JERUSALEMITE INGREDIENTS

Identity and Challenges for Three Minorities

KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG
PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

الرؤيا الفلسطينية
PALESTINIAN VISION

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Prepared by

Ahmad Al-Asmar

Supervised by

Prof. Yahya Hijazi

Translated by

Ritaj

English revised by

Tamara Al-Tamimi

Designed by

Qasem Tobal

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Foreword

Since 1998, the Palestinian Vision Organization has worked with Palestinian youth to consolidate Palestinian collective identity. Palestinian Vision seeks, through its various programs and projects, to bridge the gap between the Palestinian individual and society as a whole. Through its long years of experience, the organization has learned that ambiguity stands among the main causes of identity distortion, and that knowledge is the key to power. Thus, the organization has actively produced research, studies, and fact sheets that tackle diverse aspects of Palestinian society, and the components of its identity. It also has focused on examining methods and tools to strengthen Palestinian identity among youth.

Despite the organization's significant experience in this field, a scarcity of information persists, with regard to various segments of Palestinian society, which is generally characterized by ethnic diversity and religious pluralism. As this research deepens, the issues become more challenging, and information more scarce. The lack of such information often leads to the adoption of stereotypes of the other. In the case of Jerusalem, this mostly is driven by ignorance about the diverse spectrum of the city.

Palestinian Vision thus has identified the need to work in a systematic and scientific method to increase awareness about Palestinian social segments, especially in light of the fragmentation and distortion of Palestinian identity. Augmented awareness, achieved through systematic scientific research, will lead to a more thorough understanding of the available mechanisms for protecting and consolidating Palestinian identity. It also will identify the range of challenges faced by all Palestinians, and set forth proposals to deal with these challenges. This research is part of the "Jerusalemite Ingredients" project, funded by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

Research Summary

The current research sheds light on the human diversity of Palestinian Jerusalemite society, illuminating the mosaic that exists in Jerusalem today. It is striking that many Jerusalemites lack knowledge about the culture, language and history of the diverse segments that form their society, and about their daily challenges. Thus, Palestinian Vision identified three segments that have contributed to the formation of the human, cultural and national history of the Holy City: the Christians, the Gypsies, and the African Community. The choice of these segments was driven by the need for Jerusalemites, to better understand the bricks that comprise their home, especially in light of scarce available information, which is mostly excluded from the educational curricula. Palestinian Vision also seeks, through this research, to identify the stages of formation of the cultural and national identity of the three segments and the life challenges each segment faces as Jerusalemites.

To achieve this goal, we have relied on historical sources and references and conducted interviews with key Jerusalem figures from each of the three segments. We conducted individual interviews with young men and women, as well as group interviews, to identify the formation of their cultural and national identity, the challenges they face and their causes, from their point of view.

The research revealed that the political situation of the city, from ancient times, has not had mercy on any of its children. The community being researched suffers, like everyone else, from systematic political discrimination, as well as poor living conditions such as cramped housing and difficult economic conditions that place the majority of the community below the poverty line. During the long journey made by these three segments, each has formed a complex identity, in which the Palestinian aspect is prominent. The research also revealed that many of the subjects of the study cannot engage in the labor market or in social life, either as punishment for resistance to the occupation or because they lack the capacity to compete for job opportunities. This is sometimes a result of the policies of the occupation authorities, and, at other times, a result of internal marginalization associated with unfair societal attitudes. The research also revealed that the three studied segments face far greater challenges than others in Jerusalem, which may explain their members' attempts at acculturation strategies to cope with the difficult conditions in which they live. These strategies range, according to research participants, from seclusion, at times, to integration and participation at others. This research will present a set of proposals that aims to alleviate challenges faced by the three examined segments, contribute to strengthening their steadfastness, and reinforce their Palestinian national identity.

Introduction

From the dawn of history, Jerusalem has embraced its inhabitants and passers-through alike. Since it was built by the Jebusites, whose origins stretch back to the Canaanite tribes, in 3000 BC,[1] and through to the present, Jerusalem undergone significant historical events and conflicts between various groups and sects. The city remains rich with the fragrance of holiness, evident in its Wall, mosques, churches, temples, passageways, neighborhoods and alleys. The city's magic is only completed by the presence of its children, who have contributed to building the city throughout the ages.

People of diverse ethnicities, races and cultures have successively inhabited this city and contributed to the creation of its cultural and intellectual diversity, as evidenced by Aref Al-Aref's writing in 1947: "In Jerusalem, there are 205 schools for various races, elements and religions."[2] The majority of the population previously was located in the Old City, inside the Wall, where one can find the three religions: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. For each can find different sects, groups, mosques, churches, synagogues, schools, prayer rooms, hospitals, hospices, libraries, endowments, gardens, and shops, as well as people from all around the world, who came in the past to live in this city."

Overview of Jerusalem

Jerusalem is a mountainous city located between the Dead Sea, 18 miles east, and the Mediterranean Sea, 32 miles west. The city sits 3,800 feet above the Dead Sea and 2,500 feet above the Mediterranean.[3]

Jerusalem is divided into two parts: New Jerusalem and Old Jerusalem, separated by a wall. Old Jerusalem, or the Old City, has an area of 868 dunums, while New Jerusalem, in 1947, had an area of 18,463 dunums. In that year, Arabs owned 11,191 dunums while Jews owned 4,835. The remaining lands comprised roads and public squares. The boundaries of the city expanded greatly after the 1967 war, when Israel annexed 70,000 square meters. This annexation aimed to increase the land area as much as possible, with a minimum number of Palestinian residents,[4] and to later serve settlement expansion. Today, according to 2019 data, the area of the city comprises 126,000 dunums.[5]

In November 1947, the population was 164,500, distributed as follows: in the Old City, 33,600 Arabs and 2,400 Jews; in the Arab part of the new city, 30,000 Arabs and 9,000 Jews; and, in the Jewish part of the new city, 1,500 Arabs and 88,000 Jews. The total Arab population in the city on the eve of the Nakba comprised approximately 65,000, while Jews comprised a greater number, at more than 99,000.[6]

1 Aref al-Aref, A Detailed History of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Fifth Edition, 1999, p. 1.

2 Ibid, p. 444.

3 Ibid, p. 430.

4 Tsimhoni, pp. 21-22.

5 https://jerusaleminstitute.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/shnaton_A0120.pdf

6 Ibid.

Today (in 2020), the population of Jerusalem is 919,400, with 349,600 Palestinian Arabs, or 38% of the population, and 569,900 Jews, or 62%.[7]
Although the Palestinian Arabs are under occupation and live as a political and demographic minority, within this minority, there are multiple, diverse segments and groups that have lived in the city throughout the ages, attracted to it for religious reasons. The research will address three segments within Jerusalem: the Christians, the Dom Gypsy Clan, and the African Muslim Community, which all have contributed to the cultural, ethnic and religious richness of the city.

Research Aims

The research aims to highlight three segments living in the city of Jerusalem: the Christians of different sects, the Dom Gypsy Clan, and the African Muslim Community. The research is divided into two main parts: first, a presentation and discussion of the collective identity and history of each of these three groups, and how they define themselves within the Palestinian Jerusalemite context and, second, addressing the problems and challenges faced by the three groups, attempting to identify the reasons for these issues and proposing solutions to solve or ameliorate them.

Theoretical Framework

The research is based on theories of identity and group relations. In particular, three basic theories are pertinent:

1. Acculturation Theory, attributed to psychologist John Berry, by which members of groups that belong to minorities must specify and redefine their identity as part of the social fabric in which they live, and undergo social and psychological adaptation to the changes that occur to them. According to this theory, the meeting of the two groups (minority and majority) may lead to the minority acquiring part of the culture of the majority and being largely affected by it. According to Berry, this meeting may raise existential questions such as: should original identity be preserved? Should there be mingling with members of the majority society and a sharing of social life with them, or not? As a result of these questions, each individual or group uses one or more of four different adaptation strategies suggested by Berry. First, a strategy of integration, through which the minority integrates with the majority and acquires part of its culture, but continues to maintain some of its attributes and advantages within the community. This integration leads to multiculturalism within the group. Second, a strategy of separation or isolation, through the minority's rejection of the culture of the majority, distancing itself from it, and preserving its original culture. Third, a melting-pot or full engagement strategy, in which the minority gives up its original culture completely, through a desire to be similar to the majority group, which leads to its melting into the community without retaining a significant part of its original culture, thus completely losing its original identity. Fourth, a strategy of marginalization, in which members of the minority reject their original culture and also reject the culture of the majority.[8]

7 https://jerusaleminstitute.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/shnaton_C0120.pdf

8 John W. Berry, Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation, Applied Psychology 46, No. 1, 1997, pp. 5-34.

2. Social Identity Theory of social psychologist Henri Tajfel, which is based on the individual's concept of himself within the system and social fabric. The theory explains the behavior and interaction between different groups. This research focuses on the strategy of transition or individual mobility, by which the individual or individuals separate from the group to improve their personal situation and achieve their own individual goals.[9]
3. The third theory is that of The Enclave Culture by thinker Emmanuel Sivan, who believes that there are limits for a minority group, which suffers from a problem and a threat by the majority in preserving its identity and culture. This is due to individuals fleeing towards the majority because of the attractive force of that majority society. According to this theory, there may be disputes between members of the minority because of the struggle over power or authority.[10]

At the end of each chapter in this paper, solutions will be proposed for the challenges faced by each of the three segments, and recommendations will be presented based on the Ecological Systems Theory, which is outlined below.

4. Ecological Systems Theory is attributed to psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner. It attempts to explain the relationships between personal and environmental factors surrounding the individual. The theory places the individual at the center of events and divides what is happening around that individual into five different systems or circles, four of which will be addressed in the research:
    - **Microsystem:** this deals with direct factors surrounding the individual, such as family, school, and place of residence.
    - **Medium System (Mesosystem):** the relationships between two factors in the microsystem, and their consequences, such as the family's influence on the child in his interactions at school.
    - **Coaxial System (Exosystem):** factors that the individual does not have direct contact with, but is affected by.
    - **Large System (Macrosystem):** factors that exist at the group level in which the individual lives, such as culture or religion.[11]

On the basis of the forgoing theories, the identity of the groups covered by the research will be discussed and the problems that they face at different levels will be elaborated. Various solutions to these problems will be discussed at different levels.

9 Henri Tajfel, Social Identity and Intergroup Behavior, Information (International Social Science Council) 13, no. 2 (1974): pp. 65-93.

10 Immanuel Sivan, The Enclave Culture, 1995, pp. 11-68.

11 Urie Bronfenbrenner, The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design, Harvard University Press, 1979.

Research Questions

The research revolves around the following questions:

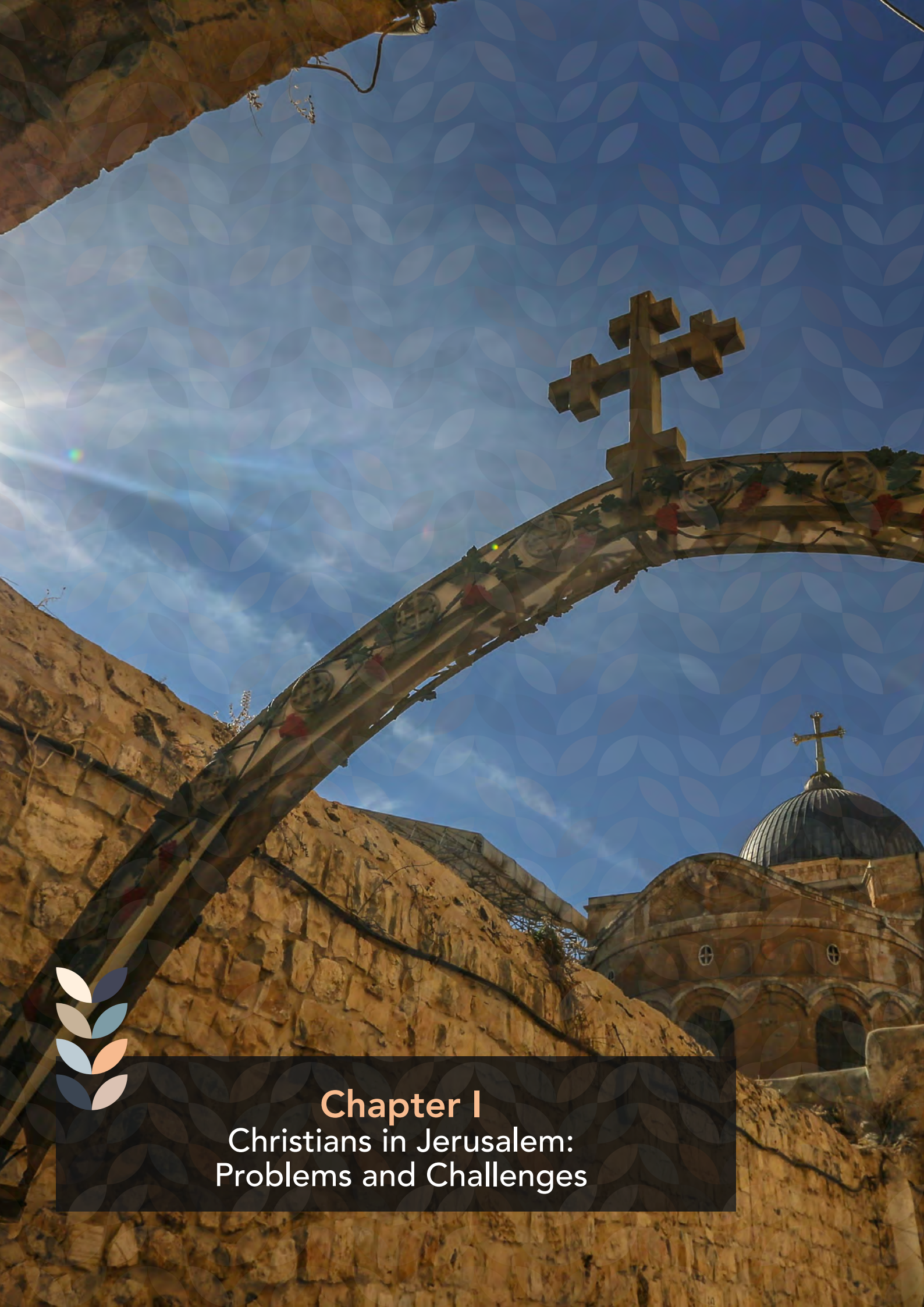
- How do each of the three segments (Christians, Gypsies, and the African Community) define themselves? What is the collective identity of each?
- To what extent are each of these segments integrated into the Jerusalemite community, in their own opinion?
- What are the life challenges facing each of these segments, and what are their causes?

