 3).

Taking the importance of water and its cruciality and necessity in terms of both Palestine’s development and Palestinian society into the consideration, the researcher puts forward that it is a problem that needs to be solved forthwith. Within this context, being followed a much more comprehensive a policy by the Palestinian authority that puts more emphasis on the water issue would be a good step for the beginning and it is doubtless that a systematic and well-thought-out plan, which is necessary, increases the possibility of getting concrete results in this regard (Kutsal, 2009, p. 96). Besides, drawing people’s attention and raising their awareness on this inhuman situation so that they are filled with the will to take a stand against it would be very beneficial in this

regard, because, at the end of the day, Palestine's struggle for equality and justice should be considered a humane goal (Said, 1978).

In short, water is turned into a tool by the Israelis that contributes to their development and serves their interest regarding economic growth whereas it limits advancing Palestine economically and makes the life difficult for them taking the cruciality of water in everyday life and difficulties of carrying on a life with limited consumption of water into the consideration. By doing so, they also force them to leave the Occupied Palestinian Territories in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular considering Bayt al-Maqdis' role and place regarding their interest and ultimate goal.

### **3.6. WALLS AS A SYMBOL OF SEGREGATION AND DISCRIMINATION**

Walls in the region stand for many things and play an important role because of several reasons. The walls are connected with national identity and power relations. It can be also said that the walls are the indicators separating one part of the city from another and there are many differences between two sides of the city in terms of economy, education, society, prosperity and the laws and implementations that are forced to the Palestinians by the state of Israel. Before coming to that and elaborate it in detailed, the researcher finds suitable to identify the different type of walls and the major roles of it so that what will be discussed in the following is comprehended by the reader in a better way.

It can be said that there is a strong relation between what wall stands for and ontological identity in this sense and it plays a major role establishing "us" and excluding "the others". What cannot be overlooked in this context is the cruciality of excluding the others regarding creating identities. What is argued by Anssi Paasi, who is a professor in University of Oulu and has many works on the socio-cultural construction of political borders and identities, is also important in this sense: He argues identities can be institutionalized by the powerful government by excluding the others through a border or a wall in this context. In other words, border construction is an expression of both physical and normative power relations (Passi, 1999, p. 75). Considering the role of walls in this regard, it can be said that the walls in Bayt al-Maqdis can be used by the Israelis as a tool serving their interest.

It is argued that walls have meanings more than one and the walls are multifunctional and multi-dimensional. Nicosia, Berlin and Jerusalem are the cities reflecting multifunctional and multi-dimensional characteristics of the walls. In addition, what is common among these cities is the physical barriers dividing them (Klein, 2005, p. 57). Peter Marcuse who is an Emeritus Professor of Urban Planning at Columbia University puts forward that there are 5 different types of walls. The first one is prison wall type of walls. It is physical, economic or social walls designed by aiming at preservation of a group's identity through segregation and isolation. The second one is barricade walls. It is used for a community's protection and solidarity and it does not have to be necessarily visible or physical walls. The language used in street signs or national-flag colors on sidewalks as a symbol or a way of expression of society's major identity serves the same purpose which is an issue that it is quite important. The third one is walls of separation. What is aimed by that is the expression of domination and force. The fourth one is sheltering walls. It can be used to protect different types of things from privileges to wealth. The walls limit the access from the outside to the sheltered area, yet it provides movement freely from inside to outside and the last one castle walls of domination such as presidential offices or homes expressing social, economic and political superiority (Marcuse, 1995). However, it is hard to examine Bayt al-Maqdis under one of these types because of the following reasons: First, what is suggested by Marcuse is the ideal type of walls describing a static situation that lacks a dynamic dimension. Secondly, according to Jews' perspective being set boundaries one way or another through different tools serving the same purpose is quite important in terms of defining us and excluding the others considering Jerusalem is a divided city because of three elements characterizing any that type of city: "sovereignty quarrel legitimacy and conflict" (Kotek 1999, p. 228).

It can be said that walls symbolize many things and it has symbolic meanings as well. The researcher, within this context, puts forward that there are many invisible walls in Bayt al-Maqdis. The invisible walls separate the Jews from the Arab population regarding economy, history, culture, ethnic identity and even the way they live. All these differences segregate one society from another and because of all these aforementioned reasons, the researcher puts forward it is almost impossible to mention the existence of one absolute identity covering the whole society in the land. One, who

is from the eastern side of the city and goes to the western side of it, realizes he/she is different from the others, and vice versa. What is difficult in this regard is to destroy the wall of consciousness preserving and reflecting the collective identity.

Furthermore, it can be said that there is an identity crisis and dividedness in Bayt al-Maqdis. What majorly causes it is the Israelis aggressive policies. They aim at increasing the Israelis' standard of living and prosperity in every possible way whereas aiming at the exact opposite for the Arab inhabitants. Considering the Israelis are not willing to adapt to the Palestinians' traditions, culture and values, the Israelis want them or force them to adapt to circumstances and assimilate their society's norms and values voluntarily, although Jews do not have a single culture that they can get assimilated into. What they embrace as their culture comes from Europe besides the fact that foods, clothes and many other things that are presented as a part of Jewish culture and traditions are taken from Palestine. It can be said such attempts can be considered another method that many people are not aware of and is used by the State of Israel to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis. However, they claim what brings about it is the attitudes of the Palestinian society isolating themselves from the others. They claim the Palestinians are allowed to participate in the municipal elections taking place in Jerusalem, basically they offer them a chance to become a part of "their" society under their sovereignty unsurprisingly, yet they refuse it (Klein, 2005, p. 61). In addition, they also refuse the Israeli citizenship offered to them. It is another issue to discuss what is offered as citizenship that is deprived of the main characteristics of it considering citizenship is "a potential force of justice, equality, and national cohesion" (Bloemraad et al., 2008, p. 154). In short, from Zionist perspective, it is claimed that the opportunity of crossing the invisible walls separating one society from another is refused by the Palestinians and it is on them, not the other way around. The researcher, however, puts forward the fact is actually the opposite. Reading between the lines is significant in this regard and by doing so, one clearly realizes what they actually want is to keep them under the Israeli sovereignty and they want the Palestinians to assimilate voluntarily. The word choices indicating belonging such as the Israeli citizenship, their elections etc. prove what they aim is what is put forward above, rather than providing them an opportunity to cross the walls and step into "their" society as it is claimed by the Israeli Jews. Observing the attitudes of the local inhabitants within this context, the researcher

puts forward that what is done by them is nothing but an attempt to preserve their collective identity in addition to resisting against the occupiers in every possible way and refusing what they eventually lead them to become a part of the Israeli's society step by step. One may easily come up with this conclusion taking the importance attached to the nationalism and national values by the Palestinians into the consideration.

Another wall in the region is the wall segregating from the Jewish neighborhood to the Arab neighborhoods. Within this context, the wall symbolizes ethnic-national identity. By that symbolic wall, "they have created their own separate areas, and have built not only protective walls with fences and security guards, walls for protecting particular identity" (Klein, 2005, p. 61). This is why, Palestinians, unlike some Israeli Jews who buy properties in Muslim neighborhood as an attempt serving their ultimate interest, rarely cross the wall to live in a Jewish neighborhood. The researcher, however, finds suitable to underline one more time that it is not the Palestinian society isolating themselves and erecting walls metaphorically between themselves and the Jewish society, but it is a natural outcome of the ongoing situation and the dramatic events caused by the occupying authority. Furthermore, the researcher puts forward what it leads to such a situation is the Israelis and the policies and laws implemented by them in this regard. The symbolic and invisible walls that "until 2000 had been virtual" are turned into reality by the Israelis aiming at containing the Palestinians' space and imposing their hegemony (Klein, 2005, p. 64), yet they justify their actions by claiming it is a measure taken because of majorly the Palestinians' illegal actions such as erecting building in the area delineated by Israel without having the necessary permits in this regard. However, the researcher stresses that being confiscated the land, difficulty of having the necessary permits to construct a building legally in addition to the costs of it, the green zone project restricting the areas dramatically where the Palestinians can settle are not mentioned within this context. The only thing expressed loudly by different tools is the perspective serving them to justify their actions. In short, the State of Israel forces Palestinians to take an action by the aggressive policies and the implementations charged on them. Afterwards, the Israelis use what they have forced them to do as an excuse that they are left with no option but to implement a specific measure in this regard. Furthermore, they also claim the following incidents showing up since 1990 as

excuses leading them to take the necessary measures such as limiting access to some areas of the city and erecting physical walls: Being elected Ehud Olmert as major is the first one in this regard. The second is “the negotiations over Jerusalem’s permanent status which were to have been concluded, according to the Oslo accords, in mid-1999, and which in fact continued throughout 2000. A third factor has been the al-Aqsa Intifada. Fourth, there has been a lack of Palestinian leadership and a decline in the authority of Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem since mid-2001. Finally, Israel has, since 2002, acted unilaterally to build physical walls within the annexed territory” (Klein, 2005, p. 65). However, as it is highlighted above, these are nothing but excuses to justify their actions.

It can be said that some conditions make the walls less visible and more permeable. Social and economic facilities and resources are important in this regard. For instance, a Palestinian citizen who does not want to contact or keep herself/himself away from the others, the Jews in this case, has to cross the line when it comes to a medical issue (Klein 2005, p. 64). The same can be observed regarding working. The necessity of working, even if the workplace is located in where Jews are generally populate such as western side of the city, lowers these walls even if it is for a temporary time, because at the end of the day, the employee returns his/her own neighborhood where their traditions, culture and values are secured and reflected. Within this context, the researcher puts forward that it can be said that the walls segregating from the Jewish neighborhood to the Arab neighborhoods are protective walls in terms of identity, culture and values. Above all, a relatively recent incident takes discrimination to completely another level. “The Knesset in 2018 passed a law with constitutional status affirming Israel as the “nation-state of the Jewish people,” declaring that within that territory, the right to self-determination “is unique to the Jewish people,” and establishing “Jewish settlement” as a national value” (Human Rights Watch, 2021, pp. 6-7). This is quite primitive idea that is far from secularism considering religions and races are peculiar to human beings, not to states. In the same vain, what is told by Prime Minister Netanyahu is parallel to this idea: “Israel is not a state of all its citizens,” but rather “the nation-state of the Jewish people and only them” (Human Rights Watch, 2021, p. 18). This particular incident is nothing but a sheer expression of their ultimate

goal and it clearly shows that they will go to any lengths to make sure they materialize what they aim in this regard.

Social distance between the Jews and Arab societies is another factor regarding erecting invisible walls in the land and the attitudes of the Jews towards the Palestinians and vice versa are significant on this subject. The incidents occurring throughout the second Intifada clearly prove it: People's unwillingness to set foot in where interaction with "the others" may occur such as restaurants and cafes is an example of it. The same reluctance is observed when a taxi driver from the western side of the city refuses to take a passenger to the eastern side of it except some specific locations like the American Colony Hotel (Klein, 2005, p. 66). Such incidents cause the walls to be raised higher symbolically and clearly show how divided the city is, not just in terms of demographically, but also socially. Furthermore, the researcher argues that the incidents mentioned above are significant, because it reflects the mind set of people from different societies, yet living in the same land. Hence, it is almost impossible to destroy the walls both physically and mentally. In addition, the events throughout the Intifada years brings about a series of measures by the state of Israel or one may argue that it is used as an excuse considering what the measures are and what it serves for. Roadblocks, police checks and checkpoints are some of them and such measures and the current environment in that time make things difficult for the Palestinian having to work in the western side of the city. Economic recession and the increase in rate of unemployment are other developments taking place throughout the Intifada and having a negative impact on the Palestinian society. Taking the measures and its consequences affecting the Palestinians dramatically into the consideration, one may clearly come up with the fact that what happened in those years is nothing but an excuse that is used by the State of Israel to put into action such regulations serving their interest.

In addition to everything discussed related to the walls and the outcomes of erecting such walls, what the Israelis aim by that is to assure Israeli domination and destroy metropolitan functions in the eastern side of the city (Klein, 2005, p.71). The construction of it also "epitomises this oppression, strengthens the occupation, and degrades the environment" (Abdallah & Swaileh, 2011, p. 554). In short, both physical and invisible walls divide the city into two and clearly show how dissimilar one side

from another besides the unfairness caused by State of Israel. Within this context, the researcher finds suitable to underline a major and highly possible outcome of such policies and regulations implemented by the Israelis. What they intend to achieve by dividing the city by erecting walls and putting into action such regulations and laws serving the same goal and forcing the Palestinians to carry on an isolated life in a way is to weaken the eastern side of the city economically, politically and socially. Hence, the researcher comes to conclusion that such regulations and policies can be considered the tools serving the Israelis' interest.

### **3.7. ISRAELI POLICIES ON HOLY PLACES AND SITES**

There are many cities having several religious and historical sites in the world. However, it can be clearly said that the Holy Land is at top of the list in this regard. It hosts three major religions, namely Islam, Christianity and Judaism and it is the land where numerous significant religious and historical sites are located and it is an unarguable fact that it is most complex one in this sense. Hence, the importance attached to such religious and historical sites by not only the Palestinian society, but also the Jews and anyone else who believes in one of the aforementioned monotheistic religions turns such sites into prior targets that can be very beneficial in terms of serving one's interest. Therefore, the researcher puts forward that transforming such sites into sites that are exclusive to the Jews and evoking a sense that what makes a site sacred are majorly Jewish relicts, facts or events related to Jews is one of the prominent methods to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis. As it is highlighted by Professor Doron Bar specializing in cultural-historical geography and national sacred sites in the history of Palestine and the State of Israel, an incident occurring in the recent past clearly shows it: The site of David's Tomb in the Holy Land was vandalized in 2013 and what is deliberately smashed is the ceramic tiles covering the majority of the walls of the sacred site and dating back to the 17th century. Considering the ceramic tiles reflect Muslim traditions and culture, it is argued that what is aimed by that is to destroy Muslim remnants in the site and wipe out Muslim ties regarding the holy site in a sense (Bar, 2017, p. 68). Moreover, it can be said that the policies and methods employed by the State of Israel within this context are not something put into action recently and their struggle in this sense dates back to 1940s. What has been done by the Israelis in this

regard is to expropriate Muslim holy places and turning such sites into active Jewish religious sites as it will be scrutinized in a detailed way.

The researcher frequently underlines the fact that every policy followed, every regulation put into action is closely intertwined. In other words, it is connected with each other in many ways and the following event clearly shows that: “The flight and expulsion of the Arab population from the territory of the State of Israel created a situation in which many Muslim holy places were left without an Islamic community to visit them. This made it very easy to institute Jewish ritual practices in some of them.” (Bar, 2017, p. 69). What is referred here is The Absentees’ Property Law that evokes a sense that is used as a main instrument by the Israelis to take possession of the land belonging to the Palestinians originally. However, in this case, one may easily realize it is used for a completely different purpose. That is why the researcher puts forward that these are the cogs in the wheel that serves a greater purpose. Basically, one regulation or policy followed by them comes with multiple outcomes that serve the Israelis interest one way or another and it impacts the Palestinian society economically, politically or socially in negative ways without exception.

The events taking place during the conflict times from 1948 to 1967 and unpleasant developments as consequences of it affect Palestine dramatically and the expulsion of the Palestinians and immigration of thousands of Jews to the occupied territories are one of them in this sense. The immigrants settling in the newly founded state are able to access the holy sites that are near their settlements and were used to visit by the Muslim population considering its Muslim aspect and the importance attached to such sites having Muslim roots. The Israelis, however, manage to adopt such sites and practice Jewish rituals easily taking their convenience to access such sites and lack of Muslim population visiting the sites, graves frequently because of their expulsion and other internal and external factors making it impossible one way or another into the consideration. Tomb of Rabban Gamliel in Yavneh, the Tomb of Benjamin (Nabi Yemin) located near Kfar Sava and the Tomb of Judah in Yehud are some of them in this regard (Bar, 2017, p. 69). Within this context, the researcher underlines that the cruciality of population and being overcrowded in the region should not be ignored, because it plays a vital role on this subject in addition to the fact that the

expulsion of Muslim population or their being driven out from their own homeland, that brings about the lack of Muslim population in the region, pave the way for them in this regard.

Shmuel Zangwill Kahana who is a director-general in Ministry of Religion is an important figure in this regard. He seeks alternative ways to expropriate Muslim sacred sites, buildings and graves and transform them into Jewish sites eventually and possess a Jewish identity in this sense. He also finds different ways to justify what they have done on this subject by employing different tools (Bar, 2017, p. 73)

The researcher finds suitable to touch upon another fact that is related to the issue which is generally ignored or unnoticed by majority of people and it is the fact that the State of Israel does not respect the other religions and welcome people's religious practices in holy sites that are associated with other monotheistic religions besides Judaism. In addition, the agenda followed by the State of Israel regarding sacred sites and their struggle to Judaize such sites stains reputation of the Holy Land, because what makes it holy is that it hosts three major religions and it has been ruled as it is taught in the holy books throughout the history. The researcher finds suitable to recall the following examples so that one can compare to what is supposed to be done by following the main principles of a holy book and what has been done by the State of Israel: The attitude of the Prophet Muhammad towards to non-Muslim during the events and wars on the road to the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis and what is done by Umar Ibn al-Khattab following the footsteps of the Prophet Muhammad are quite significant in this regard. Besides, the attitude of Salah al-Din and his approach to King Richard the Lionheart from the Crusaders is noteworthy within this context. Salah al-Din's letter to King Richard I 'the Lionheart' of England as a reply to his intention to conquer Bayt al-Maqdis, Umar's assurance and his way of approaching towards the non-Muslims in the region and the events following it are the good examples showing the Muslim perspective and approach to issues in the light of the Qur'an (A. El-Awaisi, 2007a, pp. 102-103).

It should be also noted that there were many Muslim shrines dedicated to biblical figures and practicing according to religious beliefs is not that much problematic prior to the Israeli sovereignty in the land. It can be observed in Galilee

“where holy places passed from one religion to another throughout history. This region had one of the highest concentrations of Jewish holy places in Palestine, although most were owned by the local Muslim population” (Bar, 2017, pp. 69-70). All these examples and incidents clearly show Bayt al-Maqdis was a multicultural and multi religious region where everyone could practice their religious rituals freely and tolerantly without any oppression. However, the things have changed with the occupation of Palestine. The attitudes of the State of Israel and the polices serving their interest regarding Judaizing such sites and transforming them into Jewish sites exclusively by attempting to wipe out the Muslim roots that are related to the sacred sites, buildings and graves contradict with the nature of the Holy Land and strains its reputation and rich history that is full of tolerance except some specific periods such as the Crusaders.

The occupation of Palestine and the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians in addition to the rising political tension affect the whole region in general and Palestine in particular economically, socially and politically in a radical way. Within this context, it can be argued that the religious values, sacred sites and status of such sites are affected dramatically and become a part of the Muslim-Jewish conflict and it comes with a series of changes regarding religious sites. For instance, sacred places in Palestine under the responsibility of the central government, the Israelis, is something new that is not seen in the period prior to 1948. They also adapt a series of regulations that even change and restrict whose can visit the sacred sites that are held by the Israelis (Bar, 2017, p. 70). Furthermore, they take it serious. Hence, a governmental body is assigned to deal with religious matters for the first time and what is majorly aimed at by the unit is to develop sacred Jewish sites although the same unit is responsible for the development and supervision of Muslim holy places mosques and graves.

Besides, after the establishment of Ministry of Religions, the Muslim and Druze Department was operated within it in August 1948. One of the prior actions of the department, that is chiefly responsible for coordinating all religious and juridical matters in addition to the preservation of significant sites and buildings including the ones having a religious value, is to make a list and identify the mosques, graves, basically all religious buildings and sites as an outcome of an extensive work.

Afterwards, “the ministry prepared a list of dozens of Muslim holy places and appointed a committee to check their condition. The ministry then began preservation and renovation work in some of these places which later led to their development as Jewish holy sites” (Bar, 2017, p. 71). It should be noted that what is argued by the author is based on the Jewish sources and it clearly shows that even Jewish sources argues its validity and what is done by the Israelis within this context. Moreover, two units in the same department, yet having completely different goals, contradict with each other regarding securing their interest and actions contributing to the development of religious building and places having religious value for them. The Muslim and Druze Department supposedly endeavours to protect the interest related to the Muslim holy places in the region whereas the rest of the officers and the bureaucrats working in the same ministry are encouraged to expropriate and seek ways to Judaize the sacred sites and graves. Within this context, it can be said that the Absentees’ Property Law plays an important role, because it allows them to “mandate to transfer most of the Muslim waqf’s properties in Israel to the Custodian of Absentees’ Property” (Bar, 2017, p. 71). However, after a period time, majorly due to protest of Muslim believers that cannot remain silent the unfairness brought about by the State of Israel, the regulations related to the responsibility of many waqf’s properties are revised in 1952 and eventually the properties including mosques, cemeteries and Muslim holy sites are monitored by the Muslim and Druze Department. However, it does not prevent the Israelis from finding alternative ways serving what they intend to achieve from the very beginning. Hence, the Society for the Promotion of the Holy Places is established (Bar, 2017, p. 71). Even if it is not officially stated, it can be argued that the main goal is to take over of the control of the Muslim holy places located in Palestine and ensure that it is kept that way.

Taking everything discussed into the consideration, the researcher comes to the conclusion that what has been done by Ministry of Religions with the direction of the Israeli government and the efforts made on this subject should be considered a part of a broader process serving a greater purpose. The Israeli Jews want to be exclusive every holy sites regardless of the fact that it is associated with them or not. To be precise, they aim at strengthening their sovereignty in the region by evoking a sense the land

including the history and the religious values that are associated with the Holy Land belongs to the Israelis.

David's tomb is a part of the Israelis' well thought-out plan as well. The Israelis make great effort to make sure it is considered a Jewish shrine and evoke the same sense in majority of people's mind. By doing so, wiping out Muslim roots and past related to it is the secondary objective in this regard and the efforts and struggles of Muslim officials, mainly directed by Hirschberg to maintain its religious status are in vein unfortunately (Bar, 2017, p. 71). The researcher highlights frequently that most of the issues discussed in the thesis are connected to each other and cannot be considered separately in terms of both external and internal factors leading to it and one can easily comprehend what the researcher puts forward by taking the following incident into the consideration: An agreement is signed by the Muslim and Druze Department through the end of 1951. With the agreement, David's Tomb is leased to the Society for the Promotion of Holy Places for three years with an option to extend it for another twenty five years. They have paid the annual rent to the department until it is cancelled in the early years of 1970s (Bar, 2017, p. 71). Taking the purpose of establishment of the Society for the Promotion of Holy Places and what they do in this regard into the consideration, it can be said that the agreement is nothing but a cover serving their interest. Besides, the researcher finds suitable to read between the lines and comes up with a couple of deduction within this context. First of all, it is doubtless that the Muslim and Druze Department is well aware the purpose and intentions of Ministry of Religion in general and the Society for the Promotion of Holy Places in particular. However, what leads them to such an agreement is the economic conditions. There may be other external and internal factors besides the possible impact of politics or the pressure that may be put on the Muslim and Druze Department. Yet, it does not make a difference within this context, because all come to the same thing eventually and the researcher puts forward that it is nothing but the fact that the Palestinians hands are tied economically, politically, socially and even in terms of resources and facilities that they have and it brings about undesirable conditions like the one mentioned above.

The researcher also puts forward that for the State of Israel, the image in people's mind is equally crucial as much as changing the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis by

implementing different methods and finding different ways to achieve this ultimate goal is, because they are aware the fact that raising a sense of reality, twisting people's mind and make them believe what is presented by the Israelis, chiefly fabricated facts or things serving their interest, and by doing so, justifying what they do as well are vitally important to accomplish their ultimate goal. Once they achieve it thoroughly and win the majority of people over, not just the local ones, but from the worldwide, it means that they have already made significant progress on their ultimate goal, because societies and people's role regarding such worldwide issues cannot be ignored and having their support and numerous advantages coming with that are vitally important, especially for a controversial issue such as the one between the State of Israel and Palestine. Within this context, the Israeli government seeks ways to strengthen such ties and take advantage of every possible thing to get them one step closer what has been aimed by them from the day one. What they intend to do by raising a sense that it is a Jewish site over a Muslim site and making up facts and relics to make people believe is one of them. Jacob Pinkerfield, who is an archeologist hired to renovate David's Tomb to repair the possible damage from the war, takes advantage of it to undertake an archeological study of the room that David's Tomb is situated and during this process, "Pinkerfield uncovered an apse-like recess behind the tombstone. This niche led him to conclude that the building housing David's Tomb was in fact an ancient synagogue from the Second Temple (early Roman) period ... The ministry also appointed an architect, Meir Ben-Uri, to plan and design the site. In late 1951, as part of the measures to Judaize the site, Ben-Uri painted the wall above the tombstone and added a large inscription: 'David, King of Israel, alive and existing'. He also painted the window bars in the room gold (a symbol of the Davidic dynasty) instead of green (the colour preferred by Muslims)" (Bar, 2017, pp. 73-74). Considering everything discussed related to David's Tomb and the struggles of Israel to Judaize it by combining different methods and actions serving the same purpose eventually, one can easily come up with the fact that the Israeli government put forth a great deal of effort to take benefit of everything and every step that get them closer to their ultimate goal. Furthermore, what is done by them in this regard is not exclusive to David's Tomb and the same story is seen for another site having religious value. Elijah's Cave and what is done by the Israelis to transform it into a Jewish site after 1948 is similar to the case in David's

Tomb, because the Cave that Jewish and Christians pilgrims were allowed to pray freely was a Muslim endowment controlled by the family of Hajj Ibrahim before 1948 and it can be said that Elijah's Cave is just another site impacted from the demographic changes occurred aftermath (Bar, 2017, p. 74).

There are many methods employed by the Israelis to Judaize sacred places and justify what they do in this regard and it can be said that, as it is highlighted earlier as well, twisting people's mind and evoking a sense of reality that is actually fabricated by the Israeli Jews and misleading people eventually are some of them within this context. For instance, they claim that many Muslim holy places are originally Jewish and basically the Muslims transform Jewish holy sites and sanctities into Muslim sacred sites and erase its Jewish roots as well. Furthermore, they spread the fabricated facts by academicians and scholars so that it raises a sense of reality (Aral, 2019, p. 27). In this case, it is a Jewish historian. Professor Zev Vilnay, who is a an Israeli geographer and historian claims that "sacred tombstones that were known in Jewish life in the Middle Ages, and upon which many pilgrims prostrated themselves, were swallowed up and assimilated into the Arab tradition, received Arabic names and were completely lost from Jewish tradition. Many of the graves were destroyed and disappeared without a trace, except in the writings of Jewish pilgrims in earlier generations." (Bar, 2017, p. 72). The incident clearly shows that the Israelis are in pursue of deceiving people by fabricated facts. Moreover, Judaizing the territories as well as the sacred places and graves, that is managed easily taking the local Arab population's being driven out of their homeland or expelled from the territories they settle into the consideration, plays a crucial role in this regard. The areas, whose population was primarily Arab prior to 1948 and seized by the Israeli government after the dramatic events taking place in 1948 is also significant regarding making the process easier for them. Within this context, they Judaize many sacred sites and graves. Being Judaized David's Tomb that was controlled by Dajani family as a Muslim endowment until 1948, Elijah's Cave that was a Muslim owned religious site prior to 1948 and some Jewish sacred and pilgrimage sites after the occupation of Palestine are some of them in this regard (Bar, 2017, p. 73). Twisting people's mind and undermining the value and importance attached to the sacred sites and graves in addition to seeking ways to erase the Muslim roots are quite significant factors on this subject. Within this context, what they attempt

to achieve is to raise a sense of reality, not reality itself. Media as one of the easiest way to spread any sort of things worldwide is an important tool that can be used to achieve what is aimed by the State of Israel. Media is used in “projecting an essentially false image of what it wants the world to believe, and then acting decisively to make that vision a reality” (Said, 2011, p. 57). Besides, tourism is another important tool serving the same purpose within this context. For instance, David’s Tomb is visited by thousands of tourists in general and Jewish pilgrims in particular and due to efforts of the Israeli government, they manage to evoke a sense as if it was Jewish holy sites exclusively or majorly in varying degrees from case to case. It is significantly important, because people think that such sites are exclusively Jewish and one may easily realize turning Bayt al-Maqdis into a Jewish region covered by Jewish identity, values and culture is priority for the Israel and what is just mentioned above is prominent regarding serving their interest. Moreover, it can be argued that Israeli government has made great effort and initiated several plans within this context. Shalem Plan is one of them. It aims at “reinforcing the Jewish connection to Jerusalem through archaeological excavations and tourism” (Shaveh, 2020). What they want to achieve by that, is not different from the aforementioned objective in this regard. Peace to Prosperity Plan is also important in this sense. There are many significant sites that are considered a part of this plan. Al-Buraq Wall, Haram al-Sharif, , the Mount of Olives, Gihon Spring, Mount Scopus, the Tomb of Absalom and Pool of Siloam are some of them (Shaveh, 2020). Besides, many of these particular sites are associated with Muslims as well. However, what has been done by the Israeli government aims at judaizing such sites. Al-Buraq Wall is a clear example of it considering the implementation of Israeli government: “Following 1967, Israel decided to solely permit Jewish prayer on site” (Shaveh, 2020). The course of history and noteworthy reports, however, prove the otherwise. The League of Nations Report in 1930 is quite significant in this sense. In the report, it is stressed that the wall is an essential measure regarding the interest of peace (UN, 1930, p. 3). It also underlined more than once that Muslims have the right on the wall over Jews as it will be scrutinized profoundly in this section. First of all, it is mentioned that “the wall was constituted Waqf by King Afdal” (UN, 1930, p. 10). In the same vein, what Colonel Symes expresses in his speech also signifies the same fact: “The site ... belonged to a Muslim Waqf” and “the Moslems

who owned the site” (UN, 1930, p. 18). Secondly, the British as the mandatory power also recognizes that the wall and the surrounding area of are Muslim property exclusively in November 1928 (UN, 1930, p. 19). It is also emphasized that Jews’ weeping in front of the wall is a result of Muslims’ tolerance and it does not give them any sort of right on the site. The commission firmly stresses that Jews cannot get any other privilege apart from paying such visits (UN, 1930, p. 19). What draws the researcher’s attention and must be highlighted is the fact that Jews’ actual interest by claiming seats around the wall for the old ones is unearthed and exposed in the report distinctly: “The aim of the Jewish agitation is not merely to obtain seats ... In reality, what we have to deal with here is a Zionistic movement ... In spite of all their statements to the contrary, the real aim of the Zionists is to obtain possession of the Haram-esh-Sherif” (UN, 1930, p. 20).

Finally, it is a well-known fact that al-Aqsa Mosque takes a crucial part in their agenda and is the eye of the storm. They employ numerous methods and policies to take over the control of the site thoroughly and make things much more difficult and frustrating for Muslims going there for prayer and ultimately to demolish the mosque and build the temple. They have been in pursuit of rebuilding and reviving the temple for a long period of time. Within this context, sample models are designed and the fund is set for the temple. The posters of it are even distributed to schools and universities (AbulQaraya, 2017, p. 124) over the site of al-Aqsa Mosque. Before proceeding any further, the researcher stresses the fact that it is nothing but an attempt to twist people’s mind and evoke an image that they have such a right on the site as if it is based on concrete proofs and facts. The following incident can be considered another example in this sense: “They call for guiding and translating for tourists and visitors that this is a Jewish place only” (AbulQaraya, 2017, p. 124). Such attempts are also expressed publicly by the Jews declaring that they will be doing their best to judaize the city for good (Halawani, 2015, p. 26). Basically, it can be said that they intend to build the temple on the ruins of al-Aqsa Mosque. Apart from such attempts, having full control of the site and following a policy that serves their interest are also critical whereas what is done by them within this context makes things difficult for Muslims regarding praying and having access to it freely. They control the gates around the mosque and it is the occupying authority deciding who can enter the mosque for praying and when they are

allowed for it. They even determine it according to age range. People below 50 years old are not allowed to enter the mosque one day whereas the ones above 40 years old have the access to it another day (AbulQaraya, 2017, pp. 121-122). Moreover, they determine the hours and days that either Jews or Muslims can enter and recently they allow Jewish rituals according to their religious beliefs. However, they take it to another level and abuse it considering they forbid Muslims to enter the mosque even in the Qadr night once (AbulQaraya, 2017, pp. 122-124), besides closing the mosque over a two week period in 2017 (K. El-Awaisi & Yavuz, 2020, p. 224). Apart from it, Jews attempt to associate many holy sites with themselves by employing numerous methods even if they do not have any sort of relation with such sites (Shaveh, 2020) as it is discussed in the thesis profoundly. The examples can be multiplied in this regard, however several incidents mentioned in this particular section are more than enough to comprehend the issue within this context.

In short, the State of Israel makes great effort to Judaize the sacred sites regardless of the fact that it has Jewish past and roots or it is originally a Muslim sacred place. To accomplish it through and through, they make the most of every possible action serving it and contributing to their efforts in this regard. In addition to the advantages they have economically and politically, they take benefit of the power they have regarding spreading the fabricated facts and misleading people. It also allows them to justify what they do and most importantly, it enables for them to raise a sense of reality that such sites, that are not associated with the Jews, or at least not as much as the Israelis claim, belong to the Jews and people not just the local ones, but from the worldwide tend to associate such sites with the Jews and their heritage. It should be noted that it is vitally important and it can be argued that evoking such an image in people's mind or a collective consciousness in general is much worse than being Judaized the sacred sites and graves itself as the researcher underlines frequently in the thesis, because what people think, especially on such controversial issues, matters and once they manage it, it can be said that more than half of what should be done to achieve their ultimate goals is already done and having such a power makes everything easier for them and allows them to justify every action in this regard without facing with any sort of sanction, resistance and negative reaction. Moreover, Jews immigrating from all over the world to the occupied territories play an important role in terms of adapting

and turning sacred sites into Jewish sites by taking advantage of new demographical changes and political reality. Besides, it can be argued that they play a significant role in terms of the creation of new pilgrimage destinations in former Muslim holy places located near their settlements and neighborhoods (Bar, 2017, p. 76). In addition, it is put forward that the Muslim and Druze Department in the ministry serves as a pipeline for transferring holy places to Jewish hands, although the officials in the department believe the following:

One of their main missions was to physically safeguard the Muslim holy places and the department's directors felt that the state entrusted them with these Muslim holy places and exerted considerable effort to protect these sites, at the same time they enabled the transfer of this former Muslim property into Jewish ownership. This was largely because the department was situated within the Ministry of Religions and departmental officials were unable to oppose their energetic and religiously motivated director Shmuel Zangwill Kahana who was committed to a religious-Zionist mission to Judaize these holy places. Consequently, places like David's Tomb and Elijah's Cave became national Jewish religious centres of utmost importance and part of the Jewish-Israeli narrative (Bar, 2017, p. 75).

Eventually, they attempt to get the most of it by employing different methods to Judaize the sacred sites and graves which get them automatically one step closer regarding achieving their ultimate goals and changing the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis and turning the occupied territories in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular into a region possessed by Jewish identity, culture and values under the Israeli hegemony.

### **3.8. THE ROLE OF EVENTS IN THE WEST ASIA AND NORTH AFRICA IN ISRAELI POLICIES**

There are many events changing the history of a country, yet some events change the history of a huge region dramatically and the outcomes of such events impact not only the countries involved, but also the ones in the region as well. Furthermore, it affects domestic and foreign policies of the other countries in the region. Countless minor and major events can be put forward as examples in this regard. However, the researcher finds suitable to scrutinize the Arab Spring in this sense, because it is quite comprehensive series of events and it is much more suitable than the

others considering the main theme of this section of the thesis and the outcomes of it play a major role in domestic and foreign policies of the State of Israel. In addition, the Arab Spring allows Israel to become the upper hand and the only regional power in the region, because possible countries to become a regional power weaken dramatically as a result of it which brings about Israel's having the free hand in the region considering there is not any country left that can object to what has been done by the Israelis including the policies and sanctions that are applied to the Palestinian society. Basically, the researcher puts forward that what has been happening in the region is quite important and there are many factors affecting the State of Israel's attitude towards Palestine in a sense and it can be said that the Arab Spring is one of them without doubt.

It can be said that the Arab Spring is one of the most significant events not only in the region it has occurred, but also in the worldwide considering its impact. The Arab Spring can be defined as a series of pro-democracy uprisings in the West Asia and North Africa including Tunisia, Syria, Libya, Morocco, Bahrain and Egypt. The starting point of it is that Mohamed Bouazizi who is a Tunisian street vendor set himself on fire on 17 December 2010 (Sarker, 2014, p. 46). His self-immolation sparked the uprisings turning into revolutions in the many countries. In this process, several dictators are overthrown, military coups are carried, thousands of people are killed and the countries get worse than they have had before the Arab Spring in political, economic and social ways due to numerous interferences that diverted these revolutions into another direction. Egypt is also one of the countries impacted dramatically by the series of events catalyzed with the Arab Spring which is a critical country regarding both the future of the region and being shaped the domestic and foreign policies of the State of Israel. The reasons bringing about the change of the regime are majorly the same compared with the other countries experiencing the Arab Spring. The researcher defines it as a call for freedom, yet it turns what is bad into worse unfortunately majorly due to many powers not wanting them to succeed.

The researcher finds quite beneficial to scrutinize and identify the strengths of Egypt and its role in the West Asia before identifying and discussing the countries that benefit from the Arab Spring and current situation in the region as a result of it so that what will be discussed within this context can be comprehended in a better way by the

reader. Egypt, before the Arab Spring, was a strong country in many ways and the major and the prominent candidate for being a regional power in where it is situated. It is argued that it is at the top of the list in terms of the possible countries that can lead the region considering the strengths of it (A. El-Awaisi, 2016, pp. 49-50). It can be also said that Egypt is quite important and powerful because the following facts: First and foremost, it is quite important geopolitically. Secondly, Egypt remains the largest demographic power in the Arab world. No other country in the region exceeds the Egyptian population. Thirdly, Nile River and the Suez Canal connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea through the Isthmus of Suez are quite significant. In addition, “The Suez Canal is an important transit route for oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) shipments traveling northbound from the Persian Gulf to Europe and to North America and for shipments traveling southbound from North Africa and from countries along the Mediterranean Sea to Asia. Fees collected from these two transit points are significant sources of revenue for the Egyptian government” (U.S Energy Information Administration, 2018, p. 1). Fourthly, Egypt has a rich history. Besides, Egypt is rich in oil, cotton and energy as it is highlighted in report of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). In the report, it is argued that “Egypt is the largest non-OPEC oil producer in Africa and the third-largest dry natural gas producer on the continent. The country also serves as a major transit route for oil shipped from the Persian Gulf to Europe and to the United States” (U.S Energy Information Administration, 2018, p. 1). In short, the researcher puts forward that Egypt has, actually had considering the current situation of Egypt as a country called a failed state, a crucial role for the prosperity and the future of the region because of mainly the aforementioned factors. Moreover, Alice Lyman Miller who is a lecturer in East Asian Studies in Stanford University currently and has worked once as an intelligence analyst for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) defines “a superpower is a country that has the capacity to project dominating power and influence anywhere in the world, and sometimes, in more than one region of the globe at a time, and so may plausibly attain the status of global hegemon” (Miller, 2006, p. 1). The researcher stresses Egypt fits the criteria suggested by Miller considering the aforementioned facts related to Egypt providing that the importance attached to Egypt and the Suez Canal and its significance in terms of the countries from all over the world turns Egypt into a country having an influence in the worldwide and the researcher also

puts forward that the elements related to the strengths of Egypt are also the elements turning Egypt into a threat and possible target for the countries having had interest in the West Asia for decades such as United States of America and Israel. In short, Egypt is crucially important considering what is mentioned above and its power and the possibility brought about by that power that Egypt can be the regional power in the West Asia which threatens both the State of Israel and its interest in the region. The researcher, aiming at being comprehended the events taking place in Egypt, the major reasons behind it and the current situation of Egypt by highlighting a couple of events that point out the importance of Egypt in different aspects, finds quite beneficial to scrutinize the current situation of Egypt in many ways to see what is left from what makes it powerful and whose benefits most from it.