Research Methodology

The research relies on qualitative methodology, the objective of which is primarily exploration, through which each of the three segments can be identified from the inside. The research will touch on these segments historically, through available sources, and on the issue of identity and challenges from the point of view and different opinions of individuals that participated in the study. Analysis will be based on the theories summarized above. In other words, the research relies on information gathered from available sources and references about each minority, in addition to semi-structured interviews with individuals, as well as focus groups, from each of the three segments.

Research Groups

Christians: Ten interviews were conducted, as well as four focus groups, one of which was specific to the Armenian sect. There were a total of 29 participants in these groups.
Dom Gypsies: Eight interviews were conducted, as well as two focus groups, one for males and the other for females, due to the conservatism of most of clan members and an aversion to mixing between the sexes. There were 13 participants in the two groups.
The African Community: Six personal interviews were conducted and the research was based on four studies by community members.
The age of the participants ranged between 19-70, and all interviews and focus groups were conducted in Arabic, except for the focus group with the Armenian community, which was conducted in English.



Chapter I
Christians in Jerusalem: Problems and Challenges

Theoretical Background

Introduction

Palestine is the cradle of the three monotheistic religions, including Christianity, as the birthplace of Christ and the site of his resurrection. It is a holy land in which many Christian saints and clergy lived, and whose namesakes were given to many places and churches in the country. Palestine remains the focus of attention for more than two billion Christians around the world. The Christian presence in Palestine is not limited to religious sites, churches and shrines, but additionally includes contributions to building its Arab heritage, in general, and its Palestinian heritage, in particular.

Christians from all over the Middle East and the world settled in Jerusalem, the leading Palestinian city in terms of Christian heritage and history. Christians in Jerusalem belong to multiple sects, making up approximately 1% of the city's population.[12] The number of Christians in the Middle East and in Palestine, who have resided on this land for thousands of years, has gradually decreased over a long period of time, ultimately taking on an alarming proportion. Christian presence in Jerusalem has become threatened due to changes taking place in the region and requires the people of the city - Christians and Muslims - to be aware of it as a threat to the Palestinian presence in the wider region and in the Holy City, in particular.

There is no doubt that political events witnessed by the city of Jerusalem in recent decades have contributed to a dwindling number of Christians in the country. Various problems have arisen between members of the many Christian sects due to the political, social, and economic situation. The preservation and support of the Christian individual and community is an important goal to reinforce their presence in this sacred spot.

The Importance of Christianity in Jerusalem

Christianity has given Jerusalem special importance and made it one of the renowned cities to which Christian pilgrims flock from all over the world, making it a tourist destination for hundreds of millions of people over the course of many centuries. This religious tourism has contributed to flourishing trade in Jerusalem historically. Christian pilgrims have not stopped visiting since the birth of Christianity, when their caravans came to the country to visit the holy sites.[13] The importance of Jerusalem extends beyond its religious dimension to include cultural and historical dimensions that attract hundreds of millions more people from around the world. The importance of Jerusalem to Christians is made evident by the percentage of Christian tourists compared with tourists of other religions. In 2018, for example, the percentage of Christian tourists stood at 63%, while Jewish tourists comprised 21% and Muslims only 2% of the total visitors to Jerusalem from outside the country.[14]

12 George Akroush, Jerusalem Christian Youth, to Integrate or to Emigrate, 2019, pp. 5.

13 Fuad Farah, Living Stones: Arab Christians in the Holy Land, 2003, p. 121.

14 Maya Hoshen, About Jerusalem Data 2020, 2020, p. 106.

Research Problem

In this research, we attempt to shed light on Christians who live in Jerusalem in the contemporary period and to present a greater background on the Christian sects. This study highlights the problems facing Christians in Jerusalem, especially the demographic problem and their diminishing numbers in the city, in addition to political and social problems and their causes. These include relations between Christians themselves, between Muslims and Christians, and the practices and harassment of the occupation. We offer mechanisms to solve problems and challenges. It must be noted few studies have specifically addressed Christian issues in the region, in general, and in Jerusalem, in particular, so this study's qualitative research adds to studies on this topic. The decrease in the number of Christians in the region, generally, and in the city of Jerusalem, specifically, is an important entry point for research to identify the reality of the situation that drives Christians to emigrate from the city. The research also contributes to proposing solutions that may bring Christians back, or preserve the presence of those who remain inside the Holy City.

Research Aims

The research aims to present the current situation of the Christians of Jerusalem by assessing the most prominent aspects of their life. It also deals with the identity issues for Christians in the city and presents the challenges and problems they face, in light of the conflicts and interactions that Jerusalem is experiencing, in an effort to present the problems clearly and offer solutions to them.

Research Method

The research relies on recent research, sources and references dealing with Christians and highlights the most dominant Christians communities in Jerusalem and their history. In addition, the research incorporates semi-structured interviews with young Christians from different sects and backgrounds, as well as four Christian focus groups, one of which is from the Armenian Community.

Research Challenges

1. Although there are many sources on Christians communities, most statistics on the number of Christians are inaccurate and uncertain, a matter this study aims to take into consideration.
2. At the outset of the research, the possibility was raised of conducting a study on each Christian sect, separately, but, after assessing the differences between the sects, it was decided to write a unified paper on all of them, due to the similar problems and challenges among the Christian population, irrespective of sect. This study is less a historical one and aims to be more of an investigation of contemporary problems and challenges.

Christian Sects in Jerusalem - Historical Background

Christian sects have experienced major events and challenges that have changed the sectarian composition of Christians in the Holy Land. One example of many is the Maronite Community, attributed to Saint Maron, who lived in Lebanon in the 4th century AD. The Maronites comprised the second-largest sect in Jerusalem, especially in the 7th and 8th centuries. Over time, however, this sect former large presence in the city diminished.[15]

Today, dozens of Christian denominations have a presence in Jerusalem. In this study, we will present only the larger ones, which constitute more than 95% of Jerusalem Christians.[16] The followers of other sects only number in the tens, and their percentage among all of Christians in the Holy City is very small.

Despite the multiplicity of Christian sects, Christians share similar culture and face the same problems and concerns, especially in Jerusalem, with its special status and circumstances. In 1967, Israel's seizure of control over holy sites in Jerusalem and Bethlehem angered Palestinian Christians and Christians and others all over the world and raised a multitude of fears among local church leaders, the Vatican, and the World Council of Churches.[17]

Greek Orthodox Sect

The word "Orthodox" means correct or proper opinion, and, with time, it has come to symbolize an adherence to true religion as depicted in Christian religious writings. When the Catholic and Orthodox churches split, the Orthodox sect adopted this name, while the other sect was named "Catholic". Because of the long rule of Greece and its leadership over the Eastern Orthodox Church, the term "Greek Church" has become synonymous with "Orthodox".[18]

The Greek Orthodox sect ranks among the oldest in Jerusalem. For centuries, it was the largest church in terms of number of parishes. It appeared in Jerusalem with the emergence of Christianity and was the leading church in the region, but, at the start of the 20th century, the Orthodox Church began to lose its majority in favor of the Catholic and Protestant churches. In 1922, the ratio of Greek Orthodox was 45.7% of all the Christians of Palestine, with parishes spread across Palestine, Jordan and Cyprus.[19] Today, the percentage of Greek Orthodox has dropped significantly, from half to less than a quarter, at 23%.[20]

Catholic (Latin) Sect

15 Aref al-Aref, History of Jerusalem, Dar al-Maarif, Second Edition, 1951, p. 256.

16 Akroush, p. 15.

17 Amnon Ramon, Christians and Christianity in the Jewish State, Israeli Policy Towards the Churches and the Christian Communities, 1948-2010, 2012, p. 69.

18 Eli Shiller, Sects and Minorities in the Old City, Ariel Edition, Jerusalem, p. 7.

19 Daphne Tsimhoni, Christian Communities in Jerusalem and the West Bank since 1948: An Historical, Social, and Political Study, 1993, p. 33.

20 Akroush, p. 15.

The Roman Catholic Sect enjoys a cross-border following in Palestine, Israel, Jordan and Cyprus. The first Catholic Patriarchate was established in Jerusalem in 1099, during the Crusades era. In 1187, after Saladin took control of Jerusalem, the Patriarchate moved to Acre, until the latter fell to the Muslims in 1291.[21] Between then and 1847, there no Latin Patriarchate existed in Palestine and the title was only symbolic. The Franciscans assumed control over the administration of the holy sites of the Catholic Sect, whose numbers were very small during this period.[22] In the second half of the 19th century, as the Ottoman Empire opened up to Europe, the Catholic Church established many churches, as well as cultural, religious and health institutions, in Palestine.

Today, the Catholic sect is one of the largest in terms of numbers of parishes in the Holy City. It has more than 5,000 followers, or 55% of all Christians in Jerusalem.[23] The Catholics also are the most affluent and diverse community, with more than 20 Catholic institutions in Jerusalem, mostly funded by international charitable organizations. The Franciscan Monastery administers most of these Catholic institutions, with representatives from more than 20 countries.[24]

Roman Melkite Catholics

The Roman Catholic community was established after the rise of a separatist movement in the 17th and 18th centuries in the Greek Orthodox church in Syria and Lebanon, with the support of Catholic missionaries known as "Melkites" (Arabic: from "Malek", King) because of their bias and support for Patriarch (King) Timothy II, backed by Byzantine Emperor Leo I.[25] The main motivation for their separatist movement was socio-cultural more than religious, in their desire to replace the Greek leadership of the Orthodox Church with an Arab one.[26] In 1837, the Ottoman Sultan acknowledged the Church, and, the following year, the Pope did, as well. The Patriarchate of "Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem" thereby came into existence.

At the end of the 19th century, the number of parishes of this church increased significantly and it built churches in various areas that include Ramallah, Lod, Ramle, Jaffa, as well as other Palestinian towns.[27] During the British Mandate, the Roman Catholic Church became one of the most important churches in Palestine, with its followers exceeding 12,000 people, or 14% of Christians in the country, according to the 1931 census. After the Nakba, many of its followers were forced out of Jerusalem and became refugees.[28]

In the 1980s, its followers numbered 1,350,[29] and, by 2019, they amounted to approximately 860 people, or 9% of the city's Christians.[30]

21 Tsimhoni, p. 115.

22 Schiller, p. 55.

23 Akroush, p. 15.

24 Schiller, p. 54.

25 https://web.archive.org/web/20120321114135/http://www.pgc-lb.org:80/english/Faith3.shtml

26 Tsimhoni, p. 107.

27 Schiller, p. 75.

28 Tsimhoni, p. 108.

29 Schiller, p. 75.

30 Akroush, p. 15.

Syriac Sect

The Syriac Sect is one of the oldest in Jerusalem, with its ancient Aramaic language. The sect separated from the global church in 451 AD. During the 7th century, the sect formed an important center in the Mosul region of Iraq, and, in the 12th century, the strength of the sect peaked, with 103 dioceses and more than two million followers.

In Jerusalem, the Church has followed the Patriarch of Damascus since 1959, and is divided into seven dioceses, including the one in Jerusalem. There are followers of the Church in the Bethlehem area, as well. Many members of this sect work in professions such as Medicine and Law.[31]

At the start of the 20th century, members of the Syriac Orthodox Sect in Jerusalem amounted to approximately one hundred people, only, and reached a peak of about 2,000 in 1945.[32] Today, according to 2019 statistics, the number of Syriacs comprises no more than 400 in the Holy City, constituting 4% of the city's Christians.[33]

Armenian Sect

The Armenians are attributed to the state of Armenia, in the Caucasus region. Armenia's borders have changed due to wars and successive kingdoms spanning a long history. Its people inhabited the Armenian highlands in eastern Anatolia, extending from Georgia in the north to Northern Syria.