The current situation of Egypt after several major and minor events and the changes having an impact in the country dramatically in many ways are worth elaborating considering the conclusion that will be drawn from it by the researcher and the significance of the current situation of Egypt in terms of interpreting and shedding light on the issues related to it. The report by United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is important in this regard. One of the most important outcomes of the report is the enormous decline of the gross oil export revenues in the Arab region between 2012 which is the following year of the Arab Spring and 2017. For Egypt, it is 12.8 billion of US dollars in 2012 whereas it is 6.4 billion of US dollars in 2017 which is a huge decline. For Arab region in total, the situation is much more dramatic than one may possibly predict. It is 865 billion of US dollars in 2012 whereas it is 420.7 billion of US dollars in 2017 for all countries in the Arab Region (UN ESCWA, 2016, p. 24) which is a huge strike to the economy of the Arab countries. The researcher easily comes to the conclusion that even the decrease on the revenue of the countries, Egypt within this context considering the main theme of this section of the thesis, has impacted its economy and it is easy to interpret and identify the countries that benefit most from the negative economic situations of the countries in the region. It is Israel benefits from it most, because of several reasons. Firstly, the researcher argues weakening Egypt in addition to Syria, which is the another country impacted by the Arab Spring enormously in a negative way, secures the current situation of Israel in the occupation of Bayt al-Maqdis and eliminates most of

the possible threats that they may have to face with regarding Bayt al-Maqdis, considering the importance of Egypt and Syria geopolitically and their going out of play in this sense strengthen the position of Israel in the West Asia as the upper hand. Therefore, the researcher argues Israel benefits from the negative impacts of the Arab Spring in the Arab countries in general and in Egypt in particular considering the facts mentioned in the report. Basically, it can be said that the Arab Spring was derailed to serve Israelis' interest in many aspects and the military coup in Egypt is also important in this regard. It is Israel benefiting from it and it can be said that Israel is behind the military coup besides the fact that "the coup was strongly in favour of Israel's interests" (Yegin, 2016, p. 414). Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty, Hamas and security of the Sinai Peninsula are some of the issues concerning Israelis and the military coup changed the direction of the wind in favour of Israelis in a sense regarding these issues (Yegin, 2016, p. 415). The State of Israel also aids Egypt and obviously Israelis "reacted in line with their strategic, security and economic motivations" (Yegin, 2016, p. 416). Basically, the researcher puts forward that the Arab Spring and the outcomes of it come to the same conclusion: It allows the State of Israel to become the regional power and secure their rank in the region taking most of the countries find themselves in a predicament economically, politically and socially into the account. Israelis' having the upper hand in the region as a consequences of it provides an environment that they can act in a way serving their interest including their attitude towards Palestine without facing any sort of objection and resistance considering many of the possible countries that can stand against and object to them within this context weaken dramatically after the Arab Spring.

Moreover, it can be said that the role of United States of America and their interest in the West Asia are crucial and America is the another major country alongside Israel taking advantage of the current condition of the countries in the region and the researcher puts forward that America and Israel are the main actors behind many events in the region including some series of events occurring after the Arab Spring and having a negative impact on the Arab countries in the region, basically the ones contradicting with Israel regarding their interest in the region. The researcher draws this conclusion by taking the following incidents into the consideration: The interests of America and Israel in the region, the high possibility of Egypt's being

regional power that contradicts with what is aimed by both Israel and America, turns Egypt into a threat having to be eliminated urgently, the historical and similar events reflecting the Americans way of dealing with the issues in the region with excuses that actually serve their interest such as invasion of Iraq and the documents proving what happens in the region with the Arab Spring is not a coincidence, but an outcome of a good designated plan. Basically, there is not any country that can stand against the State of Israel and what has been done by them, especially the occupation of Palestine within this context. Besides, the possible candidates to become the regional power in the West Asia and North Africa are either eliminated or weakened in one way or another. As a result of it there is not any powerful country left in the region which automatically brings about Israel's being the regional power and the upper hand in the region that can do whatsoever they want without facing with any sort of resistance as it is exemplified many times in the thesis. The outcomes of the Arab Spring are similar to what Iraq has had to experience once and it can be argued that Iraq is a failed state and Egypt is turned into a failed state as well following the failure of the Arab Spring. Unlike Egypt and Iraq that can be called the failed states unarguably, for Syria, that needs to be destroyed to secure the Israeli domination in Bayt al-Maqdis considering its cruciality geographically in general and for the sake of Bayt al-Maqdis in particular, it is argued that there is no state at all and Syria is under occupation of Americans, Russians and Iranians. Jordan is already out of question which is established by the British to protect the interest of Israel as it is highlighted in lectures by Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi. Speaking of which, the researcher clearly argues the British is another main actor and the source bringing about most of both internal and international disturbances in the West Asia and benefits from what has happened in the region recently. They have their own political agenda and it is British that laid the foundation of the establishment of Israel and caused the mess in Bayt al-Maqdis with their pawn, Sherif Hussein in the 20th century and the researcher puts forward that they may have involved in what happens in the region alongside America and Israel. In addition to the ones mentioned above, the researcher puts forward Saudi Arabia is out of game which is not a country threatening the position and the rank of both Israel and America in the region. In short, they either eliminate or weaken the countries that they may threaten their interest and the ones as the powerful candidates to become a regional power in the West Asia and by

doing so, they prevent the development of the region that may be catalyzed by the Muslim countries and the State of Israel left as the only powerful country that can be considered a regional power having the free hand in a sense.

To sum up, it can be said that the Arab Spring showing up as a movement for freedom and resistance against political repression, corruption and the lack of personal freedom in the region and spreading through the countries of North Africa and the West Asia has changed the region dramatically. Egypt that was considered a major candidate to become a regional power is now called a failed state economically, politically and socially and the researcher puts forward that Israel is the major country benefiting from it considering the current situation of Egypt that serves their interest and allows them to secure their domination in the region. It also gives them an opportunity to eliminate most of the possible threats that they may have to face with to secure their rank and place in the West Asia. It also important in terms of Bayt al-Maqdis considering the importance of Egypt and Syria geopolitically and their going out of play in this sense strengthen the position of Israel in the West Asia as the upper hand. In short, the Arab Spring as a movement for freedom was turned into a series of catastrophes for the countries such as Egypt, Syria and the others involved whereas the outcomes of it can be considered an absolute victory for the countries benefiting from it. Basically, Egypt's being a failed state serves the Israelis' interest directly as it is elaborated above in a detailed way and the researcher puts forward that what has happened in the region plays a major role in domestic and foreign policies of the State of Israel and affects the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Israel's attitude towards Palestine considering Israel is the only powerful country left that can be called a regional power having the free hand in a sense. Besides, it provides a fruitful environment to be legitimized the actions taken and policies followed by the Israeli government. It can be said that the idea of normalization is also important in this regard considering the near past and the events taking place during that time. The Camp David Accords and the Oslo Accords can be considered the concrete examples of it. Both of the aforementioned accords give the State of Israel legitimacy and increase their overall power. The Israeli government, making peace with Egypt after Camp David Accords, declares Jerusalem, whole and united, is the capital of Israel just after 2 years. In the same vein, Israel is recognized by more countries in political platforms and makes several trade agreements expanding its

economy after the Oslo Accords. The same can be said for Arab Spring as well. After it, Israel increases its power in the region dramatically. As for 'Deal of the Century' which is a current event, the situation is not much different. The terminology used within this context clearly reflects whose side they are on and the same can be said for the countries that are in favour of it. Basically, such events and the consequences of it, Arab Spring in this case, gives the Israeli government legitimacy on Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular and affects the identity as well which can be considered changing the idea through diplomacy in a sense.

### **3.9. THE RELATION BETWEEN IDENTITY AND TERRITORY**

Bayt al-Maqdis has been a region of conflicts throughout the history and the conflicts and contrasts in the Holy Land bring about the existence of different sort of groups ethno-nationally, socially and culturally. Israelis and Palestinians as ethno-national groups, ultra-Orthodox Jews and non-Orthodox Jews as cultural groups and ethno-social groups are some of them in this regard and it can be said the existence of different sort groups in the same land and their struggles for completely different goals lead naturally to exist different identities in the Holy Land. Within this context, the researcher underlines the fact that such identities as a reflection of different groups are not something showing up instantly. It is a natural outcome that is shaped and evolved out of an environment that has different dimensions and aspects culturally, socially and ethnically. What is argued by Shlomo Hasson is important in this regard: "The construction of group identity is associated with long, medium and short-range processes. From historical perspectives, group identity is linked with a mythical past, religion, language, and culture. The historical identity is not static and tends to change over time due to the accumulation of medium range experiences, norms and values... Identity construction, in other words, is associated with historical developments, everyday experiences and recent political events" (Hasson, 2001, p. 311). Basically, it can be said that it is an outcome of a long process. Besides, it can be argued that what is proposed is related to constructionism in a sense. It is constructed through interaction. It is "in a constant state of change... continually being established, renewed, reviewed, revoked, revised" (Bryman, 2012, p. 33).

The researcher stresses the fact that the cruciality of territory regarding constructing identity, especially national identity, cannot be ignored or underestimated. There is an irrevocable relation between national identity and territory. Approaching and judging what has been done by the Israelis and their policies and regulations from this point of view, one may easily realize the actual reason behind the aggressive policies followed by the state of Israel to keep and secure the Israeli domination in the land besides what has been done by them to occupy and seize the Palestinian territories in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular. Constructing a national identity without having a territory is impossible. Hence, the researcher argues every policy followed or every regulation put into action, basically anything contributing to increasing the Israeli hegemony in the land is a tool used by the Israelis to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis in this regard. Furthermore, what has been done by them to achieve it can be clearly seen statistically:

The State of Israel expanded the municipal boundaries of West Jerusalem after 1967 by 70,500 dunams, from 38,000 to 108,500 dunams (8,500 to 27,500 acres), and extended Israeli law, and its juridical system and administration over East Jerusalem. In so doing, the State of Israel annexed to West Jerusalem the 6,500 dunams of East Jerusalem and another 64,000 dunams around East Jerusalem, all previously controlled by Jordan (Hasson, 2001, p. 312).

To turn it into a win-win situation, the Israeli government attempts to restrict the territories where the Palestinians can settle by employing many different tools, methods and policies. Green zone project is one of them in this regard as it is discussed in a detailed way in the thesis. However, what is emphasized this time by the researcher clearly shows the unfairness of the Israeli government and the discrimination that the Palestinian society has to expose. On northern and southern sections of the city, where settling and building has been prohibited because of the green zone project, two large Jewish neighborhood are built (Hasson, 2001, p. 313). Two things can be deduced from the incident. First, there is a positive discrimination towards the Jews and the opposite for the Palestinian society. Secondly, green zones, preserving the green etc. are nothing but excuses that are put forward by them to cover their actual intention and it can be said that these are obstacles making the life difficult for the Palestinians and by doing so, what they aim at is to force them to leave the country or move somewhere else

outside the Holy Land at worst, unless they have already driven them in one way or another. In short, green zone project or other policies and regulations, that are put into action deliberately to make things difficult in the land for the Palestinian in every possible way, are the methods used by the Israelis to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis and turn into a pure Jewish territory.

It is obvious that there is an identity crisis in the land and battle of identity in Bayt al-Maqdis cannot be ignored. The researcher, however, underlines the fact that identity issue is not only between the Palestinians and the Jews. It can be observed among the Jews as well and what has been struggled by Haredi Jews is an example of it. What is desired by the Haredim by separating themselves with walls is a struggle of preserving their cultural identity and isolating themselves from the others to make sure their values and traditions are not corrupted because of external factors. They also attempt to isolate themselves from the rest of the society by majorly populating in northern side of the city (Hasson, 2001, pp. 313-314). In addition, their way of life and dress style are completely different from the others. They wear a special dress, black caftan (bekishe) besides black hats (Silverman, 2013, p. 115). Considering what is done by the Haredim and their attitudes towards the rest of the society, the researcher puts forward that it is nothing but an attempt to preserve their cultural identity, values and traditions. Furthermore, only conflict regarding identity is not only between the Jews and the Palestinians and the identity issue is an undeniable fact as it can be clearly seen in the incidents. In addition, everything mentioned above are the pieces of the puzzle in a sense and these little pieces coming together construct identity, values and tradition and it is one of the major reasons why the researcher elaborate the issue in a detailed way.

Considering everything discussed, it is obvious that there is a strong relation between territorial identity and ethnicity. Hence, the territorial identity is mixed with ethnicity (Hasson, 2001, p.316). It should be also noted that territory is crucially important regarding reconstruction of cultural, national, ecological and social identities in Bayt al-Maqdis. The following facts clearly show how important territory is: Firstly, “territory has separated the groups from each other by embracing one within its confines and excluding all the others” (Hasson, 2001, p. 320). Secondly, territory, especially a

specific area of it, is associated with a specific majority group settling there. Thirdly, territory serves as a basis for social mobilization and resistance. In addition, different strategies are developed to keep and secure their domination in the land and preserve their own culture, values and identity by preventing any external intervention in this regard. “Holding on to the land, creating a sacred space, turning marginal places into symbols of social resistance and defending residential sites against unrestrained development” are such strategies developed in this sense (Hasson, 2001, p. 320). In short, considering everything highlighted in this sense, it can be clearly said that territory is quite significant in many ways and one may easily realize the importance attached to the territory by the State of Israel and the aggressive policies followed by them to strengthen Israeli domination in the land by taking what is scrutinized within this context in the thesis into the consideration.

### **3.10. A VIEW ON PERMANENCE AND TEMPORARINESS OF THE IMPACTS OF ISRAELI POLICIES IN BAYT AL-MAQDIS**

The question that the impacts of Israeli policies in Bayt al-Maqdis are whether permanent or temporary is quite important, because the destiny of Bayt al-Maqdis will be shaped according to its situation in this regard.

First of all, it is not an easy question to answer or to come up with one final and accurate answer considering the uncertainty in the land and the conflict between Palestine and Israel. On one hand, there have been many peace attempts and struggles to find in the middle in a sense and put an end to the misery in the region in the recent past. On the other hand, the number of events intensifying the issue and making things even worse cannot be underestimated such as being recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel by the United State of America in 2017. Hence, it is hard to come up with one definite answer. The researcher, however, finds suitable to take a look at the history, compare and contrast the process and draws a conclusion by taking everything will be discussed into the consideration. Within this context, before elaborating what happened in the post-Soviet colonial states, developments and the process, the Crusaders period in Bayt al-Maqdis worth scrutinizing.

The Crusaders period and the following events stand out among the other cases that will be discussed considering it is purely related to Bayt al-Maqdis itself. After their invasion of Bayt al-Maqdis, the Crusaders intend to wipe out whatsoever related to the city including its past, buildings and culture and turn it into a place that is completely exclusive to themselves. They literally attempt to gaze the city to the ground. Besides, they take countless people's lives (Abu-Munshar, 2006, p. 74). Examining the case and their intention from an analytical point of view, the researcher puts forward it is doubtless that they aim at their actions' bringing about irreversible consequences. They want to change the demographic structure of the city by allowing many Christians to return the city depending on their sect. Jews and Muslims, however, are not allowed to settle there (Abu-Munshar, 2006, p. 73). What they want to achieve is a sheer example of extreme exclusivity that is even rare to see in the history. They even distinguish Christians depending on Orthodox or Catholic (Abu-Munshar, 2006, p. 73). However, taking the following period of it into the account, what has been done by the Crusaders is reversed with the liberation of the city (K. El-Awaisi, 2016, p. 34). Salah al-Din follows the footsteps of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab and behaves accordingly. He acknowledges the others and treats them in a fair way (Abu-Munshar, 2006, p. 78). It is Salah al-Din who "allowed the re-admission of Christian sects as well as Jews into the holy city" (K. El-Awaisi, 2016, p. 35). Moreover, Salah al-Din is asked to destroy the Church of Holy Sepulchre so as to end their interest in the city. However, he turns down this particular suggestion arguing that "Umar had never taken any such action against the holy places, but rather had confirmed the Christians' right to the church" (Abu-Munshar, 2006, p. 78). He also allows both Christians and Jews to practice freely according to their religious beliefs (Abu-Munshar, 2006, p. 73). John Esposito quoted by Abu-Munshar expresses the current environment in that time with the liberation of the city quite well: "Civilians were spared; churches and shrines were generally left untouched... Salah al-Din's magnanimity toward both Crusader and native Christians contrasted sharply with the attitude of the victorious Crusaders... The behaviour of the Muslims in Islamic Jerusalem was impeccable" (Abu-Munshar, 2006, p. 77). Eventually, co-existence and mutual respect are established in Bayt al-Maqdis and what has been done by the Crusaders is reversed with the liberation of the city (K. El-Awaisi, 2016, pp. 34-35).

The disintegration of the Soviet Union in December 1991 led to the decolonization of the world's last remaining empire. Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova and Kazakhstan are some of the countries declaring their independency as a result of it, but they had to live so long as a part of Soviet Union that the process following the disintegration of the Soviet Union was not easy for them in this regard. However, especially the situation of Ukraine and Belarus are different from the others in some aspects and turn being discussed of it into a must to give an opinion about what has happened in other cases and approach the Palestinian case and the question that the impacts of Israeli policies in Bayt al-Maqdis are whether permanent or temporary from different perspective by taking other cases into the consideration and broaden the horizon so that the researcher comes up with a possibly more accurate and well-thought-out answer in this regard. To begin with, it can be argued the relation between Ukraine and Russia is similar to the relation between Ireland and England in some aspects. Both of them are not able to sever the ties with the dominant country. Before elaborating it, it should be noted that Palestine's situation and the relation between Israel and Palestine are different from the aforementioned countries. However, what is aimed by that, basically the point is to examine the situations of the countries that have had to spend so long time under a dominant country's sovereignty and the impacts of it so that the researcher comes up with a more accurate answer within this context.

There are many examples showing Ireland has still strong connection with England and does not or cannot sever all ties with them. Even if they are separate countries, they act as one in some incidents as it can be observed in the following examples: First of all, "Irish citizens had full rights in the UK and if they lived in the UK could vote in British elections" (Kuzio, 2002, p. 242). Secondly, as it is in the relation between Ukraine and Russia, strong economic ties have kept the relation between Ireland and England close. The largest European foreign investor in Ireland is the United Kingdom. What is more critical within this context is the failure of a state living under a superior country's hegemony. "The Irish Free State and post-1947 Eire sought to revive the Gaeltacht (Irish Gaelic speakers) but this has failed. Today, only 2% of the population use Irish as a daily means of communication. A majority of Irish can tune into British TV and radio, a similar situation to Ukraine where Russian TV remains popular. In both cases the colonial legacy of Anglicization and Russification is

entrenched further by the power and influence of a hegemonic, neighboring language” (Kuzio, 2002 pp. 241-242). Basically they have failed to establish their own ethnic and cultural identity dominantly. Considering the situations mentioned above, the researcher puts forward their inability and failure within this context holds them back in terms of both fully independent national notions and establishing a fully independent state in every aspect as it should be. This is critical, because even if it is not thoroughly, there are similarities between the cases discussed here and the Palestinian case. Living under a superior and dominant country’s sovereignty for a long period of time is one of them and the consequences of it are not pleasant, especially in terms of culture and language. Taking the similarities between the cases and Israelis’ aggressive policies to turn Hebrew into the dominant and major language in the region and impose their own values, culture and traditions on the Palestinian society in every possible way as it scrutinized in the earlier sections of the thesis into the consideration, the researcher puts forward it is likely that the impact of Israeli policies within this context turns into a quite problematic issue that may bring about irreversible consequences, although this is not the case so far for Palestinians that has been living under Israeli sovereignty and occupation for 73 years. The situation and its seriousness, however, must be comprehended thoroughly and precautions are taken in this sense.

It can be said that if the predicament, that the Palestinians are in, is on the surface for a longer period of time, in other words continues for decades, it may bring about a perception of otherness in a sense. What is highlighted in the following is significant in this regard: “The Irish have for centuries been castigated as lower culturally, its inhabitants barbarians and degenerate” (Kuzio, 2002, p. 244). Taking the policies and regulations applied by the Israelis to force the Palestinian society to either yield and adopt their way of life including language, values and culture or leave the region and move somewhere else into the consideration, the Palestinians with Israeli citizenships, not this generation, but the one following it may suffer from sense of in-betweenness and feeling of not belonging to a place if the Israelis carry on their aggressive policies in this regard. Another possibility which is not an off-chance is the Palestinians’ being treated as others and isolated from the society by the Israelis as it is observed in the aforementioned incident, because “...their status in relation to one another is often asymmetric. In those cases, one will be perceived as superior, desirable,

and necessary, whereas the other will be seen as inferior, undesirable, and extraneous” (Shannon, 1995, p. 176).

The researcher puts forward what should not be ignored as a prominent and distinctive factor in the question, that the impacts of Israeli Policies in Bayt al-Maqdis are whether permanent or temporary, is the Palestinians’ ties with their past, history, culture, values, basically all sort of elements constituting a nation and lead to collective identity in this regard. Before discussing it regarding Palestine, it is proper to take a look at the incidents from the history. By the dominant and superior country it is attempted to “erase historical memory, a process that leads to a loss of national identity and makes them easier to assimilate” (Kuzio, 2002, p. 247). What has been done in the past by the countries that are either occupier or colonialist is similar to what is done by the Israelis. Therefore, the researcher digs into such cases, compare and contrast them and eventually approaches the issue from different perspectives and comes up with ideas that contributes to the salvation of Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular. Anyway, going back to the issue, such attempts have ended up in a way desired by the countries attempting it and the ones exposed are far from being a fully independent state considering the components constituting a nation as it is seen in the following cases: “Ukraine and Belarus’s inherited post-colonial legacy is profound and unlikely to be ever completely removed” (Kuzio, 2002, p. 245). The researcher underlines what is even worse is the fact that they accept and yield their situation in this regard which means there is not hope for them to wipe out the traces of the past and rise from the ashes as a new fully independent nation. What is argued within this context explicitly shows how tragic the situation is: “The deconstruction of the former USSR remains an ongoing and potentially endless process, even after the USSR formally ceased to exist” (Beissinger, 1993, p. 110).

Basically, being preserved the history, national values, culture and ethnic identity by the Palestinians and its transfer to the next generation are vitally important regarding the question the impacts of Israeli Policies in Bayt al-Maqdis are whether permanent or temporary, because a possible failure in this regard means loss of such components and “without such a national history they will be merely passive subjects of history whose identity will continue to be molded by their former imperial rulers”

(Kuzio, 2002, p. 247). Taking what is discussed above into the consideration, it can be said that national history and values, basically all sort of components, constituting a nation and preserving it not by letting it being wiped out by the Israelis considering their policies and efforts to erase Palestinian history, especially the ones related to the Holy Land which strengthens the Palestinians' ties with the land in a sense, are vitally important. Preserving such values brings about Israelis' failure in their attempt within this context and it can be considered a counter action against what is done by the Israelis to change the identity of the region and Judaize it in a sense.

It can be said that what has been done by the Israelis to turn education system into a tool serving their interest regarding imposing their own values, culture and even language on the Palestinian youth and the impacts of such attempts are crucial, because it is highly possible that even a failure in taking the necessary measures in time in this regard brings about the fact that the impact of the Israeli policies within this context is permanent. This issue, especially regarding education should not be either ignored or overlooked, because the researcher puts forward it is education that both the salvation and fall of Bayt al-Maqdis lay. Education is one of the most effective tools to spread any sort ideology. Considering the age range of students in schools, it is quite difficult for them to distinguish right from wrong and they have a general tendency to accept what is taught as true without questioning it. Taking what is discussed into the consideration, it can be said that it provides a fruitful environment for Israelis to impose what they desire on the Palestinian youth. It includes a revised history, values serving their interest and justification of the actions made by them. In addition, it paves the way for the Israelis to mislead students by misinformation. The education system and curriculum can be used as a tool to transfer so-called facts made up by the Israelis to the next generations and justify it as well and what is transferred is not restricted with it obviously. Everything related to the land including its culture, history, even the major reasons making the land holy and so unique among the anywhere else in the world is perceived from the Israeli point of view and conveyed into the Palestinian students in the same way. The point of view is crucial in this regard, because it changes everything dramatically. One may comprehend what the researcher means by that by considering what makes the Holy Land holy for the Jews and the Muslims or the history of Bayt al-Maqdis and how different it is when it is narrated by a Muslim or a Jew historian.

Basically, it enables for them to recreate the past and even the possible future like the way they desire and in a way serving their interest most. Besides everything mentioned above, the researcher puts forward the most lethal threat within this context is its irreversibility. Succeeding in what is desired by the Israelis through and through in this regard is not an easy task and it requires plenty of time and well designated systematic plan. However, once it is achieved, it is quite hard to get things back on track and turn the tables on in this sense and it can be seen in the following cases: “French colonial subjects were taught (and still are in French Polynesia) that they are “descendants of the Gauls.” In the USSR the non-Russians were taught that they had never desired independence but only unity with the Russian.” (Kuzio, 2002, p. 249). The aforementioned cases explicitly show why it is so crucial and critical, because what is taught is what is served their interest. Approaching from this perspective, it can be said that education is turned into a weapon breaking their power to resist and stand against the predicament that they have been in for a long period of time.

It also leads to loss of hope, in this case it is the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis and Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi argues losing hope equals death in this regard (A. El-Awaisi, 2019, p. 6) and the following incident proves the accurateness of what is proposed by El-Awaisi: “In the case of Belarus this post-colonial legacy is so influential that it has led President Alyaksandr Lukashenka since his election in 1994 to seek to re-integrate his country with the former imperial metropolis”(Kuzio, 2002, p. 250). Even if the incident is not merely related to education, it is a consequence of being interiorized the situation and accepted as it is, because there is not any national feeling left to resist it and obviously the best way to impose such notions on a society is education.

The impacts of education regarding identity, language and culture can be clearly observed in the following incident: “François Cavanna, a famous French humorist, is the son of an Italian immigrant. He describes in his autobiography (1978) the daily life in a neighbourhood of the suburb of Paris inhabited by Italian immigrants in the 1930s. He underlines the effectiveness of the school programmes to incite the immigrant’s children to share a French identity. He remembers the young Italians considered French history as their own one and adopted the great names of history like Joan of Arc, Louis XIV or Napoleon. He remembers also that they had included in their behaviour an

invisible division between the private and public spheres. He mentions the case of two brothers who used to quarrel in their Italian dialect when they were at home and pursued systematically and unconsciously their quarrel in French when they were in the street” (Barou, 2014).

In short, the impacts of Israeli Policies in Bayt al-Maqdis regarding education is vitally important, because education system and curriculum can be turned into a tool to transfer the fabricated facts and false claims made by the Israelis to the next generations and justify what they have done as well. In other words, it enables them to recreate the past in a way serving their interest most. It also allows them to wipe out the national feelings and Palestinian traditions and values which bring about Judaizing the land easily in every possible way. Basically, the consequences of it are irreversible and the impacts of it will be definitely permanent unless precise and accurate counter actions are taken in this regard.

Finally, the question should be discussed regarding the methods and regulations related to Palestinian economy that are followed by Israel. Within this context, the situation is different from the ones mentioned above. Unlike the others, the methods and economic constraints that force Palestinian to leave the region by making the life harder for them can be overcome and it can be exemplified. There are countries that have overcome economic downturn and Germany is one of them. After the following years of World War 2, German economy laid in shambles in a sense (Henderson, 2008). However, they picked up steam economically and what they managed in this regard is called “economic miracle” (Lang, 1990, p. 248). Germany, however, is not the only country that experiences an economic growth after a predicament. Soviet Union and England are some of the countries going downsizing in the aftermath of World War 2. Yet, they also managed to overcome it, expanded economically and experienced an economic growth (Bakırtaş & Tekinşen, 2004, pp. 91-93). Last but not least, the United States of America sets an example in this regard. 1929 was a turning point for America; it was the year that the Great Depression began (Rothbard, 2000, p. 162). American economy was affected dramatically by the Great Depression. “The year 1929 stands as the great American trauma. Its shock impact on American thought has been enormous. The reasons for shock seem clear. Generally, depressions last a year or two; prices and

credit contract sharply, unsound positions are liquidated, unemployment swells temporarily, and then rapid recovery ensues... Yet the Great Depression that ignited in 1929 lasted, in effect, for eleven years” (Rothbard, 2000). However, they managed to surmount the difficulties regarding economy and America is considered one of the biggest economic powers in the world (Field, 2013, p. 381). Basically, the conclusion that the researcher wants to draw within this context is that what has been done by the Israelis that affects Palestinian economy can be overcome even if it is not an easy task to undo the impacts of it and start from the scratch in a sense. However, it is quite possible to see considerable developments in Palestinian economy if necessary measures are taken and well-thought-out plan that is based on knowledge is followed. Within this context, its being based on knowledge is vitally important considering the importance attached to plans based on scholarship and knowledge as it is argued by both El-Awaisi and the researcher which will be scrutinized in the following sections of the thesis so that the reader comprehend the cruciality of it regarding the salvation and liberation of Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular.

## CHAPTER IV: POSSIBLE SOLUTION WAYS

There are many different tools and methods employed by the State of Israel to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis and Judaize it as it is discussed in the previous sections of the thesis. Considering the cruciality and the possible consequences of the aforementioned tools and methods, it can be said that it is quite important to come up with a well-thought-out plan that is going to minimize the impacts of what has been done by Israelis and lead Palestinians to a salvation within this context. Approaching from this perspective, it can be said that the possible solutions are quite important. Scholarship and knowledge is the most important one in this regard, because any plan, that is not based on it regardless of how good it is, will end up with failure and disappointment. Therefore, it can be considered a solid ground for the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis. Besides, the role of media and main means of communication is also quite important and can be considered an important tool that will contribute to the cause. What makes it crucial is that it can be used to spread the actual facts related to Bayt al-Maqdis and allow people to realize what has been really going on in the occupied territories besides the tragedy that is brought about by the Israeli Jews. Considering the functions of it, it will raise people's awareness on the issue. In addition, domestic and foreign policies in West Asia and North Africa are critical in shaping the destiny of the region in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular. Turkey is quite important in this regard and Turkey has had intimate relations with Palestine politically and culturally for a quite long period of time. Within this context, the role of the Holy Land and the importance attached to it play a major role. Turkey is a powerful candidate to become a regional power in the West Asia in a near future and if it happens, it will have a dramatic impact in the region considering the fact that it will increase the overall power of Muslim countries as a remarkable opponent against the Israeli domination and may lead them to reconsider their both domestic and foreign policies including their attitudes towards Palestinians and policies followed in the Occupied Palestinian Territories which is doubtless that contribute to the cause and get closer to the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis. Moreover, Palestine's gaining power in political platforms in the worldwide is quite important. Besides, it will provide a fruitful environment to spread the actual facts related to Bayt al-Maqdis and the occupation. The European Union and the United

Nations are quite important considering their enormous impacts in the political platforms besides their financial support to Palestine. In a nutshell, the possible solution ways for the salvation and liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis are discussed in this section of the thesis and what is mentioned above briefly and the rest of the possible solution ways are scrutinized in this regard.

#### **4.1. ON THE CRUCIALITY OF KNOWLEDGE INTERTWINED WITH SCHOLARSHIP AND EDUCATION**

Scholarship and knowledge stand out among the other elements that are related to any study in general and Bayt al-Maqdis Studies in particular. The researcher argues these are and should be the solid ground for anything and without having a solid ground based on scholarship and knowledge, it is doubtless that anything aimed will end up with a failure and disappointment. Scholarship and knowledge are also considered methodological steps which are quite important. El-Awaisi argues scholarship stands for understanding and knowledge means comprehension (*idrak*<sup>1</sup>). Before scrutinizing why it is crucially important in terms of, the researcher finds beneficial to stress the steps that should be followed to make the most of it as El-Awaisi argues. Definition, to be precise accurate definition, is the first in this regard, because defining as it should be reflects whether it is perceived accurately or not by the one defining it. Explanation standing for defining the reflection between results and causes is the second step which leads to understanding as a result of two methodological steps mentioned above. Interpretation as the fourth requires a theoretical framework which is one of the international relations theories in this regard. Realization is the step where one reads between the lines that can be considered the highest level and it allows one to reach a point that he/she is capable of making a change as the last and ultimate step where the one can direct the events dramatically and by doing so he/she has an impact on what she/he works on. The researcher underlines that the one, who comprehends the importance attached to scholarship and knowledge and follows the steps mentioned above thoroughly and as it should be, has a power to change the world through the direction he/she wants to. Therefore these two elements are essential and crucially important for the sake of Bayt al-Maqdis and its liberation in the long run. In the light of

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<sup>1</sup> *idrak*: It stands for sensory perception (TDV, 2000, p. 477)

what is discussed in the thesis, the researcher argues the forgotten priority for the liberation of Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular is knowledge. This is what Bayt al-Maqdis has been suffering from most considering the Intellectual Nakba that can be defined as crisis in knowledge and what is served by media or biased people who acts in a way that serves or protects the Israelis' interest. The researcher also stresses contributing the literature by mentioning how beautiful the Holy Land is or praising it like the way Palestinian poets or authors do as it is exemplified in one of the literature reviews in the thesis in a detailed way is not the ultimate way to liberate Bayt al-Maqdis. Basically and metaphorically, fine words butter no parsnips. Therefore, knowledge is above everything considering the world we live in that almost everything is related to power and power comes from either money or knowledge as the ground for everything. Hence, knowledge that is intertwined with scholarship is what is essential for the sake of Bayt al-Maqdis and making the liberation of the Holy Land come true.

Secondly, there are a lot of misinformation related to Bayt al-Maqdis and biased people and media that deliberately mislead the society. Basically, there is an information pollution in a sense and seen from a broader perspective, it can be clearly said that there is a very critical problem related to Bayt al-Maqdis and Palestine that can be called the Intellectual Nakba. The researcher underlines the fact that solving the problem is vitally important and solving it would be huge step for the sake of Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular. Besides, it is doubtless that handling the issue root and branch would get them closer to the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis. Nakba is defined as the establishment of Israel and the consequences of it in the 20th century by El-Awaisi. He also argues Nakba stands for deportation of Palestinian from their own homeland which equals death in a sense. However, there are many steps followed by mainly the British and the Israeli occupations that can be generally called the occupation of the land before coming to that part. The researcher argues one of the easiest way to achieve this goal is to subvert the order and welfare of the country and attempt to make it weak so that divide and rule policy can be applied easily which is the policy they cross the stream where it is shallowest to be successful in their intention. Apart from dividing Bilad al-Sham into different countries as per Sykes-Picot Agreement, they take actions to make the surrounding countries of Palestine weak and keep them ineffective in a sense to keep Bayt al-Maqdis secure considering the

importance of geopolitics and significance and function of the surrounding countries of Palestine (A. El-Awaisi, 2019, p. 51). This is also clearly seen in the report presented to Campbell Banerman to occupy the land easily and make away with the possible threats or resistance that they may have to face with in the process (A. El-Awaisi, 2019, p. 38). In addition, the researcher puts forward one of the most dangerous actions taken by them is to twist people's mind. The society in Palestine was convinced that the Ottomans were their enemy and the British were their savior, particularly with the rise of Turkish and Arab nationalism. Sherif Hussein revolting against the Ottomans and used as a pawn to serve the British's interest can be considered a good example in this regard (K. El-Awaisi, 2019a, p. 151). Some Arabs standing against the Ottoman army during the World War 1 and welcoming the British army entering the Holy Land (K. El-Awaisi, 2019a, pp. 144-145) clearly show their state of mind which is nothing but upside down. It can be said what is mentioned above is the roots of their ultimate goal that can be called the occupation of the mind which the researcher argues it is much more vital comparing with the occupation of the land that a resistance can be shown by the patriots and they stand tall and fight back against the occupying forces to retreat their country, yet when the minds are occupied, there is nothing left to fight for and hope disappears which equals death as El-Awaisi argues and the British deceives people by sparkling notion of Arab nationalism and turns friend into a foe considering the incident mentioned above. Secondly, they attack one of the core elements that is essential to become powerful and what the researcher means by that is they attempt to make the Palestinian society uneducated and ignorant so that they cannot resist against them considering the importance attached to knowledge that contributes to development of scholarship as one of the key factors to become powerful. Therefore, they, first and foremost, intend to wipe out the history of Palestine and the sources of it. A special unit is organized just for searching and finding that sort of materials and the books, documents, records, basically everything found in this regard are kept and burned by them. 40.000 written materials are stolen and 26.000 books are burned by the Israelis in a short period of time (K. El-Awaisi, 2019a, pp. 164-165). The education level of the Palestinian society decreases whereas the Israelis get educated and increase their knowledge and broaden their horizon, because any country or society is powerless without a proper education. They establish the Hebrew University which is a worldwide

university and spread the misinformation related to Palestine and Bayt al-Maqdis via academy and academic works whereas the university on the side of Palestine is postponed with excuses (K. El-Awaisi, 2019a, pp. 163-165). It can be also considered an example as an event serving their intention aiming at the Palestinian society's suffering from the lack of proper education and remaining uneducated which means ignorant in a sense. Kamil el-Hüseyni, the mufti of Bayt al-Maqdis at that time, also attends the celebration of the establishment of the Hebrew University (K. El-Awaisi, 2019a, p. 159) and the researcher argues it is an incident showing how dramatic situation is in terms of the occupation of the mind. Apart from it, the academy is used like a factory that produces biased works serving their interest. There is a gap in the available literature in this regard considering many of what is written on Palestine and Bayt al-Maqdis by Arabs and Muslims cannot be considered academic writings (A. El-Awaisi, 2011, p. 90). Hence, Orientalists and Israelis take advantage of it and attempt to undermine the Muslim literature besides the historical and significant incidents taking place in the past (A. El-Awaisi, 2011, p. 90). Within this context, the credibility and reliability of Muslim accounts are questioned and even denied by some Orientalists and Israeli academics (A. El-Awaisi, 2011, p. 92). They also attempt to undermine the importance attached to Bayt al-Maqdis in Islam besides the first Muslim conquest of it and rewrite the past from a point of view serving their interest (A. El-Awaisi, 2011, p. 93). It is even claimed that what is narrated regarding the first Muslim conquest in the Muslim accounts is a myth and it is made up by Muslim historians (A. El-Awaisi, 2011, p. 93). Besides, they have many scholars specialized on the Qur'an, the Hadith and the Holy Land and they work on every simple detail by hoping they find something that they can use to deceive people on issues related to Bayt al-Maqdis and the researcher puts forward that, by doing so in general, what they aim at is nothing but propaganda and undermining Muslim primary sources and a struggle to loose the strong connection between Islam and the Holy Land in addition to undermining the importance of Muslims' rights on the land so that people believe it is a Jewish Promised Land. It can be said that the reason why they do everything mentioned above is historical and religious legitimacy in addition to legitimacy of the occupation as it is argued by Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi.

Thirdly, what can be done to turn the tables on is quite important. The productivity is vitally significant, for the researcher argues any country that is unable to produce depends on the other countries. Any country in such a predicament is not independent thoroughly in a sense and dependency brings about limitations in many ways. Apart from every possible deficiency that it may cause, what is used as sources in schools are what is produced and put forward by the Western scholars. So, the works reflect their ideology and it is used as a weapon in their arsenal to spread the knowledge in a way serving their own interest as mentioned above in depth. Even the theories used in geopolitics are Western theories except the one developed by El-Awaisi and the lack of scholars specialized on the departments that brilliant ideas can be produced related to the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis and contributes to the cause in a sense is a problem which need to be worked on urgently. In short, lack of production in general and scholars in particular considering the Intellectual Nakba are quite significant and the researcher underlines the fact that education and knowledge are essential and should be the first step to change the direction of the wind. Moreover, creativity is also important and key factor that can be considered a game changer which will be elaborated in a detailed way in the following part where the terminology is discussed by the researcher.