The Armenians emerged when they migrated from the Balkans to Asia Minor in the 13th century B.C. and settled in the Ararat Mountains (which span Turkey, Russia and Iran). The Armenians had an early relationship with Christianity and were among its first believers. Christianity entered the Balkans in 301 A.D. and Armenians began to visit Jerusalem for pilgrimage.[34] Most of the Armenian community in Jerusalem follows the Orthodox Church, and the community enjoys special status within its own neighborhood in the Old City, as well as privileges to administer and care for many of the Armenian holy sites in Jerusalem.

Today, the Armenian sect in Jerusalem is divided into two parts. The first is the old sect, which resides in the Archangel Monastery east of St. Jacob, and the second are the newer sect, which came to live in the city after the Turkish genocide of Armenians during the First World War.[35] According to estimates, 10,000 Armenian refugees came to the city at that time, but most of them left several years later. Jerusalem's Armenians have distinguished themselves in several areas, notably jewelry craftsmanship, photography and the antiques industry.[36] Jerusalem's Armenians also have preserved their mother tongue, which they continue to teach it to their children in their schools, and maintain strong contact with Armenians living in Armenia and around the world.

As for their numbers in Jerusalem, statistics indicate approximately 500 Orthodox Armenians

31 Schiller, pp. 47-48.

32 Tsimhoni, p. 79.

33 Akroush, p. 15.

34 Schiller, pp. 21-22.

35 Al-Aref, p. 250.

36 Tsimhoni, pp. 63-65.

at the start of the 19th century, peaking at approximately 5,000-7,000 people in 1945.[37] Today, the estimated number of Armenians is up to 500 people, only, living mainly in Jerusalem and making up approximately 5% of Christians in the city.[38]

Demography and Geography

Christians in Jerusalem are considered a minority and a variety of circumstances have led to a dramatic decrease in their numbers. Before discussing these numbers, however, it must be noted that the majority of statistics indicated in this research are not quite accurate due to discrepancies between various numbers and statistics due to population counting methods and divergent data sources.

Statistics for the start of the 20th century indicate equivalent numbers of Christians and Muslims in the Jerusalem population. In 1922, there were approximately 15,000 Christians. Their number increased significantly during the British Mandate, reaching approximately 30,000 by 1944.[39]

However, the Palestinian Nakba in 1948 had a major impact on the ratio and number of Christians in the city, amounting to a demographic blow. The Israeli occupation expelled the Christians from their homes in the western neighborhoods of the city. According to estimates, half of the Christians in Jerusalem were living in these neighborhoods. Their expulsion from the western part of the city caused some to take refuge in the Old City and in some of the properties of churches they belonged to, while many fled the country and settled elsewhere.[40]

37 Ibid, p. 65.

38 Akroush, p. 15.

39 Tsimhoni, p. 20.

40 Tsimhoni, p. 19.

After the Nakba, during the period of Jordanian rule, the number of Christians increased, but the majority of the population in Jerusalem became Muslim, whereas the number of Christians at the time of the Nakba was equal to or even higher than Muslims. Per 1961 statistics, the Muslim population amounted to 64,000 while Christians numbered 12,500, that is, 16.3% of the total population of East Jerusalem at the time.

In parallel, the rate of natural population growth was higher for Muslims than for Christians, due to the movement of Muslims from the West Bank to Jerusalem,[41] whether to work or ultimately settle in the city. This led to a gradual decrease in the proportion of Christians to Muslims.

After the occupation of the eastern part of the city in 1967, the number of Christians did not significantly change, and remained approximately 11,000. However, the population of Muslims and Jews rose. In 1989, Christians comprised 8.4% of the total population of the city. In 2018, according to the annual statistical book of the Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, the number of Christians amounted to 12,720 of the total city population of 919,000,[42] meaning that their percentage did not exceed 1%. Some researchers, however, are skeptical of this figure and consider it as too large for Christians actually living in Jerusalem, and posit that their number does not exceed 10,000. Others believe the number is not greater than 8,000.[43]

With regards to composition and age groups, 2018 data shows the proportion of Muslims aged 0-14 to be 36%, while, among Christians, it is only 20%. The older age group, above 65 years of age, was only 4% among Muslims, while, for Christians, it stood at 14%.[44] The above 75 age group was comprised of 6.3% among Christians and 1.3% among Muslims, while the proportion of the entire elderly population for the same age group in the city of Jerusalem stood at approximately 4%, according to 2018 statistics. It is notable that the percentage of Christian women is greater in that age group; Christian women over 75 years old are 7.5% of all women in that older age group Jerusalem, while the percentage among Christian men is 5%.[45]

The average age of Christians in Jerusalem is 34.8 years, compared to 21.3 years for Muslims and 25.2 years for Jews. The average age for all residents of the city is 23.9.[46] It bears noting that the average age of Christians is very high compared to the other population groups.

The average number of Christian family members in Jerusalem was 4.1 people in 1967, while, for Muslim families it was 5.3.[47] Natural population increase depends on four factors: mortality rate, birth rate, immigration and emigration. According to the Jerusalem Institute, in recent years, there has been an evident difference in the natural increase among Muslims and Christians. Between 2014 and 2018, the annual natural increase among Muslims in Jerusalem was 2.5-2.8%, while, during the same years, it ranged from 0.6-1.3% among Christians. The Jerusalem Institute explains this as a result of the distribution of age categories, fertility rate, the participation of women in the labor market, and the level of education.[48]

41 Tsimhoni, pp. 21-22.

42 https://jerusaleminstitute.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/shnaton_C1020.pdf

43 Interview with researcher in Christian affairs, Mr. Usama Salman, conducted on 12 August 2020.

44 Hoshen, p. 28.

45 https://jerusaleminstitute.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/shnaton_C1420.pdf

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid.

48 Hoshen, p. 26.

The mortality rate in the Christian Quarter of the Old City is the highest among all Arab neighborhoods in Jerusalem, with up to seven deaths per 1,000 people. It is followed by the Armenian Quarter (inhabited by Christians) and the Wadi Joz neighborhood, at a rate of four deaths per 1,000 people. The remaining neighborhoods in the east of the city have a lower death rate.[49]

Regarding the geographical distribution of Christians in Jerusalem, before the Nakba, Christians lived in the western neighborhoods of the city, but, since then many sought refuge in the Old City or various other neighborhoods. However, Christians remain concentrated in specific areas: firstly, Beit Hanina, in the north of the city, where 2017 statistics indicate the residence of 3,100 Christians, the largest number of Christians in Jerusalem. However, Beit Hanina is one of the largest neighborhoods in Jerusalem, inhabited by more than 40,000 people, thus the percentage of Christians does not exceed 10% of the total population of the neighborhood, but it is a high percentage when compared to the percentage of Christians in Jerusalem overall, which does not exceed 1% of the total population of the city. The neighborhood with the second highest number if Christians in the city is the Christian Quarter of the Old City, inhabited by 2,500 Christians, followed by Beit Safafa and Sharafat, with a population of 1,400, after a housing project for Christian families was established there in 2012. The fourth area in which Christians are concentrated is the Muslim Quarter of the Old City, where approximately 1,000 Christians live.[50]

In addition to the forgoing areas, approximately 80 Christian families additionally live in the Beit Faji Monastery, in the Shayyah Neighborhood. Some Christian families also live in the Tantour area, whose lands belong to Beit Jala historically, but, today, stand within the boundaries of the Israeli municipality of Jerusalem. A smattering of Christian families reside in other neighborhoods in the city. For example, several Christian families lived in the area of Anata, currently behind the wall but, following Israel's construction of the wall, only one or two families remain.

Education

Before the Nakba, many Christians enjoyed a distinctive social status, and, until the period after the Nakba, attained a higher rate of higher education compared with Muslims. Israeli Bureau of Statistics data for 1967 showed the proportion of educated Muslim men and those with school matriculation or university degrees to be 80.6%, compared with 90% of Christian men. As for women, the percentage was only 48.2% for Muslims and 76.3% among Christians.[51]

At present, the overwhelming majority of Christian students, 98%, study in Christian and church schools.[52] Most Christian students prefer to study in church schools, rather than Palestinian public schools, Israeli municipality schools and under the Israeli Ministry of Education, or other private schools. Twelve church administered schools in Jerusalem enroll approximately 5,500 Muslim and 1,660 Christian students, both male and female, currently. Eight of the 12 church schools lie in and around the Old City.[53]

49 Hoshen, p. 44.

50 Hoshen, p. 21.

51 Tsimhoni, p. 27.

52 Akroush, p. 16.

53 Akroush, p. 16.

Economy

Economic stability is an essential element for well-functioning society. However, the instable political situation and ongoing disturbances in Jerusalem have adversely impacted the local economic situation, whether for Christians or others, resulting in a steady rise in unemployment and a reduction in the workforce.[54]

In the decades before the first intifada, a high proportion of Christians worked in the fields of their academic degrees: in white-collar jobs, such as office and business management, and at a higher proportion than that of Muslims. Christians also were active in trade and industry in the surrounding West Bank in that era, which positively impacted Christians in Jerusalem, whose percentage of commercial activity exceeded that of Muslims, according to 1974 data.[55] However, at the beginning of the first intifada, in 1987, the economic situation for Christians deteriorated, especially in the field of tourism and in the Holy City in particular, which led to an increase in the Christian emigration rate during that period.[56]

According to an opinion survey conducted by Akroush in 2019, 33.5% of Christian youth aged 18-25 are employed in a church-affiliated organization, while 54.7% work in non-Christian institutions, the private sector, or Israeli institutions, and 11.77% are unemployed.[57]

As for poverty, according to 2018 data, the rate was high in all Palestinian neighborhoods in Jerusalem, affecting 59% of Palestinian Jerusalemites, while the poverty rate among Jewish residents of the city was only 27%. The overall poverty rate, - including Arabs and Jews, stood at 40%. The percentage of Arab children who suffer from poverty is 66%.[58] While there is no official data regarding Christians, according to the Akroush survey, 89.86% of Christian families consider themselves middle class, while only 6.6% of those surveyed consider themselves poor.[59]

Participation in the labor market also is an important economic indicator, especially the participation of women. Per 2018 data, 76% of Arab men and 74% of Jewish men are employed, while only 25% of Arab women participate in the labor market versus 81% of Jewish women.[60]

No official data on participation in the labor market based on religion exists, but, in the survey of Christians, 55.33% of families have both spouses working and supporting the family, while 43.98% have only one breadwinner.[61] This may indicate that the proportion of employed female Christians exceeds that of Muslim women, and may also explain the low birth rate among Christians. In turn, where both spouses work, this may contribute to a higher standard of living.

54 Usama G. Salman, Strengthening Christian Presence in the Holy Land through the Implementation of a Strategic Planning Program, 2017, pp. 150-151.

55 Akroush, p. 28.

56 Ramon, p.101.

57 Akroush, p. 21.

58 Hoshen, p. 60.

59 Akroush, p. 19.

60 Hoshen, p. 6.

61 Akroush, p. 19.

Housing

Palestinian neighborhoods in Jerusalem generally suffer from overcrowding. According to 2018 data, the occupancy rate among Jews is one individual per room, while it is almost double among Arabs, with up to 1.8 people per residence room.[62] In addition, houses in the Old City are small, and although no official statistics on the size of Christian homes exist, an examination of the average size of apartments in the Christian Quarter revealed a size of 47 square meters, and in the Armenian Quarter, 64 square meters, which is significantly less than the city-wide average of 82 square meters. The forgoing figures may indicate significant overcrowding in the Old City in general, including the Christian Quarter and the Armenian Quarter, where Christians live.[63]

The loss of much Christian property in the wake of the Nakba and the subsequent difficult economic conditions induced some Christians to take up residence in homes that they do not own, frequently the property of a church or monastery. This has curtailed the independence for such families, for homes that are not owned generally cannot be developed or expanded. A 35-year-old man who works in the field of services says: "My family has a house belonging to the monastery, but I was not able to build another floor over it because it is an endowment for the monastery, and we cannot act on it." This also has led to an increase in the financial burden faced by many Christian families because they are forced to pay rent for their homes and properties rather than building equity in property that they own.

Only 30% of Christians own the homes they live in, while 48% rent houses and apartments. The remaining 22% live in properties belonging to the church and are considered "protected" in their homes.[64] This data indicates that nearly half of the Christians rent homes and are forced to pay a monthly rental fee, which contributes to reducing their standard of living.

This problem is evident through the number of applications submitted to churches requesting church housing. According to the Franciscan Church, approximately 650 requests remain on file for housing from the Catholic Church, whose followers constitute more than half of the Christians of Jerusalem, a backlog evidently driven by the arduous municipal construction licensing process, which requires significant funds and several years.[65] Examples include the Beit Faji project in the Shayyah area, which spanned decades from the beginning of the initiative until the beneficiaries received their apartments.

62 Hoshen, p. 64.

63 Hoshen, p. 90.

64 Akroush, p. 19.

65 Salman, p. 128.

Identity

Through focus groups and interviews, Christians of all sects in Jerusalem (except for part of the Armenian community, discussed later) agree that Palestinian identity is the most important and prominent one to them, and their Christian identity follows, meaning that national identity surpasses the religious or sectarian one. In these discussions, participants asserted that their Palestinian national identity is deep-rooted and long-standing.

According to Berry's theory of acculturation, this can be explained by the fact that Christians in Jerusalem have a dual identity: Palestinian national identity and Christian religious identity. However, the picture may be more complex, and may have become more complex over time and in the face of the fluctuating political systems and social changes that took place in the city.

Thus, it is important understand the identity of Jerusalem Christians in the context of surrounding factors, for there are several that affect the formation and refinement of identity, applying the Berry theory. Minorities that live in multifaceted communities must continuously redefine their own cultural identity over time within a complex social fabric, in a manner which protects their interests and ensures their continuity.[66]

Western Influence

Farah attributed Western influence, and the merging of Eastern Christians with it, in customs, traditions, and culture, to their communication with the West. This took place through churches and scientific institutes, and the acquisition of Western culture and language, which may also have eased their migration abroad.[67]

66 John W. Berry, Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation, Applied Psychology 46, No. 1, 1997, pp. 5-34.

67 Farah, p. 121.

It is impossible to discuss the identity of the Christian individual in the Middle East in isolation from Western interference or influence on Christians in the Middle East. According to the writer, Sabra, a Christian born in the Middle East must follow one of two basic approaches, based on the individual's education, cultural and social background, and after the awareness of the Christian individual has formed. The first approach is that of the "Christian Arab", which means openness to Islamic society and avoiding a rift with Muslims at all costs. This is motivated by the desire for acceptance and equality, and the pursuit of common ground for coexistence and cooperation. It symbolizes the connection with Arab identity and history, including Islamic Civilization. The second approach is that of the "Eastern Christian", which aims to preserve Christianity in the Middle East at any cost, and is motivated by the desire to protect Christian identity and its distinctiveness. This second approach views the West as part of the identity of Christians in the Middle East, as opposed to something alien to Eastern Christians, by assimilating the West as a symbol of modernity and enlightenment, and following the Western cultural approach.[68]

In the course of the research, Christians in Jerusalem defined themselves as Palestinians in the first instance, that is, their definition of themselves fit the first approach, according to Sabra, of the "Christian Arab". However, in delving into discussion of everyday matters, there are Western aspects reflected in the formulation of identity in matters of everyday life, such as the way of dress or place of residence. In one of the focus groups, for example, when asked about the issue of dress, three out of four young women expressed their discomfort with their Western-style dress in Arab neighborhoods which are predominantly Muslim. A 19-year-old female student stated: "If I want to swim, I prefer not to go to a beach with mostly Arabs on it. Rather, I prefer to go to a beach with Jews, because I feel more comfortable."

As for housing, it can be seen that many Christian families have moved to live in Jewish neighborhoods in Jerusalem, especially Gilo, Pisgat Ze'ev, and Neve Yaakov.[69] A twenty-year old Christian woman who works in the field of cosmetics stated: "I lived with my family in the suburb of the Copts[70] and, more than once, stones were thrown at the house because we had put up a Christmas tree. We moved to live in Pisgat Ze'ev."

Some Christians preferred to move and live in secular Jewish neighborhoods, which are more individualistic and not collective, to feel more comfortable, without interference or harassment from the environment in which they lived before. Western influence has clearly affected the Christian community and its view of itself within Palestinian Muslim society. The Christian community came to view itself more clearly in the secular Jewish neighborhoods of the city.

68 George Sabra, Two Ways of Being a Christian in the Muslim Context of the Middle East, Islam and Christian Muslim Relations 17, No. 1, 2006, pp. 43-53.

69 Akroush, p. 26.

70 A Palestinian neighborhood outside the Separation Wall.

Impact of Israeli Occupation

The presence of Christians within a Muslim majority in Palestine has impacted the Palestinian identity of Christian Palestinians. The researcher, Hastings, sees that the strengthening of national identity results from the presence of a common threat or enemy against society.[71] It can be said that the historical events experienced by Palestinian society, whether Muslims or Christians, during the Nakba and subsequent policies of occupation and restriction, have reinforced the sense of national identity and contributed to finding common ground. According to Farah, Christians have adopted a general policy of social and political engagement and expressed their openness to the issues of the region that they are essentially a part of.[72]

Christians have been situated at the forefront of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and made great contributions to the Palestinian National Movement. They tried, from their point of view, to build a bridge between the Palestinian people and Western countries, in an attempt to solve the conflict with the Israeli occupation state.[73] This was evident in an attempt to conduct an interview with a young Christian. When communicating with him by telephone, he exclaimed: "I do not want to do this interview as a Christian, because speaking about this topic divides Palestinians into Muslims and Christians, which is unacceptable."

On the other hand, a number of Christians have obtained Israeli citizenship, generally a taboo topic within the Palestinian Jerusalemite community. Statistics indicate, moreover, that the rate of obtaining Israeli citizenship has risen in recent years. According to the survey by Akroush, 44% of Jerusalem Christians have obtained Israeli citizenship over the past 15 years. By comparison the overall number of Jerusalem Palestinian holders of Israeli citizenship was 24,000[74] until 2016, which does not exceed 8% of the Palestinian population of the city. According to Akroush, the acquisition of Israeli citizenship by this percentage of Jerusalem Christians did not change their political viewpoints or affiliation.[75] Through the focus group discussions, he concluded that their acquisition of Israeli citizenship did not alter national feelings or affiliation. Akroush instead attributed the acquisition of citizenship to practical reasons, especially regarding the issue of travel, because holders of Israeli citizenship can travel to many countries without the need for a visa.

Based on the above, the study concluded that Christians in Jerusalem have been affected by various factors that have contributed to formulating their individual and collective identity. Applying Berry's theory, Christian integration into the Muslim majority Palestinian society is evident, yet, at the same time, Christian integration with Israeli society and the influence of Israeli presence in Jerusalem also appears evident. This appears to indicate Christian vies of life in this Israeli society as a way to secure a more Western way of life. Some Christians, however, have felt the need to separate from society, retreat into their Christian identity and attempt to reduce mixing with other communities (this is discussed below in the section on problems and challenges).

If we apply Berry's acculturation theory in combination with Sabra's claims, the first approach of

71 Adrian Hastings, The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism, Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 111.

72 Farah, p. 125.

73 Salman, p.146.

74 Amnon Ramon, Non-Citizen Residents, 2017, p. 317.

75 Akroush, p. 17.

"Christian Arab" may be inappropriate, where Christians considers themselves Arabs, in the first instance, and belong to this local identity, for they do not need acculturation or integration into society. If we take the second approach, however, the theory may apply to Christians to different degrees, and, perhaps, according to the individual's personal experience and their view of other communities.

To complete the picture, it is possible to apply the social identity theory of Tajfel and Turner[76] to what Sabra says. The Tajfel and Turner theory states that social identity is made up as a result of the individual being affected by belonging to the community, a belonging that affects their decisions among different communities. If the Christian uses the first approach and self-identifies as a "Christian Arab", the relationship with other communities, especially with Muslims, is one of belonging to the Palestinian identity, a relationship born out of the Christian and Palestinian presence on the same land and country and a shared history with Muslims and the Palestinian people in general. If the Christian takes the second approach, of defining themself as "Eastern Christian", the relationship with the West becomes one of identity, which may overwhelm life and existence in the East, because of the confluence of Christians with the West as they follow the same religion. This may directly affect culture and identity. Regarding Israeli society, it can be interpreted that the contact with Israeli society in the city has led to the integration of Christians with, or a change of direction towards, this society, and perhaps this was the result of Christians finding an individualistic society that is more open than the conservative Muslim one, without the Christians feeling that their national identity was affected by the Israeli influence.

Differences between individuals can also be explained according to the theory of social identity. In the event that the group's boundaries are breached, an individual may perform what Tajfel calls "individual mobility", through which he/she may take steps for self-development to achieve individual goals and improve his or her personal life. This may also apply to the action of some Christians in obtaining Israeli citizenship; while they continue to feel Palestinian, and their national identity is not affected, personal and practical interests motivate the move. It also applies to Christians who move to live in Jewish neighborhoods, to achieve personal goals such as the desire for a sense of individual comfort, without harassment from the society in which they lived before.

These identified complexities appear to differ from one person to another, for the definition of identity is not conclusive or clear, but may be a combination of several identities and complexities, past and present, forcing an individual to change the components of their identity at different periods of their life. This matter may apply to the aforementioned acculturation theory.

76 Henri Tajfel, Social Identity and Intergroup Behavior, Information, International Social Science Council, 13, No. 2, 1974, pp. 65-93.

Identity in the Armenian Sect

Identity cannot be separate from language and culture. The Armenian Quarter in the Old City has a school for Armenians, and Armenian is the only language spoken by the people of the neighborhood. A 27-year-old Armenian working in tourism stated: "All Armenian homes speak the Armenian language; there is no Armenian home that does not." In terms of culture, the Armenians living in the neighborhood are proud of their Armenian identity, which they grew up with. In the words of a 21-year-old Armenian student: "Since childhood, we were brought up as Armenians. This is mostly the word that we used and still use to define ourselves."

The members of the sect in the focus group confirmed that they belong, in the first instance, to the Armenian identity. While some see it as separate from Christian identity, others believe that the two are inseparable, especially since the Armenians were the first to believe in Christianity, according to the focus group of the sect.

As for their belonging to the Palestinian people, many believe that they do not, and that those who do are the local Armenians (those who were in Jerusalem hundreds of years ago, before the Armenian genocide). The Armenians who came in the wake of the genocide and the First World War remain closely connected to Armenia, and this is evidenced by their close association with what is happening there, intimate knowledge of the governments and ministers, as well as overall awareness of all the events in their home country. A 22-year-old Armenian student stated: "The Armenian Quarter in the Old City is considered a small Armenia, for we feel that we are there. We have our own school and borders for the neighborhood." Their association with Armenia is also reenforced by personal relationships with family and friends there, not just in general knowledge of what is going on in the country.

As for the Armenian relationship with other Christian sects, they have good relations and friendships with many Christians in Jerusalem. Some express their feelings and stress that relations remain in a formal framework, and through joint activities such as sports, scouts or culture. A 23-year-old man working in trade stated: "When there is cooperation between Armenian institutions and other Christian ones, I feel that relations among Christians are predominantly formal and within a certain frame." The focus group participants also expressed their feeling of safety and comfort when entering the Armenian Quarter more than any other area in the city.

When asked about whether Armenians are isolated from the rest of society, a 22-year-old female student stated: "We are almost isolated from the outside world. As young people, we mix with others in the city, but I feel that I have an identity and a culture of my own, and my Armenian sect here."

According to Berry's theory, it is possible to analyze the Armenian community's behavior in that they prefer the strategy of separation rather than integration, and, with this approach, they can preserve their language and national feeling towards Armenia and define themselves without being greatly influenced by what is going on around them. Despite communication with external societies, they maintain their sense of belonging to their own sect. A 27-year-old man working in the tourism industry stated: "There is a belief among the Armenian diaspora that even if years later, they will return to the motherland." As for besieged culture, it can be seen that in general the Armenians have maintained boundaries and restrictions for access to their group and prevented outsider penetration. The sect has been able to preserve its members and prevent them from shunning it or separating from it under the force of attraction to the central, majority, society.

Problems and Challenges

Christians in Jerusalem share many of the problems suffered by other Palestinians, including challenging political, economic and social conditions, but there is some distinctiveness in their problems, as they are a minority with a long, rich history in the city. This research highlights some of this by integrating sources with interviews and focus groups, and will continue below by dividing problems into internal and external categories to clarify the picture. It should be noted that changes over the last decades not only have impacted identity, as mentioned in the previous section, but created additional problems and exacerbated existing ones among the city's Christians.

Decline in Number of Christians

The first section will discuss the problems according to the information presented above, particularly in relation to the demographic issue: the great change that have impacted Christians over these years and how this has cast its shadow over the group, per the data previously mentioned in the section on demography. The number of Christians in Jerusalem began to drop dramatically and significantly after 1948, directly reversing the increase that took place over the course of the British Mandate, when the number of Jerusalem Christians reached 30,000 and was comparable to the number of Muslims in the city.