First and foremost, the researcher finds quite beneficial to stress that the Holy Land is in the region of Bayt al-Maqdis which is a region rather than a mere city or a piece of land considering that it is known wrong by majority of people. Moreover, Bayt al-Maqdis consists of two words. Bayt stands for house which was also used to refer to Ka'bah in the Qu'ran (Qu'ran, 2:125, 127, 158) besides its usage for houses and mosques (K. El-Awaisi, 2011, pp. 21-22) and al-Maqdis or al-Muqaddas means holy, blessed and pure. It is said that the term Bayt al-Maqdis was revived by Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, using this term is quite proper rather than using other terminologies addressing to the same land. Although there are other names used to refer to the land such as Aelia, the researcher ignores the ones irrelevant in terms of reflecting the idea of the Holy Land for Muslims. Moreover, in the light of what is highlighted in the thesis within this context, the researcher puts forward that the terminologies used are also crucially important in terms of creating a Muslim connection with the region or giving a Muslim identity to the land and strengthening the Muslim rights on the land besides raising the awareness of people and spreading the knowledge in a sense. It can

be said this is what Christians aim at considering the following example: There are a lot of maps showing the Christian Holy Land. The maps reflecting Christian point of view and the way of being perceived the Holy Land by Christians are significant, because the researcher puts forward the reason why there are so many Christian Holy Land maps is that they attempt to establish a sense of belonging to the land and their ultimate goal is the construction of an ethnic identity in the land. 25 of 28 contemporary religious maps related to the land belong to Christians (Collins, 2005, 265) and it can be considered a crosscheck in a sense of what is proposed by the researcher. Last but not least, the terminologies used can be turned into a lethal weapon when it is combined with creativity. The term “Islamicjerusalem” used for the first time and coined by El-Awaisi is significant in this regard. The term has three key interlinked elements as it is stressed in a public lecture at the Academy of Islamic Studies at the University of Malaya on 24 September 2004. These are “its geographical location (land and boundaries), its people (population), and its unique and creative inclusive vision, to administrate that land and its people, as a model for multiculturalism” (A. El-Awaisi, 2005, p. 8). El-Awaisi argues unique creative vision of Islamicjerusalem is the final product of it considering it is more important than what is called the final product which refers to the issue of sovereignty in this regard and the researcher argues the reason why El-Awaisi reaches this conclusion is that the term reflects the way Islam and the core teachings of it are perceived by Muslims in general and El-Awaisi in particular, because the researcher puts forward the way it is perceived by people and their behaviors are also important to comprehend the concept of Bayt al-Maqdis thoroughly considering the concepts or ideas are shaped by people and their behaviors reflect the way it is perceived. Therefore, the researcher puts forward what Prophet Muhammad and his other companions do and their actions related to the land are significant in this regard and that is why El-Awaisi urgently associates the term with the model of Aman which means peaceful co-existence and mutual respect. Apart from everything mentioned above related to the term, it is also important to stress that Islamicjerusalem does not refer to a city or a piece of land, but it stands for a larger region covering many cities and villages (A. El-Awaisi, 2013, p. 8). It is also equivalent of Bayt al-Maqdis in English and the most appropriate term that can be used in English to refer to the land (A. El-Awaisi, 2013, p. 11) considering the nature and characteristic of it besides what it reflects. Moreover, the

researcher argues one of the most important characteristic of the term is that it is an outcome of a creative thinking and it is doubtless that El-Awaisi comes up with such a term deliberately which is quite important in many ways as it is discussed in the following: To begin with, it creates a sense of wonder when it is heard by anyone for the first time and one cannot help himself/herself but asking what it stands for, what the major reason it is named that way, rather than calling it Jerusalem or in a different way, is that it provides an opportunity to express the characteristics of the term and it also provide a fruitful environment to spread the actual facts related to Bayt al-Maqdis which is highly important considering the Intellectual Nakba and the disinformation related to it. It also spreads among the academics. It is used by scholars many times as two separate words and Karen Armstrong, Oleg Armstrong and Rodney Aist are some of them within this context (A. El-Awaisi, 2013, p. 10). There is even a journal called “Journal of Islamicjerusalem Studies” besides a centre in Malaysia, conferences, articles and books which prove it is more than a simple term, but a term globalized. Moreover, the researcher argues the following incident is also quite important in this regard: When the term “Islamicjerusalem” is searched via Google, 109.000 results related to it are found. So, it is nothing but a solid evidence that is a global term and it can be said that it also proves how enormous the impact of just one term is in terms of contributing to spreading the knowledge related to Bayt al-Maqdis within a few years. The revival of the term, especially in Turkish and Indonesian is worth mentioning considering such terms was not in use in these specific languages unlike now. The researcher argues such developments like the one mentioned above is crucially important, because it raises the awareness of people and provides an environment that the actual facts related to the conflict between Palestine and Israel in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular can be expressed to others. Besides, it also contributes to being constituted a collective identity which is quite important considering the issues related to identity crisis in Bayt al-Maqdis and the Israelis’ effort to change the identity of the region and Judaize the land. Hence, such developments are vitally important and critical steps contributing to the cause and what is mentioned in this part automatically leads the researcher to discussing the following section that takes the reader to the very beginning of everything where the solid ground is established to contribute to the cause.

It can be said that the establishment of Bayt al-Maqdis Studies is highly significant in terms of its contribution to spreading the knowledge dramatically. With that, it is turned what El-Awaisi dedicates his life into something that is everlasting and makes contribution to spreading the knowledge. The study aiming at filling the gap in literature enables to many young and promising students to learn about Bayt al-Maqdis from the founder of it which is a huge chance generally that only minority of students take advantage of. However, it can be said that there are a lot effort made to come to that point considering that it takes several years to accumulate enough knowledge to establish such a study and direct the events. El-Awaisi also argues it by saying “the establishment of the new field of inquiry of Islamicjerusalem was a process and a journey that took nearly a decade, 1994-2003, adopting the principle of gradual development and travelling through several stages” (A. El-Awaisi, 2013, p. 4). Bayt al-Maqdis Studies has grown and expanded every single day and “a community of 47 graduates in Islamicjerusalem Studies work across the globe at several levels: 11 PhDs, 33 Masters, 3 PG Diplomas/PG Certificates” (A. El-Awaisi, 2013, p. 15) and there are a lot of works that has been done and on-going works related to Bayt al-Maqdis which is doubtless that it contributes to both the study and the salvation of Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular in the long term. The journals, works, master and Phd programmes, all these show there are a lot of developments and achievements in this regard. The researcher puts forward that what differentiates such developments from the others, including the ones mentioned in this particular section of the thesis, is that it is based on scholarship and knowledge which are the most critical and important elements on the road through the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis and what it does also provides an environment to spread the actual facts and raise the awareness of people on the issue.

However, narrowing the academic developments down to programmes related to Bayt al-Maqdis exclusively limits being got the most of it in a sense. Therefore, the researcher puts forward that approaching from different angles are significant to comprehend it thoroughly and contribute it more and effectively. Hence, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches are important in this regard, because it broadens the vision and it allows one to approach the issues from different dimensions and see what cannot be seen by the ones who are not able to take advantage of studying

on two different programs that are related to each other. To start with, history is crucially important in this regard, history and Bayt al-Maqdis are complementary to each other, for the researcher underlines the fact that the current issues related to Bayt al-Maqdis cannot be comprehended thoroughly and one cannot come up with a remarkable and effective solution without knowing the history of it. The researcher also argues the history is a mirror reflecting the present and future, so it cannot be overlooked. Secondly, Islamic Studies and sub-branches of it such as theology and *Tafsir* are also another discipline that is related to the studies made on Bayt al-Maqdis considering there are a lot of verses and hadiths addressing to the Holy Land and accurate interpretations on it are vitally important. The theory developed by Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi and called “The Barakah Circle Theory of Bayt al-Maqdis” is important in this sense. He proves al-Masjid al-Aqsa which is in the heart of Holy Land is the center of the Barakah and the Barakah spreads in different amounts in form of invisible waves (A. El-Awaisi, 2019, pp. 13-15) by scrutinizing the related verses in the Qur’an and identifying and interpreting it correctly. Thirdly, international relations is a must considering its role in Bayt al-Maqdis Studies. Besides the other branches of it, geopolitics is highly important in this regard, for it is geopolitics that needs to be scrutinized to comprehend and make sense the actions taken related to Palestine directly or surrounding countries which also affect Palestine in a sense considering the way geopolitics works and its effect and role on international affairs. Last but not least, literature is quite important for the sake of the study, because what is not told in the history books or other sources is mentioned in the literature. It does not essentially have to be literary works. Memoirs are also part of it and it is literature where one can easily analyze and learn about the characteristic of a period and society’s way of living or their approaches, reactions to an incident which is quite important to comprehend and shed light on a historical issue or event. Therefore, the researcher, with his own way of understanding and interpretation, suggests literature is a treasure where history is hidden. Moreover, another crucial significant characteristic of literature which makes it necessary to intertwine literature with it is its role to raise people’s awareness on the issues related to Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular considering there are a lot of misinformation related to it and biased people who deliberately mislead the society. However, the researcher argues the knowledge, accurate knowledge most

importantly, can be spread through and thanks to literature. Although there are students who are willing to learn about Bayt al-Maqdis and contribute to the cause, spreading the knowledge and drawing the mass of population's attention and raising their awareness on the issues related to Bayt al-Maqdis and Palestine are vitally important. The researcher suggests Tv programmes, that such issues are discussed and a documentary or a Tv series consisting of a couple of episodes that are the general informations, the actual truths or the facts known wrong by the majority of people related to Bayt al-Maqdis are mentioned, contribute to the cause dramatically and if it is featured on a national channel like TRT which is the main channel of the government in Turkey and is watched by majority of the society, it helps to spread the knowledge faster and draw more people's attention and the same may be applied in other countries as well.

In short, there are a lot of misinformation and biased works serving the Israelis' interest which make quite difficult to differentiate between what is wrong and what is right. The intellectual Nakba and occupation of the mind before the occupation of the land are lethal which is highly possible to destroy the all hopes related to Bayt al-Maqdis root and branch unless counter measures are taken. Knowledge and science are the key factors and game changers in this regard. Spreading the actual knowledge and facts is also crucial and academic developments such as Bayt al-Maqdis Studies, established by El-Awaisi which is a legacy left as an outcome of his dedication his life to it and hard work for years that has grown and expanded every single day and contributes the cause dramatically considering the works, journals, master and Phd programmes related to it, is vitally important for the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis. Reading the past and writing the future will be only possible with knowledge and education.

#### **4.2. LEARNING FROM THE PAST: PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S STRATEGIC PLAN TO LIBERATE BAYT AL-MAQDIS**

Taking lessons from the history is vitally important to make things right in the future. Besides, it can be considered a guide in a sense and for anyone or any nation that fails at taking lessons from the past, it is highly possible that they will not be successful in the future. What the researcher means by that does not just refer to the negative events taking place in the past. On the contrary, good and remarkable events are to be

scrutinized to take lessons and learn what to do in the future. Within this context, Prophet Muhammad's strategic plan to liberate Bayt al-Maqdis is remarkable in terms of the solution ways for the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis and it is worth elaborating in this regard.

Prophet Muhammad who has a great vision as a farsighted genius proves that shedding blood and fighting in a battlefield is not the only and ultimate way to accomplish a goal. It requires more than this. His strategic plan to liberate Bayt al-Maqdis is significant in this regard. It is a quite comprehensive plan and it can be divided into three main categories, namely knowledge, politics and military actions.

First of all, the strategic plan developed by Prophet Muhammad to liberate Bayt al-Maqdis can be divided into three major sections. These are knowledge, politics and military activities as it is mentioned above. First and foremost, knowledge is the foundation of everything. Any plan without it cannot be called a strategical plan. In addition, any plan that is not based on knowledge will result in catastrophe and it can be clearly said that Prophet Muhammad's plan is a knowledge based plan without doubt. Knowledge means understanding, yet the researcher argues knowledge cannot be narrowed as something that only refers to understanding or learning something new. For instance, Prophet Muhammad informs his companions about Bayt al-Maqdis and the importance attached to it. Afterwards, they start asking questions about it (A. El Awaisi, 2017, p. 12). So, it can be said that asking questions is also a part of knowledge, because the more curious they are, the more they are willing to learn about it. Moreover, knowledge is everlasting and it starts with the very first day of advent of Islam and continues until his 23 years prophethood. Besides, one of the main characteristics of knowledge is the fact that it gives hope to people and not losing hope and putting faith, that Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular can be liberated and what has been done by the Israelis for years besides oppression and cruelty that the Palestinian society has had to endure can be ceased, are exactly what Palestine needs in the current environment. Moreover, the researcher argues it can be implied that hope disappears without knowledge and it can be also said that "what keeps us alive is hope" which can be interpreted as losing hope equals death. Although Prophet Muhammad is aware the fact that he passes away before the conquest of Bayt al-Maqdis and does not see the

harvest what he has planted, he dedicates his life to liberate Bayt al-Maqdis and he gives hope to people at the same time as well. So, El-Awaisi coins the term “the land of hope” for Bayt al-Maqdis (A. El-Awaisi, 2007b, p. 4). In short, knowledge as the foundation of the strategical plan over political and military actions is crucially important as it is mentioned above. Besides, the researcher puts forward that first revelation starting with the verb “Iqra” also proves how significant knowledge is and considering everything related to knowledge and its role and cruciality, it is not a coincidence that the major and most possible solution ways to liberate Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular in the long run are centralized around knowledge and education within this context.

Secondly, politics is another important part of the strategical plan to liberate Bayt al-Maqdis. It can be said that Prophet Muhammad’s letter to King Heraclius is the first political step serving his ultimate goal which is nothing but the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis. The letter can be also considered a warning which is a Muslim tradition in that time. Prophet Muhammad warns him that unless they accept Islam and follows the right path by doing so, everything befalling him and his people will be on Heraclius (A. El-Awaisi, 2017, pp. 18-19). El-Awaisi argues “the Prophet was in fact making every effort available to him at that time to lay foundations for his strategic plan for conquering Bayt al-Maqdis” (A. El-Awaisi, 2007b, p. 7). The Prophet develops a well thought-out plan to liberate the region and protect it from any possible threat. Therefore, he secures the surrounding area of Bayt al-Maqdis by “safeguarding their northern front and the edge of historical Syria from the danger of Byzantines and keeping safe their southern front after Hudaybiyya’s truce and the conversion of the ruler of Yemen to Islam” (A. El-Awaisi, 2007b, p. 9). These, as political and geopolitical steps, are related to the Barakah Circle Theory of Bayt al-Maqdis developed by El-Awaisi (A. El-Awaisi, 2019, p. 21).

Last but not least, military is a part of his strategic plan. The Battle of Mu’tah, the expedition of Tabuk and the army of Usamah stand out among the others within this context. The researcher, however, finds suitable not to elaborate it considering the main theme of this section and the huge differences between the way of fighting in a battle in that time and the present.

Moreover, the Prophet's strategic plan continues after his passing away. He has instructed Abu Bakr (A. El-Awaisi, 2007b, p. 11). The researcher argues that Abu Bakr's being informed about what to do after his death by the Prophet and the steps following each other one by one with a specific order clearly shows the Prophet has a strategic plan. Abu Bakr is well aware of it and knows the detail of the plan. In addition, as one of the final steps to achieve the ultimate goal, Abu Bakr arranges his main campaign to liberate Bayt al-Maqdis and "rejoice their victories over the Byzantines and brings their first Qiblah into their realm" (K. El-Awaisi, 2015, p. 29) and Bayt al-Maqdis is conquered by the Muslim army led by Umar Ibn Al-Khattab and the goal is accomplished in this regard.

In addition, battlefields are not the only places where a war is either won or lost. There are many factors and events affecting the result of it and what is done by the Prophet in this sense proves nothing but he is a genius and has a broad vision. The peace agreements in several places are significant logistical steps in this regard (A. El-Awaisi, 2007b, p. 10), because the researcher argues one may not be victorious regardless of how powerful they are in battlefields unless they strengthen their power with such vital steps.

Finally, another important and underestimated detail in the Prophet's strategic plan and geopolitical map is his humanist and pacifist characteristic. The Prophet as the Messenger of Allah reflects and spreads the essence of Islam like the concept of *Adl* (justice), the principle of not excluding others and the constructive argumentation as El-Awaisi argues (A. El-Awaisi, 2007a, p. 96). The peace agreements, his letter to King Heraclius and his struggle to guide him and his people to Islam to avoid a possible war are the incidents reflecting his characteristics in this regard which is quite important, because the researcher argues the only way to be victorious or accomplish a goal is not shedding blood, the peace or anything serving it is also a significant part of it.

To sum up, it can be clearly said that the Prophet dedicates his life to liberate Bayt al-Maqdis from the very first day of Islam until his last breath and he proves how important knowledge is and any plan without it cannot be called a strategical plan. It is the solid foundation of everything in this regard and "knowledge drives change, liberation and civilization". In addition, political and military steps are also crucial to

accomplish the ultimate goal and it can be said that three of them are complementary to each other. The researcher also puts forward that being victorious is not something that can be accomplished only through wars. It has more dimensions than this and everything done by the Prophet besides his characteristic features like leadership and having a broad vision is a clear example of it. It is doubtless that treading the Prophet's footsteps regarding what he has done to conquer Bayt al-Maqdis, basically the main principles of it, contributes to the Palestinian cause and the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis.

#### **4.3. THE ROLE OF CULTURAL ACTIVITIES**

Anything that can be possibly done to remind both Palestine's current and the next generation of the history, culture and values of Palestine should be done in this regard. It is doubtless that such an attempt contributes to not only keeping the struggles to the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis and hopes in this regard alive, but also constituting a collective identity and solidarity among the Palestinians. Within this context, the developments in music, folklore, art and dance are remarkable to get the most of it in any possible way to contribute to the cause directly and indirectly and find different solution ways even if what is brought to the table is not something leading to huge developments and radical changes instantly that brings about liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis and the problem is solved once and for all. Expecting such a thing would be something beyond imagination and far from reality. The researcher, however, argues that anything, contributing one way or another directly or indirectly and providing an opportunity to advance step by step through the ultimate goal, serves well within this context. Hence, the developments in music, art and film should not be ignored in this regard and it is important in many ways. However, it should be kept in mind that what is meant by that is not particularly the aforementioned literary books and novels that is nothing but a sheer expression of their feelings towards the city and how beautiful it is. Distinguishing one from another in this regard is important to comprehend what will be discussed in this section.

First of all, "the development of cultural organizations over the last 15 years has had a substantial effect on social and cultural life in Palestine, and has served as an important model for civil, non-violent resistance to the occupation" (McDonald, 2006, p. 6) and what is aimed with such cultural organizations is not merely educating or

entertaining, it is also important in terms of being conveyed the national feelings and constituting a collective identity as well. Being raised people's awareness and providing an environment to spread the actual facts, rather than what is presented by some biased media organizations, can be provided with such cultural tools considering what is highlighted by David A. McDonald who is a Professor of Ethnomusicology in Indiana University: "Compared to the angry scenes broadcast by international media, non-violent social and cultural activism goes largely unnoticed by the foreign press. The daily negotiation of Palestinian life under occupation is constituted by more than stones and demonstrations. It also includes building cultural bridges, inspiring artistic production, and creating moments of hope and achievement..." (McDonald, 2006, p. 6). The following incident can be considered a good example of the effect of music and its relation with the conflict in the region: "The improvised poetry of the shi'r largely played upon and within established musical archetypes, such as al-dal'ouna, al-'ataba, al-jafra, that later became the basis for the development of Palestinian Intifada song" (McDonald, 2006, p. 7). Works, mainly focusing on historicizing the Palestinian people, their past and struggles against the occupying forces, are produced by nationalist historians, artists and poets. It can be argued that such works can be considered a reminder, because it revives what they have been fighting for and the reasons they have to stand tall and resist what has been happening in the region for years. Moreover, being revised the music culture in the early 1980s and turned into a tool to spread national notions especially among the Palestinian youth by the production of nationalist songs is important in this regard. The researcher also argues that music, art, cinema, basically all sort of things having an artistic value reflects the attitude of society, their way of lives, approach or reactions towards events. In short, it can be argued it is the mirror of the society and being replaced the resistance songs with the songs of peace and reconciliation in the following years of the Oslo Accords is a good example within this context (McDonald, 2006, p. 8).

Secondly, taking the globalization of cultural events like art and cinema into the consideration, the researcher puts forward such events are remarkable tools to spread the struggles of the Palestinian society in predicament suffering from injustice and what has been done by the Israelis. The Edward Said National Conservatory for Music (ESNMC) and the Palestinian National Orchestra are noteworthy in this sense.