This post-1948 decline in the number of Christians can be linked to several factors, the most important of which are:

Political Factors

The fate of Jerusalem and its Christian sites is closely linked to Christian history and heritage, and the international Christian position was clear on this issue. Prior to the Nakba, many Christian sects expressed their concern and fear of Jewish control over the holy sites in Jerusalem. This goes back to 1922, when the Vatican Minister of Foreign Affairs publicly declared that the actions of the British Mandate could lead to the displacement of a large number of Christians. Among the Holy See's proposals in that era was one to internationalize the city of Jerusalem, fearing for the holy sites. The Nakba led to the displacement of many Christians, especially from neighborhoods in the west of the city. In 1967, the eastern part of the city was occupied, and the occupation enacted laws that strengthened Jewish religious identity at the expense of others.[77]

Israeli occupation policies continued to restrict the Christian population and reached their peak during the first intifada, which led to a mass emigration of Christians in 1987.[78] The second intifada followed in 2000, negatively affecting Christians and leading to further emigration. Since the construction of the Separation Wall in 2003 the suffering of Christians increased and severed them from their natural right to access the holy sites, their families in Bethlehem, and, for some, their business interests.[79] For decades, successive occupation governments confiscated much of the land belonging to the Palestinian population and implemented violence against them, including Christians.[80]

77 Salman, p. 146.

78 Ramon, p. 101.

79 Ramon, p. 122.

80 Salman, p. 146.

Demographic Factors

The decline in the number of Christians in Jerusalem coincided with a rise in the number of Muslims and Jews in it. The population of the city increased almost nine-fold over recent decades, reaching 919,400 per 2018 statistics. The borders of Jerusalem expanded significantly after the 1967 through Israel's annexation of 70,000 square meters, bringing the municipal area to 126,000 square kilometers. In addition, the number of Muslims increased in the period of Jordanian rule, through their migration from the Hebron area and West Bank villages to Jerusalem. This coincided with a decrease in the rate of natural growth and birth among Christians in Jerusalem, as mentioned previously. Thus, the proportion of Christians did not exceed 16% of the city's population during the 1948 to 1967 Jordanian rule period.[81]

In addition, the general restrictions imposed on Palestinians by the occupation, through settlement building and attempts to prevent Palestinian demographic expansion in the city, contributed to stifling an increase in the number of Christians in the city. Despite the expansion of the city's boundaries, much of the annexed land was swallowed up by settlements, where hundreds of thousands of settlers live.[82]

Emigration

Emigration is linked to the political and demographic factors mentioned previously, and the issue of Christian exodus from the country is not new, but has existed for decades. However, its rate has risen since 1967, due to political and social conditions and instability in the country. Aspirations for a better life in economic terms, greater social and religious freedom, and political stability also prompted more Christians to emigrate.[83]

The rate of Christian emigration since 1948 is higher than that of Muslims. According to the researcher Prior, the intention to emigrate is three times higher among Christians than Muslims. Since 1967, nearly 40% of Palestinian Christians have left Palestine.[84]

On the other hand, the Christian individual has become more affected by individual beliefs and has acquired more modern and ambitious thought on a personal level. Christians seek a better life, education, and living and economic conditions.[85] According to some beliefs, there was encouragement and facilitation by Western countries, especially European ones, for Christians to emigrate there. Some Christians believe that this is a policy pursued by the West to empty the Middle East of its Christians, while others see it as a result of the persecution of Christians in the region and aimed at providing Christians with a safe haven. Furthermore, the weaker link of Christians to their extended families than among Muslims also has increased Christian emigration. A 31-year-old Christian man who works as an employee stated: "I have a friend who went to Canada in 2007. When I spoke to him a short while ago and asked him if he wants to return, he asked me what for, and told me he has no family here or anyone connecting him to the country."

81 Tsimhoni, pp. 21-22.

82 Salman, p. 143.

83 Salman, pp. 131-133.

84 Michael Prior, Palestinian Christians and the Liberation of Theology, 1993, p. 483.

85 The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel, 2006, p. 32.

Christians do not hide their fear of extinction or withering away in Jerusalem. A 38-year-old man working as a teacher, when asked about the problems faced by Christians, smiled sadly: "We are becoming extinct." The feeling is justified, given their diminishing number.

Separating Christians of Jerusalem from their Depth and Restricting their Movement

Political events, such as the uprisings, construction of the wall, and others, have contributed to division of the homeland and weakening of the cohesive Palestinian family. Jerusalemites cannot move freely within their homeland, regardless of their religious affiliation, but the impact on Christians has been deeper, because their small number in Jerusalem has been severed from their similarly small number in the West Bank, especially in Bethlehem and the surrounding areas of Beit Sahour and Beit Jala. This separation has increased social isolation and economic hardship. An example of this is the difficulty of marriage in these circumstances, especially as they are a minority, and finding a life partner is a difficult process.[86] Additional data from the Akroush study shows that 16% of Christian families face problems with the family reunification among their members. This is an occupation imposed process through which a family is required to undertake an arduous and uncertain bureaucratic process to obtain a permit for a spouse who holds a Palestinian, as opposed to Jerusalem, identity card. This restriction has increased the obstacles faced by Palestinian, including Christian, families and has posed a threat to their social rights and residency in Jerusalem.[87]

The increase in the number of Muslims in cities, other than Jerusalem, that were predominantly Christian, and were considered the depth of Christians in these cities, has greatly affected the overall Palestinian Christian presence. According to the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, the percentage of Christians in Bethlehem declined from 84% in 1922 to 28% in 2007; in Beit Jala, from 99% to 61%; and, in Beit Sahour, from 81% to 65% during the same period.[88]

Conflict Transformed and the Absence of Christian History

According to Salman, Jews and Muslims in Jerusalem are trying to preserve and defend their religious identity in the city. Jews are trying to maintain a demographic majority within the city's boundaries, either by encouraging the settlement policy or by emptying the city of all non-Jewish sects and residents, in an effort to render it wholly Jewish. Muslims, in turn, react to these Israeli actions by trying to preserve Islamic property and prevent its sale to non-Muslims, through issuing Fatwas that prohibit such sales, and by spreading the idea that the land is holy and belongs solely to Muslims.[89] A 28-year-old Christian man who works in tourism stated: "I sometimes feel that the issue of Christians is marginalized. Jews say that the land is theirs and Muslims say the

86 Salman, pp. 125-127.

87 Akroush, p. 17.

88 A Study on the Causes of the Emigration of Palestinian Christians and Ways to Mitigate It, Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, 2020, p. 3.

89 Salman, p. 106.

same thing, as though we have no history or right to this land as Christians."
Even though the history of Christians has been rooted in the country for thousands of years, Salman, in his study, refers to the issue of Christian presence in the region by examining textbooks from the fifth grade up to secondary school. According to Salman, schools and textbooks used in the Palestinian curriculum make almost no mention of Christian history, as the Palestinian curriculum begins with the history of Arabs and Muslims from the beginning of Islam and through the history of the various Muslim dynasties, leading to the history of the Middle Ages. All this is mentioned without reference to Christian history, or with negative Christian historical references or inaccurate information.[90] The same issues exist within the Israeli curriculum, the "Bagrut" matriculation, which omits Christian history and draws upon books and sources written by Zionists, sometimes referencing the Old Testament, to promote an exclusive Jewish right to the land, ignoring the rights of others, and to educate students on Jewish values.[91]

Discrimination

Like all Palestinians from all walks of life, Christians suffer from harassment and discrimination by the Israeli authorities as a result of occupation policies and practices. This is an experience of discrimination at work, in housing and construction, politics, and other aspects. The Zionist ideology, by which the State of Israel was founded, negates the existence of the Palestinian people or the establishment of a Palestinian state, promoting the idea that the land belongs to the Jews, only, and was granted to them by God. After the 1967 Naksa, the correlation of Jewish ideology with the land increased and contributed to an influx of more Jews into the Old City of Jerusalem.[92] The policy of closure imposed by the occupation also led to many Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip being denied access to their holy sites in Jerusalem, even during religious holidays.[93] A 38-year-old Christian man, who works as a teacher and lives in the Old City, says: "In the past, we used to feel the holidays, especially Holy Saturday, and we used to see all our friends and relatives. Today, with the small number of Christians and the closures by the occupation, we do not feel the holiday, even in the Old City."
In addition to Israeli discrimination, Christians suffer discrimination by some hardline Muslims, leading some Christians to feel alienated and isolated from their Arab surroundings. This results from the practices of some Muslims, whether in the workplace, school or in public places, or of labels applied to Christians such as "Crusaders" or other racist and discriminatory language. This problem can be linked with the previous one, namely, the absence of Christian history from textbooks and the emergence of a generation whose majority does not know about Christians except by name.
According to Akroush, 76% of Christian survey respondents asserted that they have been subjected to incidents of discrimination simply because they are Christian, and 42% of young Christians stated that they have been exposed to situations in which they were forced to hide their Christian

90 Salman, pp. 131-133.
91 Ibid, p 124.
92 Ibid, pp. 103-104.
93 Ibid, p. 144.

identity.[94] According to an 18-year-old Christian student: "I am afraid to hang a cross or a rosary with a cross inside my car, because they have vandalized the car when they saw a cross in it."

Isolation

The aforementioned reality of a decrease in the number of Christians and discrimination against them, in addition to their isolation from their roots in the West Bank, motivated many members of the Christian sects to isolate, or nearly isolate, themselves from their Arab surroundings, and to conduct many activities exclusively for Christians. For example, there are basketball groups exclusively for Christian youth, which hold sports activities and tournaments between Christian teams and groups, only. The isolation of Muslim and Christian societies from each other also is evident on religious occasions and in celebrations. For example, Christian scouts celebrated Islamic occasions such as the Israa and Mi'raj or the Mawlid of the Prophet, while Muslim scouts celebrated Christian occasions such as New Year's or Easter; however, these phenomena have begun to disappear within the Jerusalem community. Those meetings and activities formerly took place naturally and smoothly between people of the two religions, but, today, the trend is towards isolation and seclusion of each group from the other.

This isolation also is embodied in separate Christian construction and housing, such as the housing project in the Beit Safafa area, or Beit Faji, which is separated from the surrounding community through a closed area, fenced with a high wall. It may also be evident in the reluctance of some Christian parties and activists to hold joint activities with Muslims in the city. One 40-year-old activist who works as a journalist stated: "Some years ago, a young Muslim man submitted a proposal to expand and include some parts of the Muslim Quarter and the central streets during the Christmas Market period and make the holiday activities joint ones, but some Christian activists and institutions rejected the idea."

With the aforementioned problems, the Christian community is enduing difficult circumstances. According to the researcher Aneshensel, different social environments that cause the individual to interact with it, such as family, work, friends, community and others, may lead to a significant burden on the individual in the event of non-conformity with these environments.[95] If we apply this theory to Christians in Jerusalem, we observe that belonging and the feeling of complex identity for the Christian individual, to which many components, mentioned previously in the identity section, have been added, have increased the burdens on the Christian minority. The ongoing changes in the region, in general, and in the city, in particular, have increased pressure to devise practical approaches to deal and coexist with these problems, reflected in the decline in the number of Christians. The challenges posed by protracted political conflict have not been easy for the Christian minority to deal with and have frustrated efforts to form a new strategy to solve these accumulated, and evidently accelerating, problems.

On the other hand, there has been little or no support for the Christian minority, which is considered the highest factor for a sense of belonging, identity and a sense of security within the group.[96]

94 Akroush, p. 25.

95 Carol S. Aneshensel, Consequences of Psychosocial Stress: The Universe of Stress Outcomes, 1996, pp. 111-36.

96 Ibid.

This has led to an increased feelings of insecurity, fear for the future of the community and the sense of a genuine threat of extinction. A 37-year-old Christian who works in the field of high-tech stated: "The Christian individual no longer feels he has a rock of support in society; there is no Christian community or population density in Jerusalem or elsewhere." While Christians formerly felt that they had a large family and Christian community, they now lack this sense, perhaps, due to the emigration of parts of many families, or the difficulty of meeting with family members in other areas of the country due to the restrictions on movement to other Palestinian cities.

Gap between the Clergy and the Christian Community

Interviews with members of different Christian sects revealed a gap between the Christian clergy and their community and parishes. This is due to several reasons, primarily that many clerics, especially those of high rank, belong to other peoples and cultures, most of which are foreign and Western. They are not of Palestinian origin, and their service in the church is a religious, functional one, removed from the concerns and problems of the Palestinian people, and from the challenges that Jerusalem Christians face in their daily lives. This makes cultural and intellectual communication between the church's followers and the clergy more difficult, may create misunderstanding between them and lead to dissatisfaction or discontent with the ecclesiastical institution, as represented by its members and clergy. "The clergy ... is colonialism," stated a 30-year-old Christian who works in the business sector.

In addition, Christian cultural and educational centers increasingly are absent, despite the presence of many properties owned by the churches and more than 130 Christian organizations and institutions in Jerusalem.[97] In this vein, some Christians feel that church resources and capabilities are not properly devoted to the service of the Christian community. Even though the churches own significant real estate, the Christian individual does not enjoy their services and may believe that they are not put to proper use. This also creates a state of disappointment in the Christian individual about their institutions and church. In addition, the leaders of some Christian sects sell church property in the Old City to parties other than Christians or Christian churches, without considering the impact on the Christian individual or community.[98] According to Akroush, most young people view the church with great reservation and suspicion, and, according to the study, 78% of young people aged 23-25 think there is mismanagement of the programs run by ecclesiastical institutions, and 61% of the 17-22 group share this feeling.[99]

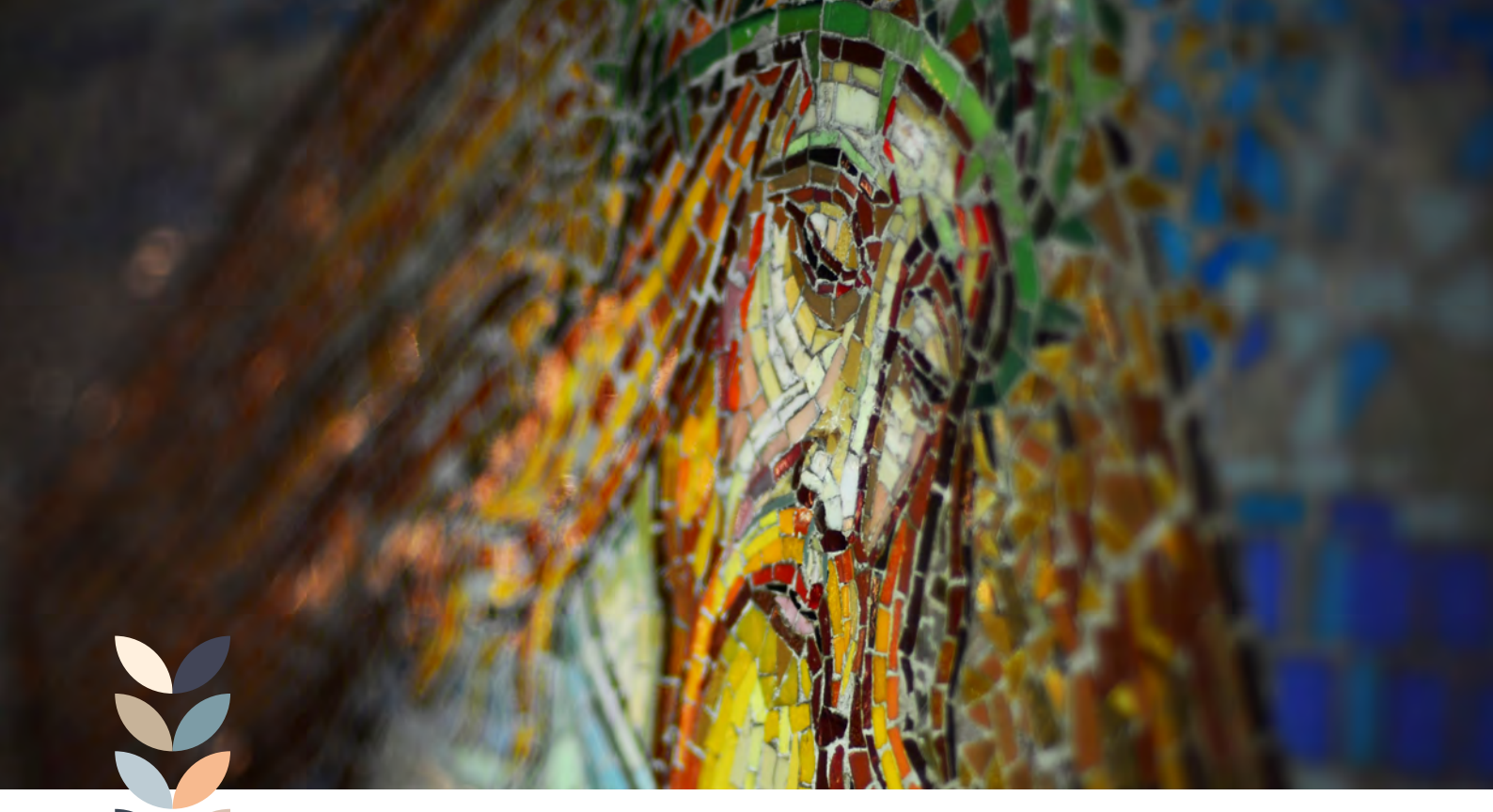
Conflict between Christian Sects

The dispute between Christian sects is an old, historic one that is not readily summarized, but can be condensed in the controversy surrounding the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. In his book, History of Jerusalem, Aref Al-Aref quotes the historian, Ashby: "The peace preached by the Lord Jesus Christ may appear anywhere else, except between the walls of the Church of the Holy Sep-

97 Akroush, p. 6.

98 Salman, p. 106.

99 Akroush, pp. 20-21.



ulcher, where enmity and hatred have taken root between Romans, Latins, Armenians, Copts, and other warring Christian sects."[100] According to Al-Aref, the climax of the dispute between the sects was during the period of the Crusader occupation in 1099, when the Latin Church was in control and tyrannized the Romans. In the Ayyubid period, the Romans reclaimed their property from the Latins. In 1493, a dispute arose between the Latins and the Georgians around the Church of Calvary, and, in the mid-15th century, the Armenians began to compete for the place. The dispute has persisted across centuries and sometimes has led to violence between the different sects.[101]

Frequent conflict between the various Christian sects, whether over the status of the holy sites or over privileges, exacerbates the problem of the ordinary Christian individual. In the past, marriage usually took place between members of the same sect, only, due to these differences. In recent decades, marriage between different sects has increased. The historical inter-sect quarrels probably lead to alienation of some Christians from the church establishment, as some of them report in interviews. A 28-year-old man working in the tourism field stated: "I don't know why all these problems exist around the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. This place is sacred and we must preserve that sanctity."

Moreover, those conflicts lead to a weakening of the Christian position and the absence of a unified position towards various challenges, whether official Israeli policies or the practices of some Muslims or other residents of the city. These long-running conflicts also maintain the absence of a clear Christian leadership that enables Christians to face the challenges, dangers and problems that beset them. Salman states that the absence of Christian leaders prevents Christians from applying pressure to protect their interests and causes each sect to act as it deems appropriate,[102] scattering Christian ranks and leading to the absence of unified politics and leadership.

100 Al-Aref, p. 268.

101 Al-Aref, pp. 269-274.

102 Salman, p. 147.

Weak Religious Bond Among Christian Youth

The former two reasons, namely, the gap between the Christian community and the clergy, and the conflict between the sects, seemingly have led to the weakness of individual religious bonds and affiliation with ecclesiastical institutions. This is made evident through several surveys on this issue. According to a survey by the Sabeel Center in 2006, 81% of Christians throughout Israel and Palestine are remote from the church and 74% of Christian youth have no connection to it.[103] This indicates that many Christians lack comprehensive background and knowledge of Christian history and culture, which may be reflected in weak affiliation, whether to religion, culture, or the land.

According to the Akroush survey, there is a weak knowledge of Christian religious sites in Jerusalem, where only 13% possess strong knowledge about these sites, 58% reported that their knowledge is very limited and 28% rated it as very poor.[104]

Despite the many developmental and humanitarian services provided by ecclesiastical institutions in Jerusalem, the presence of Christian youth in these services is weak. Although young people represent more than half of the Christian community in Jerusalem, their influence and partic-

103 The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel, 2006, pp. 89.

104 Akroush, p. 28.

ipation in decision-making is highly limited. For example, only one of every six scout groups uses a democratic process to elect its leadership, that is, an appointment system remains prevalent in ecclesiastical institutions. The percentage of Christian youth enrollment in clubs and scouts is 10% less than among the overall Jerusalem youth population.[105]

It is true that the gap between clergy and community together with the conflict between the sects appear to be two main reasons for movement by Jerusalem Christians away from ecclesiastical institutions, but additional problems and reasons explained above cannot be ignored, especially the issue of absence of Christian history from textbooks. Books that Christian children study with and which make no mention of Christian history, may lead them away from the church. The general sense among Christians that they are a shrinking minority may lead to their discouragement and lack of engagement with their churches and community.

General Conclusion of the Research

The problems that have befallen Christians over recent decades cannot be separated from their identity and affiliation. Expulsion from their homes in the city during the Nakba and the subsequent harassment and policies they endured stem from their Palestinian Arab identity, and the Zionist objective to make Jerusalem a purely Jewish city. The great emigration of Christians was not only from Jerusalem, but from all Palestinian cities where Christians lost their demographic footing. Christian population centers vanished or diminished, which led to the Christian's sense of insecurity or alienation in their homeland. After exerting a large influence in the city for centuries, Christians became a diminishing minority. These problems were exacerbated by the absence of Christians from several places and their marginalization, especially in school curricula, and being sometimes subjected to racist attitudes or discrimination.

All these external circumstances, combined with the internal conflicts between sects and the gap with the clergy, have led to a weakening or dispersal of identity and introduced daunting complexity for Jerusalem Christians. It can be concluded, per Tajfel's theory of social identity, that if the group is breached, each individual may act as they deem appropriate and per their own interests, without reference to, or thought about, his group.

Thus, to assist Christians in the city, the problems facing them need to be solved, which, in turn, begins with stopping the demographic bleeding they are experiencing, helping to keep them on their land and making appropriate use of their inherent capabilities, strengths and other assets.

105 Akroush, p. 6.

Suggestions and Recommendations for Solving Problems

We suggest solutions to the challenges based on the socio-environmental theory at different levels:

At the Microsystem Level:

1. Work to increase understanding and awareness among Jerusalem Christians, especially youth, of the danger of emigration, its impact on the future of Christians in the city, including their Christian relatives, and on the future and history of the city in general.

Medium System (Mesosystem):

2. Work to reduce the gap between Christian clergy of various sects and churches and their followers, especially youth, through events and meetings that may enhance trust and understanding between the two parties, and possibly, through this, create a unified, effective leadership through representation of the Christian public and compatibility with the religious leadership.

3. Hold workshops and activities within ecclesiastical institutions to raise the capacities of Christian youth in management and volunteering, and strengthen the link between this youth and religious identity, within the framework of ecclesiastical institutions.

Coaxial System (Exosystem):

4. Attempt to use the resources of Christian churches and institutions, whether real estate or funds, in a proper and strategic manner that benefits the local Christian community, through encouraging entrepreneurship and establishing business interests that contribute to keeping Christians on their land, in their homes and as productive members of their communities.

Large System (Macrosystem):

5. Increase awareness among the Jerusalem community, in general, of Christians and their history, by introducing Christian history in school textbooks and dealing with it in an appropriately prominent and objective manner. This will be achieved by directly and persistently communicating with those responsible for the curricula at the Palestinian Ministry of Education to effect tangible change in textbooks and curricula. Despite previous attempts to do so, additional earnest efforts are required.

6. Increase awareness of the Christian presence in Jerusalem and its importance to the Palestinian and Jerusalemite social fabric, including that decreasing Christian numbers negatively impacts the Holy City socially, economically and politically, all of which weaken the Palestinian and Arab position in constructively ending the conflict with the Israeli occupation.

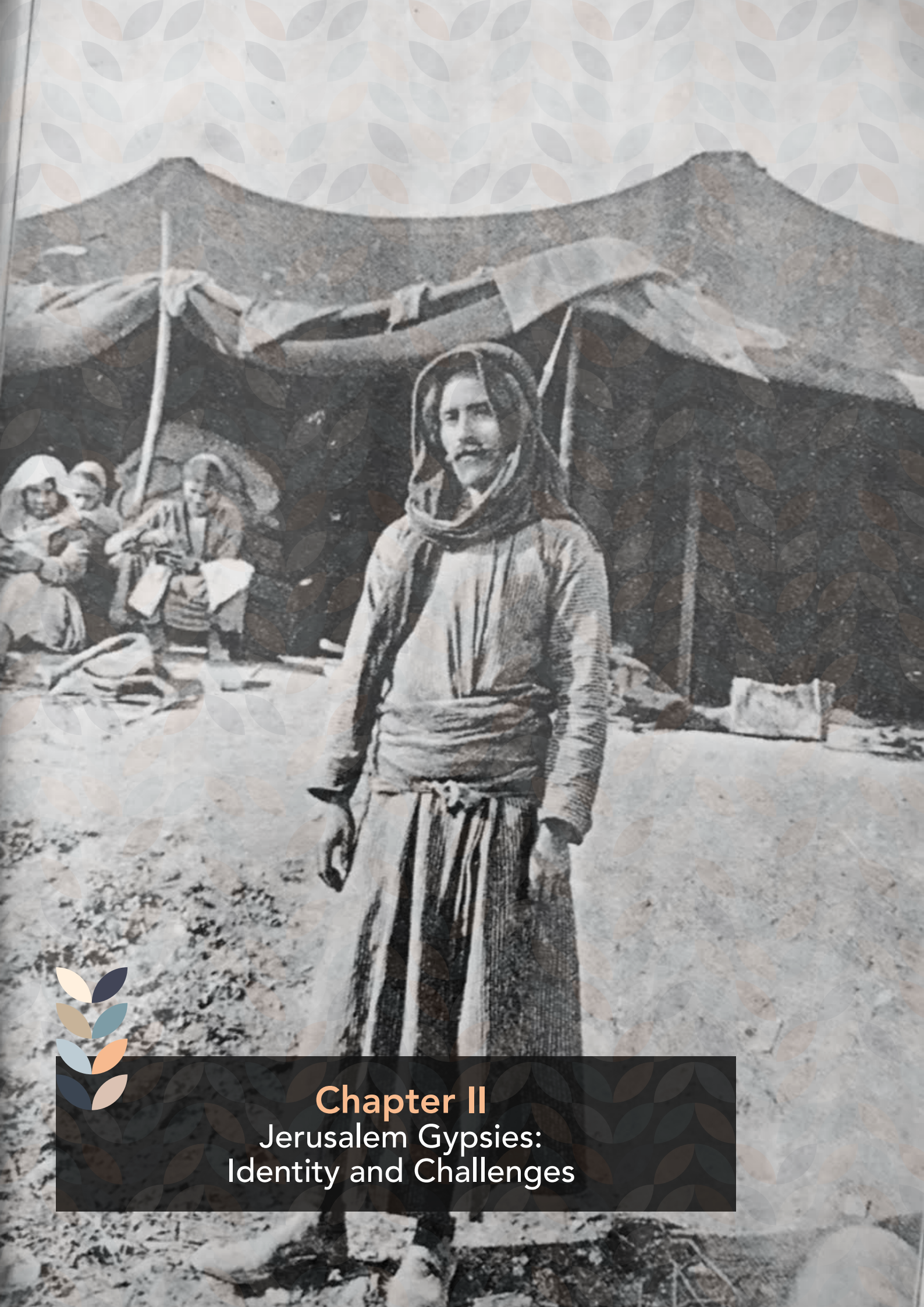
7. In 2017, a body was established with the name "Christian Student Youth" which then changed to "Youth of the Homeland of Jesus". This body began to connect Christians in various Palestinian regions and cities. In an interview, Mr. Rafi Ghattas, Secretary General of Christian Youth in Palestine, indicated that this body is in the process of educating Christian youth, including by linking them to their Christian history and the land of Palestine, and working to prevent reclusiveness and isolation among the Christian community.[106] This initiative must be supported and assisted by all official and unofficial parties and civil society institutions.