“The Palestinian National Orchestra (PNO) presents an interesting model of resistance” and what is aimed with ESNMC by performing together as a national orchestra is to bring a new face to the Palestinian struggle (McDonald, 2006, p. 10). The researcher also puts forward such organizations can be a symbol of the Palestinian Diaspora and the nationalist struggle if what is planned put into practice regarding a worldwide tour which will provide a fruitful platform for the discussion of the Palestinian cause and to spread the facts related to what really has been going on in the region and the misery caused by the occupiers. In addition, what is told by Mohammad Fadel is important in this regard: “We want to show the world that we can fight for our freedom peacefully and in this case through music” (McDonald, 2006, p. 11).

Thirdly, the Jerusalem Festival that was held in 2002 with the main theme of it, namely “Songs of Freedom”, is an explicit example showing the role of such activities’ in giving a public voice to a specific issue, the conflict between Palestine and Israel in this case. Musicians coming from all over the world, especially from Europe, Africa and North America perform Palestine resistance songs and contribute to being heard the injustice in the region and the predicament that the Palestinians are in.

Finally, such events and activities besides raising awareness within this context are also remarkable considering Israelis' attempt to erase what is related to Palestine including its culture, values and traditions. They also make great effort to present what actually belongs to Palestinians as if it is theirs (Sheety, 2015, p. 1). For instance, the way they dress is a good example in this regard. Palestinians' way of dressing is quite traditional and it has a distinctive style (Sheety, 2015, p. 5). However, Israelis attempt to adopt it in a sense. Keffiyeh is presented as it belongs to Israelis, although it is something associated with Palestinians and their culture for a long period of time (Sheety, 2015, p. 6). Israeli women and children wearing embroidered clothing of Palestinian villagers are another example in this regard (Sheety, 2015, p. 6). Apart from it, it can be said that Israeli foods are mostly taken from Palestinian cuisine. Before elaborating it, it must be noted that such attempts can be considered a part of banal nationalism and it also contributes to creating their own culture (Ranta & Mandel, 2014, p. 414). Besides, they use any possible tools and methods to spread what is labeled as a part of their culture and evoke a sense of reality in this regard. There is even a song on

falafel stressing it is their national dish. There are postcards highlighting falafel with an Israeli flag on it (Ranta & Mandel, 2014, pp. 415-416). There are many other foods such as hummus and pita bread besides falafel. What is done by them within this context is nothing but de-Palestinianization in a sense as something serving Israelis' interest (Ranta & Mandel, 2014, p. 426). Considering what is highlighted regarding this issue, the aforementioned activities and events in this section of the thesis are quite important to stand against such attempts.

To sum up, the researcher puts forward the role of cultural events such as music, art and film and its contribution to spread any sort of ideology, movement and expression cannot be ignored. As it is seen in the aforementioned examples, it can be turned into a very beneficial tool to spread the rightness of Palestine in the conflict between Israel and Palestine and what they have been suffering from for years. It draws people's attention from all over the world including the ones who are not even particularly interested in this issue and raises awareness on what is going on in the region. It also contributes to constituting a collective identity in Palestinian society. In addition, it evokes a sense of solidarity and unity and it reminds them of the past, their values and what they have been fighting for. Approaching from this perspective, it gives hope and power to stand against the occupiers to retreat what belongs to them at the first place. Last but not least, the researcher stresses that it shows the best way to fight back and resist something unpleasant and injustice is not through violence and it can be resisted against the oppression through cultural activism as an effective tool in this regard.

#### **4.4. LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD: THE ROLE OF MEDIA**

Role of media deserves to be highlighted profoundly in this regard. Media in general and main means of mass communication in particular are quite significant and efficient to spread any sort of movement, ideology and expression and its role and function to raise people's awareness on any issue cannot and should not be overlooked within this context. The researcher argues the ones, realizing the true power of such tools to be heard publicly and draw people's attention to a specific issue, go to any lengths to make the most of it. A current example of it can be seen in America. "George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, was killed by a member of the Minneapolis Police

Department when an officer used his knee to pin Floyd's neck to the ground for over eight minutes" (Dave et al, 2020, p. 1). News of the killing spreads quickly and brings about immediate protest of the police officer's behavior, with the first protest taking place in Minneapolis on the next day, May 26 2020. His death also sparks protests in nationwide and Black Lives Matter protests that are sparked by the killing of George Floyd in police custody have brought a new wave of attention to the issue of inequality within criminal justice (Dave et al, 2020, pp. 2-3). It should be noted that it is not an issue that is merely related to a death of a black man by a police officer. What makes the things even more intensified is the sense of inequality and racism which has been a major issue that has been made great efforts to solve branch and root in America and what the researcher wants to focus on within this context is the effective use of means of mass communication to express their frustration and raise people's awareness on the issue so that radical changes take place to solve it. Moreover, the researcher underlines the fact that media is not the only tool used to make themselves heard in this regard. What they do to spread it in every possible way and turn it into a worldwide issue considering the more attention it gets, the quicker results they can get to solve it. Hence, they use every platform to be heard by more people and raise their awareness to the issue. NBA organization is also one of them. One may be confused or bewildered, because it may not make any sense how to use it for such a purpose. However, they have managed to turn it into a platform that they can benefit from. To make the most of it in this regard, "the phrase "Black Lives Matter" is displayed in large lettering on the court. Players from different teams kneel together around the Black Lives Matter logo on the court during the national anthem before the start of an NBA basketball game (Barrabi, 2020). Besides, to draw attention and raise people's awareness on the issue, many players prefer to place slogans on their jersey such as "Black Lives Matter", "I Can't Breathe", "Justice", "Peace", "Equality", "Say Her Name", "Anti-Racist", "Group Economics" and "I Am a Man" (Wallace, 2020).

Within this context, they mix creativity with the possible tools and methods. In a sense, what is done evokes what is put forward by Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi. El-Awaisi also argues creativity is a significant element in this regard considering what he aims at by coining the term 'Islamicjerusalem'.

The examples can be multiplied. Even if it is not related to media, power of society and the impacts of raising people's awareness on an issue are numerous. Martin Luther King Jr. and what he has done can be considered a good example in this sense. Martin Luther, who was an American Baptist minister and activist becoming the most visible spokesperson "as the leader of the civil rights movement" in 1955 (Sunnemark, 2004, p. 85), makes a great effort to become the voice for those who cannot express themselves and raise awareness of people on this unfortunate issue. "The period 1955 to 1968 has been called "the King years" of American history" (Sunnemark, 2004, p. 1). His speech that is majorly known as "I Have a Dream" is turning point in this regard. With his speech, that is considered a call for a society that everyone is equal without discrimination, raises people's awareness that are not only within the boundaries of America, but also from all over the world. The impacts of it are numerous and changes many things radically. As it is mentioned above, the examples can be multiplied. The researcher, however, finds suitable the examples that are put forward enough to comprehend the cruciality and role of media and power of societies regarding its impact and raising people's awareness on an issue. Considering everything discussed above, it can be argued that raising people's awareness on the Palestinian issue and role and power of societies as it is seen explicitly in the aforementioned event related to Martin Luther King Jr. are critical and significant. Within this context, media in general and main means of mass communication in particular are quite important and efficient. Hence, the researcher argues such tools can be used to draw people's attention to the Palestinian issue and turn the tables on in a sense and it is doubtless that it contributes to the Palestinian cause in a direct way.

In addition to everything discussed above, what is put forward by Edward Said as a solution way worths highlighting in this regard. Said underlines the fact that Palestinians have failed to counteract the Israeli policy of selling to the world the notion of Jerusalem belonging exclusively to Israel, a failure that has enabled Israel to tighten its grip on the Holy City. (Yousef, 2017, p. 1489). It can be said that this is something that Israel has systematically pursued since the occupation. Media and similar tools serving the same purpose are used "in projecting an essentially false image of what it wants the world to believe, and then acting decisively to make that vision a reality" (Said, 2011, p. 57). Even "in 1991 Jerusalem had already been annexed by Israel for

twenty-four years, its topography, environment and historic aura massively intervened in, forcibly changed, demographically tampered with. Yet what had communicated itself of this unpleasant history to the outside world was a cheerful symbol of pioneering, humane enterprise, which is to say very little of what had been done to Jerusalem, and what its (then) Palestinian majority in the Eastern part of the city had been forced to endure in the way of quite considerable loss and suffering” (Said, 2011, p. 59). Basically, the world is unaware of the tragedy and unfairness that the Palestinians have had to face with and endure for years. Majority of people do not even have a clue about what has been going on in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Considering everything mentioned above, the role of media in general and main means of mass communication in particular are vitally significant and cannot be overlooked in this regard.

Said also stresses that there are people from all over the world criticizing what has been done by the state of Israel and the American population that stands against the Israelis’ actions cannot be underestimated in this regard (Said, 2001, p. 247). What is proposed by Said is very notable suggestion. Basically, it stands for hitting them with their own weapon in a sense, yet with a one major difference, because this time what is served to media or people will be nothing but truths unlike the policy followed by the Israelis within this context. Considering the world we live in, use of technology and social media can be considered an alternative to the biased Western media. Besides, it provides a fruitful environment that facts and thoughts are expressed without facing any sort of oppressive limitation (Khamis, 2016, p. 38). Such platforms are quite popular in Palestinian society (Khamis, 2016, p. 39) and “the importance of social media use has been taken on board by scholars in various fields including ... education, communication” (Khamis, 2016, p. 34). Considering what is achieved through internet and alternative platforms by Palestinians majorly to resist the occupation and spread the actual facts in this regard as it highlighted in the thesis, such platforms cannot be overlooked. In short, it can be argued media and similar tools serving the same purpose should be used to enhance awareness of not only the rightness of Palestine in the issue, but also what they have been suffering for years, the tragedy in the occupied territories. Taking everything discussed into the consideration, media and other means of mass communication must be considered a weapon in their arsenal to get them closer to the

salvation of Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular by drawing people's attention to the issue and forcing both people and international organizations to take action in this regard.

#### **4.5. TURKEY AS THE ACTUAL POWER CENTER IN THE REGION**

Turkey's role in the conflict between Israel and Palestine is critical and cannot be overlooked, hence it warrants scrutinizing in this regard. Turkey has always been a strong supporter on the side of Palestine throughout the history and especially in the recent past. Turkey has strong ties with Palestine and the Holy Land. The origin of it, however, dates back to centuries ago considering the importance attached to the Holy Land starting with the advent of Islam and the following developments and events taking place under the reign of Ottoman Empire. Basically, it can be argued Turkey and Palestine are two friendly countries having intimate relations historically, culturally and religiously. Taking the following event into the consideration is enough to see how deeply rooted the relation between the two countries are. In 1980s, the times that Turkey did not have major problems with Israel, what drives a wedge between the countries was the Israelis' claim to be recognized Quds as the capital of Israel (Öz & Tüten, 2018, p. 646). Some Muslim countries prefer to remain silent by putting their interest above the status of the Holy Land which the cruciality of unity among the Muslim countries towards the issue is something stressed frequently by both El-Awaisi and Said, yet the developments within this context are nothing but disappointment. Turkey, however, by ignoring all such factors, stands against them and reacts severely. Considering everything discussed above, the researcher puts forward that Turkey, unlike the other countries, can follow an aggressive policy and step up in this regard. What is told by the president of Turkey recently is another prove showing that Turkey stands beside Palestine and defends their rightfulness on the issue at all cost. Besides political aspect, Turkey signs Free Trade Agreement with Palestine to contribute to improvement in Palestinian economy (Çalışır, 2020, p. 64).

Another important factor related to the issue is Egypt. Even though Egypt cannot have a direct impact on the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis, the importance attached to Egypt cannot be overlooked considering its role and crucial location regarding Bayt al-Maqdis. Sara El-Awaisi quoted by Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi argues that Bayt al-Maqdis

cannot be secured unless Egypt is secured, and vice versa (A. El-Awaisi, 2019, p. 31). Egypt is a gate for Bayt al-Maqdis and because of this reason, the Crusaders, failing several times in their attempt to conquer Bayt al-Maqdis, realized the fact that they should have attacked Egypt, and they did so in their fifth attempt which led them to victory in this regard (A. El-Awaisi, 2019, pp. 31-32). Besides, what is quoted by Maher Abu-Munshar is also shows the crucial role of Egypt in this sense. The Crusaders say that "Salah al-Din was able to seize cities and towns, and to wrest Jerusalem and the Syrian coast from the Crusaders only after he controlled Egypt. Therefore, for the Crusaders' great benefit, Egypt must be under their control, so they can seize Jerusalem and other places easily" (Abu-Munshar, 2013, p. 69). In short, Egypt is crucially important and it has had a key role regarding Bayt al-Maqdis and the liberation of it throughout the history considering the incidents mentioned above.

Besides, Egypt's gaining its power back prevents Israel from having the free hand in the region as the dominant power in the West Asia and may lead them to reconsider their both domestic and foreign policies, especially their attitudes towards Palestine within this context. Hence, considering the possible and indirect impacts of it related to Bayt al-Maqdis in a scenario that Egypt regains its power, the researcher finds suitable to map out a route for the salvation of Egypt. The researcher aims at identifying the most suitable ways within this context. . First of all, to see the cards left for Egypt, it is a must to list the countries that are out of the game in this regard. Jordan, United Arab Emirates and Iran are some of them. For instance, Iran is a problematic to Egypt and the other Arab countries in general considering Iran's will to control and spread their ideology among the Arab countries. In addition, Iran also abuses its power and one may dare to say what they do in Iraq and Syria is an occupation in a sense. Basically, the researcher argues Iran cannot be a trustworthy ally for the salvation of Egypt. A strong alliance between Egypt and Syria would be quite beneficial and appropriate, yet considering the current conditions of the countries, a better option can be found. The researcher's pick is Turkey in this regard, yet the researcher ignores the relations between Egypt and Turkey and suggests it for the sake of both Egypt and the region, because Turkey is vitally important in terms geopolitics and Turkey, unlike the other countries, can provide the support that Egypt strives for. Moreover, Turkey is the major candidate for being a regional power in the following years as El-Awaisi argues (A. El-

Awaisi, 2019, pp. 56-57). Besides, Turkey is in attempt to strengthen its relations in Asia considering Turkey's strategic partnerships with Asian countries (Anas, 2020, pp. 437-438). Turkey's engagement in Free Trade Agreement and economic partnerships besides the agreements with the Asian countries such as South Korea and Singapore can be considered the concrete examples in this regard (Anas, 2020, p. 440). Basically, if what is expected is materialized, "Turkey will establish itself both as a European as well as a Middle Eastern power" (Anas, 2020, p. 442). Therefore, having good relations with Turkey may be one of the best options for sake of Egypt and an alliance between the current and prior major candidates for being regional power contributes to the rise of the region and increases the overall power of Muslim countries as a significant opponent against the Israeli domination in the region which automatically contributes to the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis.

#### **4.6. THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE UNITED NATIONS**

The European Union is also crucial in salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis and its role of cannot be ignored in this regard. They pay close attention to the unrest in the West Asia and the conflict between Palestine and Israel. The first declaration reflecting their attitude towards the issue is Venice Declaration. The declaration issued in 1980 presents a framework for a comprehensive solution to the Israel- Arab conflict. It can be considered a call for "recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, a just solution to the Palestinian problem, their right to self- determination and for the PLO to be associated with the negotiations" (The European Council, 1980). In addition, what is stressed in article 7 in the declaration is also important: "The achievement of these objectives requires the involvement and support of all the parties concerned in the peace settlement which the Nine are endeavouring to promote in keeping with the principles formulated in the declaration referred to above. These principles apply to all the parties concerned, and thus to the Palestinian people, and to the PLO, which will have to be associated with the negotiations" (The European Council, 1980). What is put forward is significant, because it explicitly shows the cruciality of unity regarding solving the issue. The following developments until 2000s, however, show what is argued fails in practice, because it is hard to mention the existence of a consensus among the member nations regarding the problem (Arik, 2010, p. 43). The same can be

said for the status of Palestine in the United Nations and their demand for having full membership in the UN in 2011 considering the committee was unable to come to a consensus in this regard.

On the other hand, there are some positive developments politically. Sweden becomes the first nation in the EU to officially recognize the State of Palestine in 2014 (Toçoğlu, 2015, p. 445). In addition, The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) becomes the first U.N. agency to welcome the Palestinians as a full member since President Mahmoud Abbas applied for full membership of the United Nations on 23 September 2011. It can be said that it is doubtless that such developments contributes to both the Palestinian cause and Palestine's gaining power in political platforms and what is said by Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki is similar to what is put forward by the researcher in this sense: "Today's victory at UNESCO is the beginning of a road that is difficult, but will lead to the freedom of our land and people from occupation" and "Palestine has the right to a place on the map" (Irish, 2011). However, as of 31 July 2019 over 70% of the United Nations member states have recognized the State of Palestine.

It can be said that The European Union takes an important place in contributing to Palestine economically. The European Union has always been the one aiding Palestine financially most (Balci, 2005, p. 354). One of the most distinctive factors leading them to it is that the EU believes the improvement in Palestinian economy is a key point regarding being ended up the peace process successfully (Wood, 1998, p. 570). However, considering the current situation, obviously it is not enough to solve the issue and it requires more than aiding financially.

The role of the European Union in the conflict between Palestine and Israel is crucial considering its enormous impact in the political platforms. Approaching from this perspective, it can be said that the European Union can be considered a distinctive factor regarding solving the problem and the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis in a sense. However, how aggressive they are or will be within this context is another issue that will be discussed by the researcher in the following sections. Anyway, going back to the point, what is argued by Federica Mogherini, who served as High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European

Commission from 2014 to 2019, is important: “We need a Palestinian state. That is the ultimate goal and this is the position of all the European Union” and “we cannot just sit and wait. If we sit and wait it will go on for another 40 years. We have to have action now”. The statement is important to see on which side the European Nations is, considering the lack of unanimity among the member countries of the EU regarding the issue as it is discussed earlier in the thesis. The researcher also stresses that although it is unknown whether what is argued will be put into action or not, seeing such reactions on the atrocity in the occupied territories caused by the Israelis can be considered a positive development. Moreover, it contributes to raising the awareness on the issue as well.

However, what needs to be paid attention is the fact that although what has been done by the State of Israel is considered apartheid which is one of the crimes against humanity committed by the occupying authorities as it is discussed in earlier section of the thesis (Human Rights Watch, 2021, p. 3), the European Union does not follow an aggressive policy to resolve the issue, because it is obvious that reprimands, declarations or resolutions are not enough to put an end to the misery in the holy lands (Aral, 2019, p. 37) as it can be seen in the following event: The International Court of Justice (ICJ), principal judicial organ of the United Nations issues an advisory opinion related to the construction of the wall on 9 July 2004. In its Opinion, what is argued is the articles as follows:

“A. By fourteen votes to one,

The construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and its associated régime, are contrary to international law”;

“B. By fourteen votes to one,

Israel is under an obligation to terminate its breaches of international law; it is under an obligation to cease forthwith the works of construction of the wall being built in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, to dismantle forthwith the structure therein situated, and to repeal or render ineffective forthwith all

legislative and regulatory acts relating thereto, in accordance with paragraph 151 of this Opinion”;

“C. By fourteen votes to one,

Israel is under an obligation to make reparation for all damage caused by the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem”;

“D. By thirteen votes to two,

All States are under an obligation not to recognize the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall and not to render aid or assistance in maintaining the situation created by such construction; all States parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949 have in addition the obligation, while respecting the United Nations Charter and international law, to ensure compliance by Israel with international humanitarian law as embodied in that Convention”;

“E. By fourteen votes to one,

The United Nations, and especially the General Assembly and the Security Council, should consider what further action is required to bring to an end the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall and the associated régime, taking due account of the present Advisory Opinion.” (UN, 2004).

In short, the Court decides that the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory by Israel and its associated régime are contrary to international law. However, it is ignored by Israel that claims it is necessary to keep out West Bank militants and prevent the occurrence of more suicide attacks against its citizens.

Obviously it does not have any impact on both domestic and foreign policies of Israel and, in this case, its relation with Palestine as an occupying authority. To solve the problem within this context, the researcher comes with the idea that Israel is to be forced to change their attitude towards Palestine. Being imposed more effective sanctions on Israel can be a deterrent factor in this regard. Even putting embargo can be

considered a good alternative to force them act in a more humanist way and change the direction of the wind in a sense. Basically, forcing Israel to change their attitude towards Palestine is the essence of what is proposed by the researcher and such efforts can be considered a major step getting them closer to the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis considering the European Union's enormous impact in the political platforms.



## CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

What is mainly discussed in the thesis are the policies and methods that are employed by the State of Israel to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis. Before proceeding any further, the researcher, however, discusses the concept of the Holy Land by comparing and contrasting it in terms of Islam, Christianity and Judaism by giving specific examples of it so that the reader can comprehend what is discussed in the rest of the thesis in a more conscious way. Then, the tools and methods besides the policies that are followed by the Israelis to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis and Judaize the land are scrutinized in a detailed way. Within this context, the policies followed and actions taken by the State of Israel that serves their interest in an indirect way are also elaborated. The next step was to discuss the question that the impacts of Israeli policies in Bayt al-Maqdis are whether permanent or temporary. It is quite significant, because it can be said the destiny of Bayt al-Maqdis will be shaped according to the outcome of this question in a sense. It is not an easy question to answer or to come up with one final and accurate answer considering the uncertainty in the land and the conflict between Palestine and Israel. The researcher, however, did his best to draw a conclusion. Within this context, the similar events from the history are examined to compare and contrast the process and the question is discussed from different aspects. Last but not least, the possible solution ways to put an end to the misery in the Occupied Palestinian Territories in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular are scrutinized in a detailed way. Hopefully, what is discussed in this regard will be what it leads to the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis. Basically, these are the major issues highlighted in the thesis and what will be argued in this section of it will be cream of the cream in a sense.

It can be said that Israel makes great effort to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis and Judaize the land considering everything discussed in the thesis. Numerous

policies and methods are employed and increasing the Israeli population and outnumbering in the land while decreasing the total number of Palestinians simultaneously is one of the major policies used in this regard. Actually, it can be argued this is a goal that Israel has been pursuing since the very beginning of the occupation. After the Balfour Declaration, number of waves of Jewish immigration is multiplied and the Zionists, aiming at widening the gap between Jewish and Arab population, force them to leave the region by following countless different methods and tools as it is scrutinized earlier sections of the thesis. Absentees' Property Law is also important in this regard and what is aimed with that is to drive more Palestinian people out of their own homeland. Besides, following the 1967 war and the occupation of the rest of Palestine, they also attempt to limit the Arab population in the region and the Israelis are encouraged to erect new buildings and increase the population in the land whereas Arab population is subjected to several restrictions and juridical laws. Within this context, one third of the eastern side of the city is expropriated for the Jewish residents and four fifths of what is left is prohibited for the Arab settlement. Green zone project plays a crucial role in this sense and it must be noted that all these actions and implementations are illegal in International Law. Obviously, what has been done, all these policies and methods are not enough for the Israelis and they take it to another dimension and keep making things difficult for them considering the fact that it takes 10 years on average to be approved of a new settlement plan for the Palestinians whereas it takes less than 3 years for the Jews. In addition, they take advantage of the overall economic condition of the Arab inhabitants living there by making building permits almost unaffordable for them considering most of the Palestinians in the land carry on their lives below the poverty line. The researcher defines what has been done by the State of Israel a frustration policy, because they make life harder for the Arab population and force them to either carry on a frustrating life or leave the city and move another land or a country. In addition, they also put into action a series of regulations related to citizenship, work and residency permits as it is elaborated in the related section of the thesis. In short, they transform the physical and demographic structure of Bayt al-Maqdis and they attempt to turn it into a fundamentally Jewish city under the Israeli sovereignty primarily by creating the largest possible Jewish majority. Besides, they make life much more difficult for the Palestinians so that they come to point that

they cannot resist and leave the land and move somewhere else. The aforementioned policies can be considered the main components of settler colonialism. Within this context, keeping colonizer and colonized separate, displacement of the indigenous, forcing them to leave and logic of elimination reflect the settler colonial nature of the State of Israel. These are the explicit conclusions that can be drawn from what is discussed above. However, the researcher puts forward that the threat is much more than what is obvious in this regard. First and foremost, it changes the dynamics of the land and reshapes the future and fate of it. Outnumbering in population brings about being heard their voices louder and makes them superior to the rest of the population living there. Secondly, it also allows them to justify what is done by them regardless of the fact that it is right or not. Considering the power they have and the superiority in population, media and main means of communication are turned into tools that provide them a platform to spread their claims and made up facts besides the fact that it can be used to justify their actions easily. Last but not least, it is crucial to change the identity of the land, because the land is shaped by the environment and population plays a major role within this context. Taking the role of population in shaping the general characteristics of a city dramatically into the consideration, it can be said that it affects almost everything including even food, tourism, and people's way of life and the Jewish traditions and culture possess the city in the long run. Most importantly, population is a distinctive factor regarding the language and terminology. Hence, it even affects the language used in the public signs, street names etc. However, what is much more critical within this context is the fact that the population has a significant role in terms of the major language used in education and the general curriculum. The actual threat is that once is achieved through and through, the consequences of it will be irreversible in terms of the fate of the city including the identity, history and traditions of it.

In the thesis, the role of education and the way it is turned into a crucial tool serving their ultimate goal are scrutinized in a detailed way. It is used as a tool to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis and impose whatsoever they want on the Palestinian students. It is argued that it is not something coming up suddenly. On the contrary, it is an outcome of well-thought-out plan and the role and cruciality of education should not be overlooked, the researcher argues that it is education that both the salvation and fall of Bayt al-Maqdis lay. Within this context, the researcher finds

suitable to summarize what may possibly leads to the fall of Bayt al-Maqdis through education. To begin with, as it is mentioned above, it is quite effective to change the identity of the land which is something aimed by the Zionists since the very first day. They intend to impose their own culture and traditions on Palestinian students, although they have failed in their attempts as it is highlighted in the thesis. The researcher puts forward that education system and curriculum can be used as a tool to transfer so-called facts made up by the Israelis to the next generations and justify it as well and the only thing transferred is not restricted with it obviously. Everything related to the land including its culture, history, even the major reasons and factors making the land holy and so unique among the anywhere else in the world is perceived from the Israeli point of view and conveyed into the Palestinian students in the same way. The point of view is crucial within this context, because it changes everything dramatically. One may comprehend what the researcher means by that by considering what makes the Holy Land holy for the Jews and the Muslims or the history of Bayt al-Maqdis and how different it is when it is narrated by a Muslim or a Jewish historian. Basically, it enables for them to recreate the past and even the possible future like the way they desire and in a way serving their interest most. It also allows them to wipe out national feelings and Palestinian traditions and values which bring about judaizing the land easily in every possible way, although they have not succeeded in this regard. Besides, education is also related to the language and it automatically leads the researcher to highlighting the following section that takes the reader to a point where hopes for the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis are either gone for good or they stand tall and resist what has been done by the Israelis and keep pursuing their dreams in a sense.

Language and its role regarding changing the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis are discussed and approached from different aspects in the dissertation. Before proceeding any further, it should be noted that language is one of the most significant components constituting a nation and turning it into a weapon that serves their interest greatly is something deserving utmost attention. First and foremost, there is a linear relation between language and power and it can be said that such a relation can be observed more obviously in the countries where conflicts and identity crisis take place severely. From this perspective, language can be considered a sign of domination and power which is something the Israelis are looking for considering its contribution to their

goals. It also creates a sense of superiority and having such an asset can be very beneficial for them to strengthen the Jewish hegemony in the land. In addition to the role of language regarding power relations, its impact can be seen in education system explicitly. Language and culture teaching are remarkable indicators reflecting the power relations. Another issue that needs to be highlighted is that the Israeli Jews, realizing how important and crucial the spoken language is in terms of serving their interest, pave the way for forcing the Palestinians to talk Hebrew and seek way to make it necessary to use in a sense. The attitudes of the officials in the checkpoints, education system, social and medical circumstances are just a couple of examples demanding Hebrew's usage and turning it into an obligation in sense. Within this context, the researcher puts forward that necessity is a keyword. The Israelis, as it is highlighted, have followed different methods to achieve it and by doing so, they turn it into a must and as a result of it, Hebrew is to be spoken one way or another. Taking the role of language regarding shaping both the past and the future of a society into the account, the researcher argues anything done to enhance the use of Hebrew not only in particular areas, but all over the region is nothing but an attempt to Judaize the region from a different aspect. Language is the identity of a society and considering Zionists' ultimate goal, changing the identity of the society is more than important for them. That is why, Palestinians make great effort to resist using Hebrew as a tool to slow down Judaization.

What needs to be touched upon within this context is the intimate relation between language and identity considering its cruciality in many ways. To summarize, language is one of the most prominent factors regarding shaping one's identity and character. Besides, language is considered one of the most important and core components constituting a society. Ethnolinguistic identity is another important term that needs to be borne in mind within this context, because many linguists argue that identities are constructed through languages. In addition to the ones discussed, the researcher underlines that it affects culture and to be precise, it affects everything largely, because speaking Hebrew or switching to it on some occasions may not mean anything to the speaker and does not bother him/her either. However, what starts with language continues with adaptation to the Jewish culture and custom. At the end of the day, after one generation, what has been struggling for years for the liberation and

regaining what already belongs to Palestine besides everything done to preserve the culture, history and identity are going to be in vain.

The State of Israel, aiming at turning the Occupied Palestinian Territories in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular into a region possessed by Jewish identity, culture and values under the Israeli hegemony, goes to any lengths to make sure they do whatever they can and take advantage of every single policy, method and tool serving their interest and getting them closer to their ultimate goal in this regard. Turning historical and religious sites, graves and shrines into something that is exclusive to the Jews, basically Judaizing them by making up facts and relicts to strengthen their claims is one of them. The researcher argues that for the State of Israel, the image in people's mind is equally crucial as much as changing the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis by implementing different methods to achieve this ultimate goal is, because they are well aware that raising a sense of reality, twisting people's mind and making them believe what is presented by the Israelis, that are chiefly fabricated facts, are vitally important to accomplish their ultimate goal. Once they achieve it thoroughly and win the majority of people over, it means that they have already made significant progress on their ultimate goal, because societies and people's role regarding such worldwide issues cannot be ignored considering the importance of having their support and numerous advantages coming with that. Within this context, the Israeli government seeks ways to strengthen such ties and take advantage of every possible thing to get them one step closer their ultimate goal. The researcher also stresses that Jewish immigration from all over the world to the occupied territories plays an important role in terms of adapting and turning sacred sites into Jewish sites by taking advantage of new demographical changes and political reality. In addition to the advantages they have economically and politically, they take benefit of the power they have regarding spreading the fabricated facts and misleading people. With that, they take it one step further and they even dare to claim that many Muslim holy places are originally Jewish and basically the Muslims transform Jewish holy sites and sanctities into Muslim sacred sites and erase its Jewish roots as well. Furthermore, they spread the fabricated facts by academicians and scholars so that it raises a sense of reality. Attempting to erase the Muslim past related to the historical and religious sites and graves besides undermining the value and importance attached to it by Muslims is another major tool employed in this sense. Al-

Aqsa Mosque stands out among the others in this regard and it can be said that it is at the top of the list in their agenda considering the importance attached to it. It is a well-known fact that Zionists have an intention to demolish the mosque and build the temple on the ruins of it. They employ numerous methods and policies to take over the control of the site. Apart from it, they use every possible method to justify their intentions and spread their claims in this regard which is nothing but an attempt to twist people's mind and evoke an image that they have such a right on the site as if it is based on actual facts. Basically, the occupying authority makes great effort to Judaize the sacred sites regardless of the fact that it has Jewish past and roots or it is originally a Muslim sacred place. Being vandalized the site of David's Tomb and smashed the ceramic tiles covering the majority of the walls of the sacred site that is considered it reflects Muslim traditions and culture is a good example in this regard and what they aim by that is to wipe out what may be possibly associated with the Muslims, in other words, its Muslim past and value so that it is considered exclusively a Jewish site. David's Tomb is not the only religious site and the same scenario can be seen for many historical and religious sites in this regard. Taking everything discussed into the consideration, the researcher comes to the conclusion that what has been done by the Israeli government and the efforts that they have put into within this context is a part of a broader process serving a greater purpose. The Israeli Jews want to be exclusive every holy sites regardless of the fact that it is associated with them or not, basically they want to Judaize such sites. To be precise, they aim at strengthening their sovereignty in the region by evoking a sense that the land including the history and the religious values that are associated with the Holy Land belongs to the Israelis. It should be also noted that legitimacy and normalization are crucial factors regarding settler colonialism. Settler colonialism seeks to legitimize itself as a core component of it and legitimizing historical claims and strengthening Jewish roots by employing numerous policies and methods can be considered a part of this process. Taking what is discussed within this context into the account, it is argued that the State of Israel is a settler colonial state in many aspects.

Taking all methods and policies that are applied by the Israeli government besides the ones summarizing here into the consideration, the researcher draws the conclusion that every policy followed, every regulation put into action is closely intertwined. In other words, it is connected with each other in many ways and

approaching from this perspective, the researcher likens it to the cogs in the wheel in a sense. Basically, one regulation or policy followed by them comes with multiple outcomes that serve the Israelis' interest one way or another and it impacts the Palestinian society economically, politically or socially in negative ways without exception. For instance, one of the priorities of Israel as a settler colonial state is to increase the Jewish population in the region and decrease the Arab population simultaneously, because this allows them to become the upper hand in the land and strengthen the Jewish hegemony in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, especially in Bayt al-Maqdis and approaching from a broader perspective, to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis. What is majorly aimed with that is to set a proper ground to turn it into a convenient land that the policies, methods and regulations serving their interest can be applied effectively and easily. The methods and policies paving the way for outnumbering in the region and strengthening the Jewish hegemony provide a fruitful environment for implementing other methods and policies as well. Within this context, they are able to practice their religious rituals freely considering their convenience to access the historical and religious sites and lack of Muslim population visiting the sites and graves frequently because of their expulsion and the occupation. The Absentees' Property Law is also important regarding making the things easier for the State of Israel whereas it works in the reverse way for Palestine and local Muslim population. Besides, the researcher puts forward that being the upper hand in the land regarding population has a dramatic impact in many factors such as spoken language, education and the regulations and decisions made. Moreover, considering the power they have economically, socially and politically in addition to their superiority in population, it provides an environment that they can justify their actions by spreading the fabricated facts and misleading people. In short, one regulation or policy followed by the Israeli government comes with multiple consequences that serve their interest one way or another. The researcher comes to conclusion that everything done by the Israelis is a part of well-thought-out plan and closely intertwined. Hence, to solve one of the aforementioned issues root and branch, almost everything from the very beginning must be solved in a sense.

The question that the impacts of Israeli policies in Bayt al-Maqdis are whether permanent or temporary is quite critical, because the outcome will be what majorly

shapes the destiny of Bayt al-Maqdis in a sense. In this context, it is argued that living under a dominant country's sovereignty for a long period of time brings about some consequences that are going to put Palestine in predicament in the long run, especially in terms of language and culture considering Israelis present what is associated with Palestinian culture as if it is theirs. Taking the similarities between the aforementioned cases highlighted in the related section of the thesis and Israelis' aggressive policies to turn Hebrew into the dominant and major language in the region and impose their own values, culture and traditions on the Palestinian society in every possible way into the consideration, the researcher puts forward it is highly possible that the impact of Israeli policies within this context is permanent unless the situation and its seriousness are comprehended through and through and precautions are taken forthwith in this sense. Taking everything related to the question into the consideration, what is proposed by the researcher is quite important to show resistance against what has been attempted by the Israelis and turn the tables on: It is argued national history and values, basically all sort of components constituting a nation and preserving it by not letting it being wiped out by the Israelis considering their policies and efforts to erase the Palestinian history, especially the ones related to the Holy Land which strengthens the Palestinians' ties with the land in a sense, are vitally significant. Preserving such values brings about Israelis' failure in their attempt within this context and it can be considered a counter action against what has been done by the Israelis to change the identity of the region and Judaize it in a sense.

In the thesis, the cruciality and importance of education is highlighted many times and this is exactly what turns it into a very critical issue regarding the question. The researcher comes to the conclusion that education can be easily turned into a weapon serving Israelis' interest and used as a tool to break Palestinians' power to resist and stand against what they have been suffering from for a long period of time considering the irreversibility of the impacts of what has been attempted to achieve by the Israeli government through education. It should be kept in mind that it also leads to loss of hope, in this case it is the liberation Bayt al-Maqdis, because it is argued that losing hope equals death in this regard and the incidents discussed in earlier sections prove the accurateness of what is proposed. In brief, the impacts of Israeli policies in Bayt al-Maqdis regarding education is quite significant and crucial, because education

system and curriculum can be easily turned into a tool paving the way for transferring so-called facts made up by the Israelis to the next generations to strengthen their claims on the land and make them believe that it is originally a Jewish city and region by twisting people's mind and evoking a sense of reality. It also allows them to justify what they have done as well. In other words, it enables them to recreate the past and shape the future in a way serving their interest most. It also allows them to Judaize the land. Basically, the consequences of it are irreversible and the impacts of it will be definitely permanent unless precise and accurate counter actions are taken in this regard. However, when it comes to regulations and policies affecting Palestinian economy and people's standard of living by making life difficult for them in every aspect by aiming at their coming to a point that they cannot resist what they have had to suffer and endure in everyday life and leave the land and move somewhere else which is something desired by the Israelis and serving their interest in an indirect way, it is argued that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Considering the examples from the history such as America in the Great Depression, German economy that laid in shambles in the following years of World War II besides Soviet Union and England as some of the countries that found themselves in a similar situation in varying degrees and went downsizing in the aftermath of the war, the researcher comes to conclusion that what has been done by the Israelis that affects Palestinian economy can be overcome even if it is not an easy task to undo the impacts of it and start from the scratch in a sense which requires determination, plenty of time and hard work. However, it is quite possible to see considerable developments in Palestinian economy if necessary measures are taken and systematic and well-thought-out plan that is based on knowledge is followed. Within this context, the possible solution ways, that get them closer step by step to the salvation and liberation of Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular, are quite important and it takes the reader to a point where this journey ends and the construction of hopeful future of Bayt al-Maqdis begins.

First and foremost, scholarship and knowledge stands out among any other factor contributing to the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis. It must be considered the solid ground for what is aimed and everything planned must be established on this ground, because anything that is not based on scholarship and knowledge no matter how well planned it is will end up failure and disappointment. The importance attached to it and

its role within this context are twofold. Firstly, considering the world we live in, it can be said that almost everything is related to power and it is knowledge where power comes from. Hence, knowledge that is intertwined with scholarship is exactly what is essential for the sake of Bayt al-Maqdis and making the liberation of it come true. Secondly, there are a lot of misinformation and biased works serving the Israelis' interest. Besides, academic platforms provide a fruitful environment for Jewish scholars to publish their biased works. The deficient in available literature and number of qualified and eminent academicians specializing on Palestine and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular, although there are many eminent academicians in this regard, is another problematic issue making things easier for them to mislead people and spread their so-called facts besides the fact that Orientalists and Jewish scholars take advantage of it and attempt to undermine the Muslim literature in addition to the historical and significant incidents related to Islam and Bayt al-Maqdis. Such works and disinformation make quite difficult to differentiate between what is wrong and what is right. The intellectual Nakba and the occupation of the mind before the occupation of the land are quite crucial issues in this regard and it is argued knowledge is a game changer within this context as well. In short, the researcher argues the forgotten priority for the liberation of Palestine in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular is knowledge and scholarship.

The importance and cruciality of media and major means of communication are underlined and elaborated in a detailed way in the thesis. First of all, such tools can be used very efficiently to spread the actual facts related to Bayt al-Maqdis and what has been going on in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the tragedy caused by the State of Israel, because people do not know much about what Palestinians have had to suffer in everyday life and the hardships that they have had to endure for years. Being driven out of their homeland is already another issue on its own. However, it is little known by people from worldwide and media and similar tools serving the same purpose should be considered an effective and crucial weapon in their arsenal to raise people's awareness on the issue considering the more attention it gets, the quicker results they can get to solve it. Besides, the power of society within this context should not be overlooked. Considering the world changing and developing constantly, internet and social media turned into one of the major platforms that are used to build up not only awareness, but

also justification on a specific issue and it provides a fruitful and quite effective platform to let one's voice be heard. So, it can be said that it is significant in many aspects. Media and similar tools, providing a platform to spread and justify the actions taken, are used by the Israelis to strengthen their claims and evoke a sense of reality. Therefore, using such tools and platforms to contribute to the Palestinian cause can be considered a counter action in a sense. In short, social media and major means of communication are important and efficient. Hence, the researcher argues such tools can be used to draw people's attention to the issue and turn the tables in a sense and it is doubtless that it contributes to the Palestinian cause in a direct way.