106 Interview with Mr. Rafi Ghattas, Secretary General of Christian Youth in Palestine, on 09/05/2020.

8. Establish activities to break down the barriers between Muslims and Christians in Jerusalem and outside it, through sports, social and cultural events, and through religious events and holidays. Despite the existence of similar activities, it is necessary to intensify and increase these efforts.

9. Organize cultural and religious events open to the public, including Christians and Muslims, such as festivals and conferences. It bears noting that, during the focus group discussion research, cases were reported where some Christian parties had reservations towards holding public activities, to ward off perceived potential problems and friction. However, this brings back the matter of isolation referred to above and the imperative of building bridges between Muslims and Christians of the city must be prioritized to break this isolation trend and risk.

Twelve church schools operate in Jerusalem. They can be used as a base to increase civil peace and understanding between Christians and Muslims, who make up the larger percentage of students within these schools. This can be done by introducing educational materials and workshops, activities and joint activities within each school and with other schools, such as those belonging to Muslim endowments, as well as municipality schools, which school the majority of students in the city. In this way, a sincere attempt can be made to break the barriers between students and bring them closer together.



Chapter II
Jerusalem Gypsies: Identity and Challenges

Introduction

Jerusalem is distinguished from other Palestinian cities in its ethnic and religious diversity, with many minorities and groups living in its Old City that have settled in the region across centuries. This diversity has led to total integration among the community of the city, without the need for any ethnic or religious group to concede its identity to prove its subordination and belonging to this larger community. Each group has preserved the way of life, language, culture, and habits it had before its migration to the city. The community is harmonious, consisting of many minorities that came from the Arab West, Central Africa, the Indian Continent, Asia Minor, and other parts of the world. Some came to fight as Mujahideen and joined the armies of Islamic Conquest. Others came to worship and practice asceticism, remained in one of the Sufi corners scattered in the city, and had many descendants. Some took refuge in the city, seeking safety and stability for themselves and their families. Frequently referred to in Jerusalem by the pejorative term "Nawar", its members currently reside in neighborhoods such as the Old City, Shu'afat Camp and Ras Al-Amoud,

This study deals with an ethnic minority that was and remains part of the population fabric of the city of Jerusalem: the Gypsy (Arabic: Ghajar) Clan, one of the immigrant minorities that arrived in the Holy City hundreds of years ago, and was able to partially preserve its cultural identity and lifestyle.

This preservation, however, did not prevent this minority from being affected by the general Jerusalemite way of life and acquiring new habits and traditions in line with the majority of Jerusalem society, whether in the way of dress, speech, or social customs at weddings, funerals, and the like. However, despite the opportunities for harmony and integration into the Jerusalem community, and as explained by the Israeli writer Yaacov Yaniv in his book about the Gypsies, the clan still lives in relative isolation from the wider Jerusalemite community,[107] with restrictions and challenges that prevent its members from fully integrating into Jerusalem society.

Research Problem

Within the complex life of the people of Jerusalem in general, minorities face additional unique challenges and obstacles that arise for numerous reasons, including marginalization and indifference from the majority, poor political and economic situation, and double identity, as is the case in the Armenian minority, for example. This study deals with the "Gypsy Clan" and presents its most important characteristics and aspects of its identity and culture. Its unique challenges as a minority in the Jerusalemite community also are presented, to stimulate discussion and propose solutions that may contribute to improving the minority's status.

Researching the clan's history revealed varying accounts of its origin, history, and the paths of its migration. There is no single narration that can be relied upon in determining the above. The naming issue, which may be related to the disputed historical background of the clan, is a problem in itself. Are the Gypsies, Nawar, or Dom the same ethnic group, or do they differ in their origins and growth? If we are talking about a single group, why is there not a single account that explains its origins and the path of its migration to the city?

107 Yaacov Yaniv, Gypsies in the Mountainous Regions of Southern Palestine and Jerusalem, p. 5.

Social, economic and cultural research on this clan is very scarce. Studies in the field, particularly Israeli ones, have noted the lifestyle of the clan's members and the political and social challenges they have faced over the past one hundred years, and continue to face, especially in the Israeli era. Arab historical sources delve mostly into the origins of this minority.
The clan's reality and its social and economic situation in the Holy City, together with the scarcity of studies on it, make this research paper an important one, because it sheds light on an ethnic group that has long been marginalized by Palestinian society, in general, and the Jerusalem community, in particular.

Research Aims

The purpose of this research is to define the national and social identity, as well as the characteristics of, the Gypsy clan in Jerusalem, and the extent of the clan's sense of belonging to Palestinian and Jerusalemite societies. It additionally aims to present the Gypsy clan's challenges and concerns, toward the end of suggesting solutions that can contribute to improving the situation of the clan.

Research Methodology

The research relies on historical sources, references, as well as available reports and studies on the Gypsies, as well as on semi-structured personal interviews conducted by the researcher with some prominent clan figures and also with some young people, in addition to gathering information through focus groups.
A qualitative approach was followed in this study in which themes were deduced from the content of interviews and focus groups, and the results were interpreted per our theoretical understanding that is founded on two basic theories, selected because they examine adaptation strategies for migrants and refugees, in addition to the theory of besieged culture and its impact on the formation of national and cultural identity. These theories are summarized and discussed in the theoretical background of the research at the outset, below.

Research Limitations

Many challenges arose during the research on the Gypsy (Dom/Nawar) Clan in Jerusalem, the most important of which were:

1. Scarcity of existing sources on the Gypsy Clan in Palestine, in general, and in Jerusalem, in particular. Most resources are general ones on the Gypsies in other regions of the world or in Europe. Thus, finding comprehensive and up-to-date research proved challenging.
2. Communication with some members of the sample selected for this research posed a challenge to the researcher as it was not always smooth, especially with clan women, a socially conservative group.

Theoretical Background

1. Gypsy Clan

1.1. Naming the Clan (Gypsies - Dom - Nawar)

There is inconclusive discussion about the appropriate name that should be applied to the Gypsy clan that lives in the city of Jerusalem. Some call it "Ghajar", equivalent to the word "Gypsy", which is - by some opinions - a distortion of the word "Egypt", for it is believed that the clan came from there.[108] Others believe that the origin of the word "Gypsy", according to some oral narratives, is the word "migration" due to the large extent of migration and movement.[109] It must be noted that some of those interviewed, especially young people, expressed reservations regarding the name and demanded that they be considered as any other unclassified Jerusalem group that belongs to this city, because they are indigenous residents, no different from other Jerusalemites, and there is no ethnic identity that distinguishes them from the remainder of Jerusalem's families and clans.

As for the term "Nawar", the singular of the word "Nawari", it is distorted from the word "Lawari", one of the most important Gypsy clans that migrated from India.[110] Some believe that the origin of the name is related to the "Nurians" group, which derived from the name of its leader, Nur ad-Din Zangi.[111] With the passage of time, it is believed that the "Nurians" became known as "Nawar". Others name the clan "Dom", which means "man" and also has origins in one of the Indian clans.[112] This study will use the previous designations according to the context that the minority is mentioned in. However, the word "Gypsy", despite its problems, will be the most prominent in this paper due to its compatibility with most research and academic sources, even if the name of the clan changes from one place to another in different parts of the world. This study will not use the term "Nawar", as it carries a negative connotation for some and is used in public discourse among Jerusalemites as a form of verbal offense. This study additionally will not use the term "Dom" or "Domari", as neither term is widely known or used.

1.2. History of Gypsies in the World

Opinions differ on the origin of the Gypsies, because of their broad distribution across many areas

108 Yaniv, p. 5.

109 An interview conducted with Mukhtar Abdul Hakim Salim at his home on July 20, 2020.

110 Issa Al-Maalouf, History of Eastern Families, Riad Al-Rayyes Books and Publishing, Beirut, Lebanon, 2007, p. 182.

111 Nur ad-Din Zangi (1118-1174) was one of the Seljuk leaders and governors who ruled the Emirate of Aleppo, after which his influence expanded to Damascus, Mosul and Baalbek. Zangi is considered one of the most important leaders who fought the Crusades, and his symbolism is due to his prelude to the conquest of Jerusalem before the advent of Saladin.

112 Jamal Haidar, Gypsies: Memory of Travels and Biography of Purgatory, Arab Cultural Center, Casablanca, Beirut, 2008, pp. 25-26.

around the world. Al-Hamad believes that Gypsies are among the groups with an unknown history, for they are divided into several races according to the country or state that they have lived in. Some believe that their roots extend to India, because of their tanned skin color and the typical thin, short frame, characteristics similar to the population of the Indian subcontinent, and their numbers, according to Al-Hamad, do not exceed 14 million worldwide.[113]

Haidar believes that the Gypsies began to move to Eastern Europe in the 9th century, where they first reached the borders of the Byzantine Empire, then moved to the Aegean Sea separating Turkey from Greece. Some, it is posited, settled in southern Greece, while others sailed to Spain in the Mediterranean via the Strait of Gibraltar. Due to their lifestyle and work in sorcery and witchcraft, and because of stereotypes that prevailed around them, a significant number of unfair and cruel legislations were issued against them, which diminished their chances for a decent life and led to the deterioration of their social and economic conditions. The negative attitude of European societies towards them manifested in their social rejection. In Spain, for example, a law was passed in 1499 forcing Gypsies to settle down within a month, with the threat of expulsion from the country if they failed to do so. According to Haidar, Romania until 1856 treated Gypsies as slaves of landowners, who enjoyed powers that amounted to the right to kill them.[114]

Al-Maalouf states that the origin of the Gypsies may be traced to Aryan lineage from Indian, Persian or Kurdish clans. Gypsies reside in Persia, where they speak Gypsy language, and they journey from there to Russia, then to Europe, then to Kurdistan and to Turkey.[115]

Some Arab clans believe that the Gypsies came from India to Basra after the conquest of the Sindh Region (present-day Pakistan) during the Umayyad Era, after which they were subjected to some oppression. At the time, they were called the clans of "Al-Zat", and, in the reign of Al-Mu'tasim,[116] they were pursued and attacked. The Byzantines also attacked and imprisoned them. From there, the Gypsies migrated to Eastern Europe, as mentioned above. They became proficient in dancing and singing to earn a living. Later, their descent was traced to the Jinn, and myths spread about them that began to take root with the increase of Gypsy work in sorcery and magic.[117]

1.3. Gypsies in Arab Countries and Palestine

The Arab region received its first Gypsies in the early 5th century, when they came from India and settled on the southern coast of Iran, Bahrain and Iraq.[118] Today, Gypsies are distributed around the Arab countries and have several labels, the most important of which is "Nawar" in the Levant and Egypt, "Al-Kawliyyah" in Iraq, "Al-Halab" in Upper Egypt and Sudan, and "Al-Zat" in the Arabian Peninsula amongst others. Gypsy clans lived on the coasts stretching from Southern Iraq to Iran and Bahrain. The Arabs knew them from before Islam, then the Gypsies converted to Islam and

113 Mohammed Al-Hamad, Syrian Ethnicities and Sects (History, Creed, and Orientation), Dar Al- Tali'ah Al-Jadidah, Damascus, Syria, 2006, p. 361.

114 Haidar, pp. 25-26.

115 Al-Maalouf, p. 173.

116 Al-Mu'tasim Bi'llah (796-842), the eighth Abbasid caliph.

117 Al-Hamad, p. 362.

118 Haidar, p. 72.

entered into loyalty with the Tamim Clan.[119] A portion of them later arrived in the Levant,[120] and some of them still lead a nomadic life in Jordan.[121]

Some believe that the Gypsy groups living in Palestine came from Egypt, and their known name is "Nawar", but some of them call themselves the "Dom", which, in Gypsy language, means "man" or "person".[122] Like in Europe, Palestinians and Jerusalemites have been circumspect in their dealings with Gypsies and have kept a distance from them. The term "Nawari" is expressed as a term of contempt.