Turkey's role regarding the conflict between Israel and Palestine is discussed from different aspects in the dissertation. Turkey, having intimate relations with Palestine for a long period of time politically, religiously and culturally considering the events in the history, is a strong country that can step up to defend and support the Palestinian cause unlike the other Muslim countries putting their interest over the occupation and the tragedy in the Holy Land which should be protected by all Muslims actually at the first place considering the teachings of Islam. In addition, Turkey is a major candidate to become a regional power in the region. Turkey has closely followed the recent developments in the region besides its direct involvement in Syria, Libya and Azerbaijan. If what is expected comes true in a near future, it is doubtless that it will contribute to the rise of the region and increases the overall power of Muslim countries as a significant opponent against the Israeli domination in the region which leads them to reconsider their both domestic and foreign policies, especially their attitudes towards Palestine within this context and it automatically contributes to the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis.

The role of establishments having enormous impact in politics such as the European Union cannot be ignored and it takes a crucial place regarding the solution of the Palestinian issue. Such establishments also contribute to Palestine's place in politic platforms in the worldwide. Palestine is officially recognized by many countries. Besides, Palestine has a full membership in the United Nations since 2019. The examples can be multiplied within this context and it is argued that such developments

contribute to both the Palestinian cause and Palestine's gaining power in political platforms.

In the dissertation, it is highlighted that the European Union also takes an important place in contributing to Palestine economically. One of the most distinctive factors leading them to it is that the European Union believes the improvement in Palestinian economy is a key point regarding being ended up the peace process successfully. Moreover, as it is underlined above, the role of the European Union is crucial regarding solving the problem and the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis. It is doubtless they have power to change the course of the history within this context. However, having that power is one thing, going any lengths by using that power to put an end to the misery in the land which should be considered a humane goal is another, because it is obvious that what has been done by them besides the struggles of the United Nations are not enough to cease the actions taken by the Israeli government that put the Palestinians in a predicament besides the occupation itself. Considering the fact that reprimands, declarations or resolutions are not enough to put an end to the misery in the land, the researcher puts forward that being followed an aggressive policy by the European Union to see concrete results and resolve the issue is a must within this context. Besides, the Israeli government has to be forced to change their attitude towards Palestine. Being imposed more effective sanctions on Israel can be a deterrent factor in this regard. Even putting embargo can be considered a good alternative to force them act in a more humanist way and change the direction of the wind in a sense. Basically, it is concluded that forcing Israel to change their attitude towards Palestine is the essence of what is proposed by the researcher and such efforts can be considered a major step getting them closer to the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis taking the European Union's enormous impact in political platforms into the account. Apart from it, considering the importance attached to Bayt al-Maqdis as a worldwide issue, the researcher puts forward that justice is what is necessary to establish peace not only in the region, but also the worldwide. Besides, a peaceful order cannot be restored in Bayt al-Maqdis without justice. Approaching from this perspective, justice is a keyword regarding the salvation of Bayt al-Maqdis.

In conclusion, there are many policies and methods employed by the State of Israel to change the identity of Bayt al-Maqdis. The Israeli government, aiming at turning the Occupied Palestinian Territories in general and Bayt al-Maqdis in particular into a region possessed by Jewish identity, culture and values under the Israeli hegemony, goes to any lengths and takes advantage of everything serving their interest. The question that the impacts of Israeli policies in Bayt al-Maqdis are whether permanent or temporary is quite significant, because it is argued that the destiny of Bayt al-Maqdis will be shaped according to the outcome of it in a sense. Within this context, the possible solution ways that get them closer to the salvation and liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis are critical to minimize the impacts of what has been done by the Israelis. The researcher underlines one more time that knowledge intertwined with scholarship and education are the most important and crucial ones within this context and these must be considered the foundation of everything and it is a bridge paving the way for getting the most out of the other solution ways that have been discussed. At the end of the day, it will be knowledge that drives change, liberation and civilization.

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**APPENDIX 1:** Questionnaire regarding the participants' perceptions on the languages spoken.

DATE\_\_\_\_\_ PARTICIPANT #\_\_\_\_\_ NAME (optional)\_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following questions in as much detail as possible. You can use the back of this page or additional paper for more space to write.

1. Are you proud of your native language? Why or why not?
2. Did you want to learn other languages or did you learn them because you were required to at school or by your parents?
3. Do you enjoy speaking or using your second and/or third languages? Why or why not?
4. Do you think your native language has helped shape who you are? Please explain.
5. What language(s) do your parents speak? Where were they born?
6. Which foreign language do you think is the most useful for you? Why?
7. Do you feel that one language is more important than another to you as a person or in society? Please explain.
8. Do you think one language is more powerful than another where you live? Please explain.
9. Are there any circumstances in which you feel ashamed or embarrassed to use a certain language? Please explain.
10. Will you share your perceptions (thoughts, feelings) of the following languages:  
(a) English:

(b) Arabic:

(c) Hebrew:

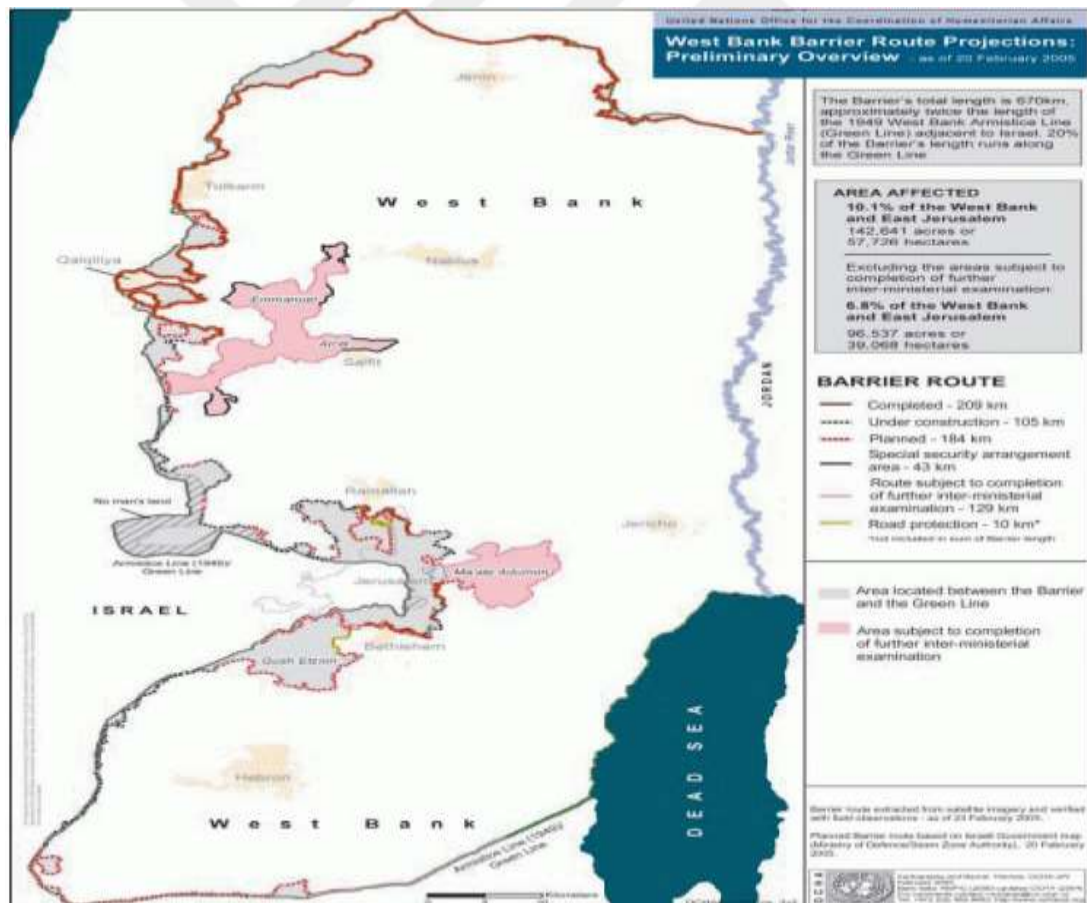
11. For you, what are the benefits of knowing a second or third language?

12. Do you have any friends or acquaintances whose native language is different from your native language? Please describe these relationships.

13. Do you feel that language is connected to culture, politics, or power? Please explain.

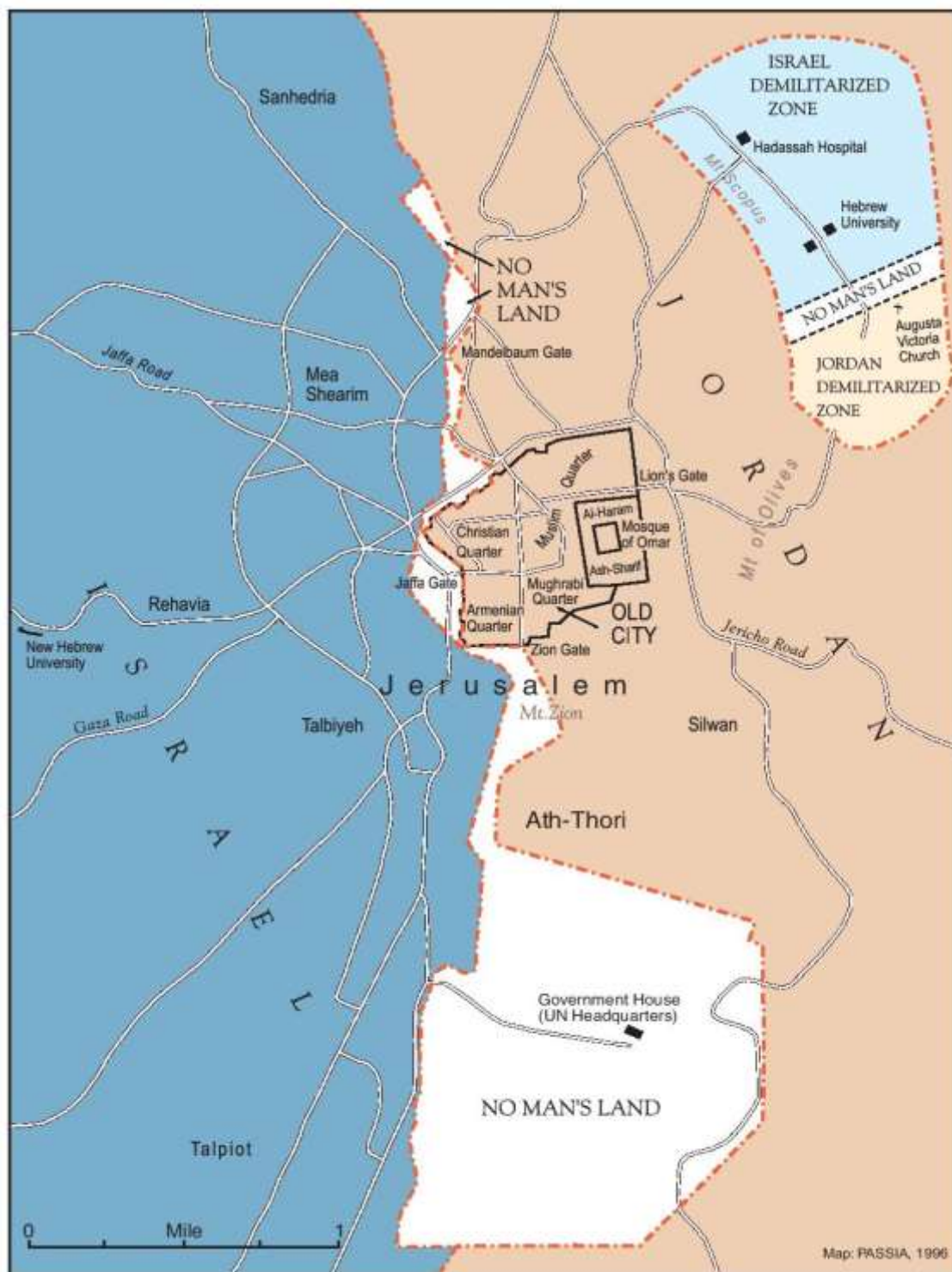
**Note.** Retrieved from “Language Use, Attitude, and Linguistic Identity among Palestinian Students in East Jerusalem”, by Olsen, K., & Olsen, H., 2010, p 52.

## APPENDIX 2: Israeli Separation Wall.



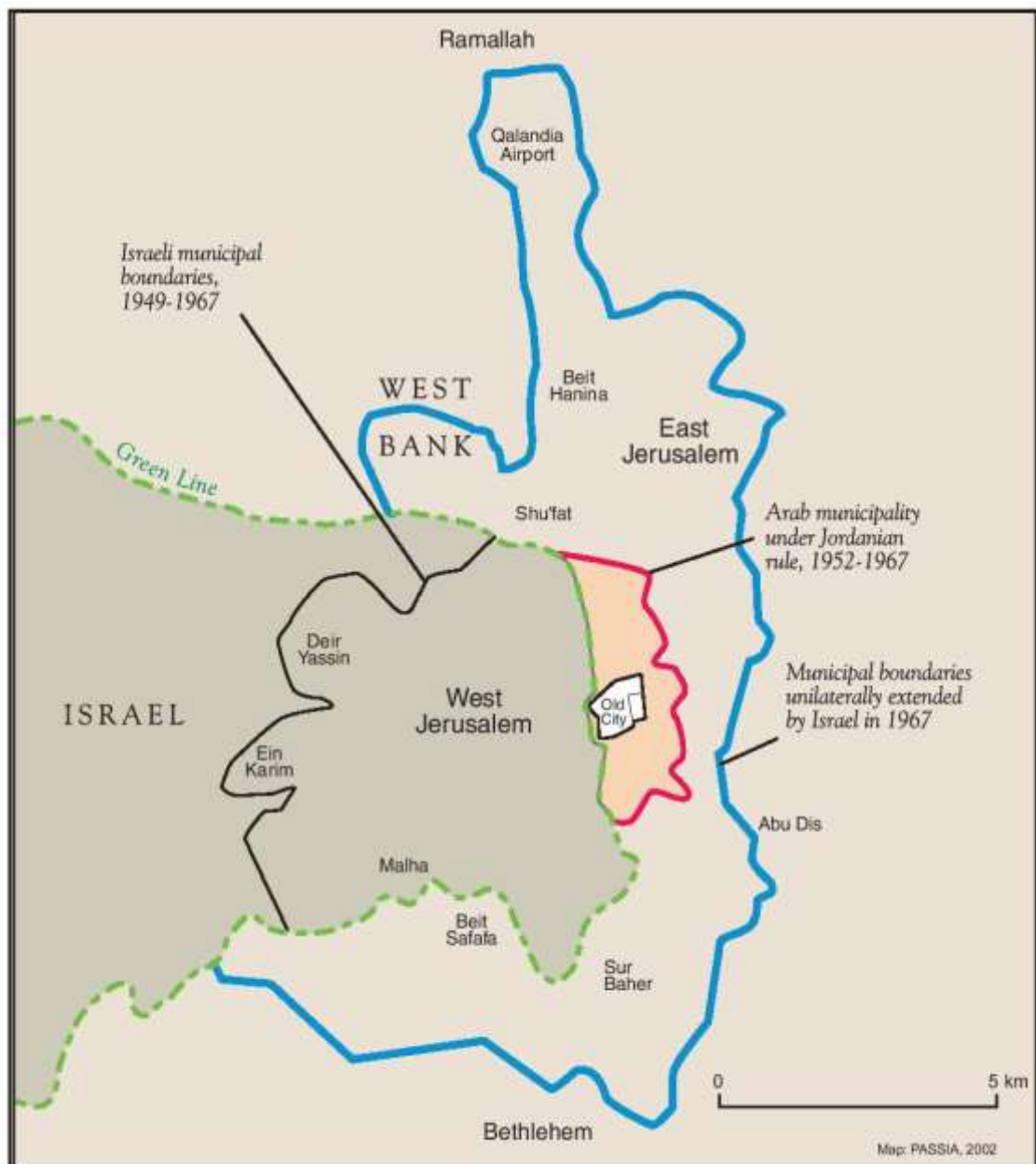
**Map 2:** Israeli Separation Wall, **Source:** The United Nations 2005.

### APPENDIX 3: Partitioned Jerusalem, 1948-1967.



**Map 3:** Partitioned Jerusalem, 1947-1967, **Source:** Passia 1996.

#### APPENDIX 4: Jerusalem after the 1967 War.



**Map 4:** Jerusalem after the 1967 War, **Source:** Passia 2002.

## APPENDIX 5: Completion Rate by Level of Education, 2016-2020.

**PCBS** State of Palestine  
Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

Completion Rate by Level of Education, Region and Sex, 2009-2020

Click [here](#) to download the file at Excel form

| Year & Level of Education | Palestine |         |            | West Bank |         |            | Gaza Strip |         |            |
|---------------------------|-----------|---------|------------|-----------|---------|------------|------------|---------|------------|
|                           | Males     | Females | Both Sexes | Males     | Females | Both Sexes | Males      | Females | Both Sexes |
| <b>2016</b>               |           |         |            |           |         |            |            |         |            |
| Primary                   | 98.9      | 99.0    | 99.0       | 99.1      | 99.0    | 99.0       | 98.7       | 99.2    | 98.9       |
| Lower Secondary           | 86.6      | 95.9    | 91.2       | 87.8      | 95.5    | 91.6       | 84.8       | 96.5    | 90.6       |
| Upper Secondary           | 49.0      | 69.7    | 59.1       | 47.7      | 71.1    | 58.9       | 51.0       | 67.8    | 59.3       |
| <b>2017</b>               |           |         |            |           |         |            |            |         |            |
| Primary                   | 98.7      | 99.1    | 98.9       | 98.8      | 99      | 98.9       | 98.6       | 99.2    | 98.9       |
| Lower Secondary           | 87.2      | 96.4    | 91.6       | 86.8      | 96.2    | 91.4       | 87.7       | 96.6    | 91.9       |
| Upper Secondary           | 48        | 70.7    | 59.1       | 45.6      | 70.2    | 57.6       | 51.7       | 71.4    | 61.4       |
| <b>2018</b>               |           |         |            |           |         |            |            |         |            |
| Primary                   | 98.6      | 99.3    | 98.9       | 98.5      | 99.0    | 98.8       | 98.8       | 99.6    | 99.2       |
| Lower Secondary           | 86.5      | 96.4    | 91.4       | 85.9      | 96.0    | 90.9       | 87.5       | 97.1    | 92.1       |
| Upper Secondary           | 48.5      | 70.7    | 59.3       | 46.0      | 71.1    | 58.3       | 52.2       | 70.0    | 61.0       |
| <b>2019</b>               |           |         |            |           |         |            |            |         |            |
| Primary                   | 98.7      | 99.5    | 99.1       | 98.5      | 99.6    | 99.1       | 98.9       | 99.5    | 99.2       |
| Lower Secondary           | 87.7      | 96.4    | 92.0       | 87.1      | 96.2    | 91.6       | 88.7       | 96.8    | 92.7       |
| Upper Secondary           | 51.2      | 71.7    | 61.2       | 48.1      | 70.8    | 59.1       | 56.2       | 73.2    | 64.5       |
| <b>2020</b>               |           |         |            |           |         |            |            |         |            |
| Primary                   | 98.8      | 99.6    | 99.2       | 98.5      | 99.5    | 99.0       | 99.1       | 99.9    | 99.5       |
| Lower Secondary           | 87.4      | 96.6    | 91.9       | 86.2      | 96.1    | 91.0       | 89.2       | 97.4    | 93.2       |
| Upper Secondary           | 53.6      | 73.9    | 63.3       | 50.8      | 73.6    | 61.7       | 58.0       | 74.5    | 65.9       |

Note: the indicator was calculated depending on the years of schooling which the person successfully completed.  
The last grade of primary level is 4th grade  
The last grade of lower Secondary level is 9th grade  
The last grade of upper Secondary level is 12th grade

Source: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2021. Data base of labor force survey, 2009-2020, Ramallah-Palestine

**Table 2:** Completion rate by level of education, 2016-2020, **Source:** Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics 2021.