In contemporary history, during the British Mandate of Palestine, Aharon Yafa believes that the Gypsies settled in Jaffa, Jerusalem and Gaza. They lived in tents and moved from one place to another. Some fled from Jaffa to Arab countries after the British Mandate suspected that they had hidden weapons for use against it, while others fled after the Nakba[123] in 1948 from Jaffa to Jordan and from Al-Arish to Egypt. During the Naksa[124] in 1967, the Israeli army struck tents inhabited by the Gypsies of Jerusalem with firearms, claiming that these tents served as barracks for the Jordanian Army. With the passage of time, the Gypsies left their tent life and began to inhabit permanent homes made of cement.[125] They currently live in two main areas, the Gaza Strip and Jerusalem.

1.4. Past Gypsy Lifestyle

Gypsies in Palestine were known to work in the manufacturing of tongs, lighters, hammers, rings, and scissors. In the past, Gypsy women wore clothes like those worn in Southern Palestine and were distinguished by gold-plated earrings and anklets. Gypsy women often added a touch of beauty to their appearance by drawing tattoos on their bodies, and have been renowned for their alleged ability to predict the future and fortune telling.[126]

1.5. Gypsies in Jerusalem

The Gypsy clan in Jerusalem comprises three main families: Salim, Nimer, and Ba'arani. There are also names of secondary families, such as Shaker and Nouri, but they all stem from the three main ones. According to Yafa, the Gypsies of Jerusalem lived, more than a hundred years ago, in the Wadi Joz area in the northeast of the Old City, after which they began to move and live inside

119 An Arab clan that inhabited Najd, Al-Yamamah, Iraq, Kuwait, and Bahrain.

120 Haidar, p. 71.

121 Yaniv, p. 5.

122 Jennifer Peterson, The Last Migration? Jerusalem's Gypsy Community, Jerusalem Quarterly File and the Institute for Jerusalem Studies, Issue 18, 2003, p. 44.

123 The disaster that befell the Palestinian people in 1948 by expelling them from their lands and establishing the Israeli occupation state on the ruins.

124 The continuation of the occupation of the remaining part of Palestine by the Israelis and the occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights, southern Lebanon and the Egyptian Sinai Desert.

125 Aharon Yafa, The Gypsies in Jerusalem, The Journal: New Directions, Supplement 21, 2009, p. 232.

126 Haidar, p. 92.

the Walls, especially in Burj Al-Luqluq and Bab Hatta neighborhoods in the northeast of the Old City. They then moved to live in various other areas, especially in Ras Al-Amoud, Anata, Al-Eizariyya, Abu Dis, and Hizma.[127] In the early twentieth century, 2,000 Dom clan members lived in Jerusalem. Today, according to estimates, they may number up to 25,000.

1.6. Language

According to Schiller, the ancient Gypsies of Jerusalem spoke "Nouri", an unwritten spoken language that originated in Central Asia but was affected by the Arabic language, due to the influence of Arab surroundings on the Gypsies, and incorporated Arabic words. With the passage of time, the language began to disappear, and was only spoken by the elders of the clan. The younger generation mostly forgot it when they began studying in schools, where they learned to read, write and speak Arabic, the language of communication with their Jerusalem environment. Some Arabs called this language "the language of birds" as they did not understand it.[128]
Examples of sentences in the Gypsy language are: Ama Domharni: We are the Gypsies; Gash diya wa tnumani: All towns are our homeland; Farshomen beiti: Our bed is the earth; Wa ghatmiyomen samak: Our cover is the sky. Eli kahandouri atten bijiari girgos: He who looks upwards breaks hisneck.[129]

1.7. Culture

Gypsies had folk music and songs in the Nouri language, which the elderly sang at weddings and events. Gypsy men also had musical performances in which they sang and played the rababa or flute, in addition to holding magic shows and acts.[130] In stories about Gypsies, Gypsy women are praised for their beauty, beautiful dancing, frequent admirers, and adventures while fleeing from theirfamilies.[131]
Gypsies have their own traditional clothes that are usually made by women and are characterized by bright, striking colors. They also make their own hand jewelry and earrings. Gypsies were greatly affected by Arab and Muslim culture in Jerusalem, such that their own culture began to dwindle, and their customs and rituals are now similar to those of the Muslim majority around them.

1.8. Leadership

Schiller mentions the story told by the Gypsy Sheikh, Mohammed Deeb Salim, and how the clan chose his family to lead them. In 1906, by the Sheik's narration, his grandfather and the remainder of the clan left Jerusalem on donkey back towards Hebron, where they settled for three months

127 Yafa, p. 230.
128 Eli Shiller, Sects and Minorities in the Old City, Ariel Edition, Jerusalem, p. 79.
129 Yaniv, p. 15.
130 Shiller, p. 80.
131 Yaniv, p. 16.

in order to work. At the time, his grandfather, Ibrahim Salim, fell ill and died, and his sons decided to bury him in Jerusalem. They placed him on a cart and rode to the cemetery near Salaheddine Street and buried him there. Then the clan gathered in the house of the Mukhtar of Abu Ghosh village[132] and chose one of Ibrahim Salim's sons, Abed Ibrahim Salim, to become the Mukhtar of the clan. His knowledge of reading and writing was the reason for this choice. During the British Mandate, the clan inhabited the Turjuman neighborhood,[133] between Al-Musrara and Mea Sha'arim. In a 1920 incident that Schiller mentions, one of the Gypsies had a celebration attended by Palestinians and Jews, and after some of the Jewish attendees got drunk, a large quarrel erupted, during which the Gypsies threw stones at the Jews. At that point, the British military governor of Jerusalem, Colonel Ronald Storrs, and his entourage passed by and saw Mukhtar Ibrahim Salim calming the young gypsies. Colonel Storrs asked him to come to his office the next day, where he appointed him Mukhtar of the clan and handed him a mandate document that remains in the possession of Ibrahim Salim, narrator of the story, by his account. Ibrahim remained Mukhtar until his death in December 1956. Following his death, clan members met and chose Mohammed to succeed his father as Mukhtar and, in 1957, he was officially appointed to the post by the then Jordanian governor of Jerusalem.[134] In 1968, Mohammed Ibrahim Salim received a letter from the mayor of the Israeli Occupation in Jerusalem, which included a mandate appointing him as Co-ordinator of Gypsy affairs for Gypsy areas of residency in the municipality.[135] After the 2006 death of Mohammed Ibrahim Salim, Abdul Hakim Salim assumed the position of clan Mukhtar and, according to him, he did so through elections, not by appointment.[136]

1.9. Civil Society

A single institution deals with the affairs of the Gypsy minority in Jerusalem, the Domari Society for Gypsies in Jerusalem. Established in 1999, it is a unique non-profit Jerusalem institution that deals with Gypsy affairs and aims to support them, including by fighting poverty among them, and confronting the discrimination and cultural marginalization they suffer from. The society is run by Mrs. Amoun Salim from its offices in the Shu'afat neighborhood, north of the Old City. The society implements projects to support women's employment and support programs for Gypsy children to increase their awareness, education, and culture. The society also sells handicrafts and products made by Gypsy women, to support them economically, and works to preserve Gypsy heritage and language.[137] On the other hand, and based on interviews, some members of the clan believe that the Domari Society does not significantly contribute to improving the condition of clan members, but focuses on a specific group of girls and beneficiaries, such that its impact and effectiveness are not felt by everyone.

132 An Arab village located northwest of Jerusalem.

133 The neighborhood's lands no longer exist after the expansion of the Mea Sha'arim neighborhood for religious Jews at the expense of its lands.

134 Shiller, p. 81.

135 Yaniv, p. 29.

136 An interview conducted with Mukhtar Abdul Hakim Salim at his home on July 20, 2020.

137 https://www.domarisociety.com/

Results and Discussion

The discussion in this research is based on themes the researcher was able to deduce through conversations with several prominent clan personalities, including the Mukhtar and the director of the Domari Society, as well as a group of interviews conducted with youth, and the findings of the researcher from his dialogue with the focus group, which consisted mainly of clan women.

Ethno-Cultural Identity

In response to inquiries about clan history in the two focus groups, participants did not offer detailed responses apart from indicating that their ancestors came to the country during the period of Nur Ad-Din Zangi or Saladin. When asked about the Nouri language, none of the participants in the two focus groups knew it, contrary to the secondary source literature reviewed, which asserts that clan members speak their own language. This may have been accurate through the first half of the 20th century, but, in today's reality, and according to the groups and interviews conducted by the researcher, few of the clan know the Nouri language. One 51-year-old woman stated: "I know a few words in the Nouri language; our language is similar to Hindi." A 27-year-old woman was surprised by the question and responded: "Is there a Nouri language? It's the first time I know about it." She did not know that there is a language specific to the clan, or she denied her knowledge of it, a behavior that suggests there may be no desire to belong to this culture. According to Sivan's theories, besieged groups charge towards the majority society and adopt its customs, traditions and language, and, with the passage of time, the features of the original cultural identity fade and an identity develops that converges with that of the majority, especially when the groups share much in common, such as place of residence, religious background, and so on. Perry explains the phenomenon of the clan's use of a strategy of complete integration and

assimilation into the Jerusalemite community as a form of adaptation and acclimatization to the incubating environment.

As for individuals, it was evident that young people sought to break away from their ethnic identity to move towards an inclusive one that would give them a sense of belonging and pride in a better society – from their point of view. For example, the need for differentiation was clearly evident. In one interview, when a 20 year old woman was asked about problems faced by clan girls, she spoke with pride of her family, describing it as "a cultured family, not like many clan families that are not educated." A 28 year old man referred to his clan in the third-person during parts of the interview, especially when asked about the clan's problems: "They have many problems ... They must improve their situation." Perhaps the extremist and abusive view of the Gypsy clan prevalent among Jerusalem society for decades motivated this young man's desire to disavow his ethnic group, and especially those who, in his view, cause problems and cast the clan's reputation into disrepute. It appeared evident that this interview subject and others seek to belong to a society that they view as superior. This issue becomes crucial for young people, especially during adolescence and the development of personal identity.

Expressing her opinion on the issue of ethnic identity, 44 year old Amoun Salim stated: "Our culture is considered one of the most beautiful cultures in existence, but its integration with other groups and societies has led to the loss of part of this culture that was followed within the clan, so I decided, through this center, to bring back all what my grandmother and mother used to be proud of as a culture. We are trying to raise awareness among youth of the importance of this culture and bequeath it to them in the right way, especially now that the older generation which holds this culture, knows and understands it well, has begun to disappear. I began to be proud of Domari culture, existing for 400 years in Palestine, and part of what we do today in the center is to bring back the old Dom dress. I want to roam neighboring countries such as Jordan, Syria and Lebanon and examine the clothing of the Dom clans there, for we all eventually go back to the same clan."

Salim added: "There are members of the clan trying to integrate into Jerusalemite society and the Palestinian people, so they have worn the Palestinian dress and given up the Domari one. They gave up many beautiful things that made them distinct and adherent to their culture in the past. We must revive this culture together, regardless of whether we are inside or outside Palestinian or Israeli territory."

Regarding the reasons for the erosion of parts of Dom culture, Salim stated: "The lack of acceptance of this culture within society and the majority that we live with is the main reason. The majority look at us as misfits, thus, the people of the clan tried to give up part of their culture to become acceptable to the majority that we live with. This was a main reason for the dwindling of part of this culture." She added: "The injustice that the clan suffers from the majority is the reason. I think that the Palestinian people were wrong to oppress the Dom ... It was the opposite of other societies; in Jordan, for example, the King gave the Circassians good standing, which enabled them to maintain their identity. Palestinians should have taken advantage of Gypsy civilization and culture, for this enriches the country, and Jerusalem, as well, and improves tourism."

With these steps, Salim seeks to tighten the boundaries between members of the clan and the surrounding community, by strengthening Gypsy culture and preserving a Gypsy lifestyle through the cultural services provided by her institution. She tries to be satisfied with these services and retreat from the surrounding community, and, as such, she calls for revealing the Gypsy Dom-

ari ethnic identity at the expense of national identity. In other words, Salim is trying to find an identity equation in which ethnic identity takes the larger part. Perhaps this explains the views expressed by some other interviewees who, when queried about the services of the institution, stated that it does not serve the clan and does not contribute to meeting its needs, but, rather, meets the needs of its specific members.

This may also be explained from another angle, as an attempt to identify an alternative leadership for the clan that reflects the desire to preserve and stabilize the clan's ethnic identity at the expense of integration and assimilation into the Palestinian Jerusalemite community. As such, the society endeavors to attract young people to the institution by providing scholarships, empowering women, etc.

According to Sivan's theory of besieged culture, in cases of conflicting groups within the besieged society, each group keeps a different distance from the majority community. This conflict is reflected in different in attitudes about, and approaches to, dealing with the majority group. In other words, there are divergent responses to the constant question about how to define identity, manage cultural identity, the level of integration required within the majority community, and how to balance preservation of identity and its possible relinquishment or integration into the incubating society of the majority.

The results showed a clear fluctuation and difference between the members of the clan in their assessment of their relationship with the majority community. Some, especially young people – consistent with Perry – chose a strategy of full engagement in Jerusalem society at the expense of the clan community, and preferred to be named Jerusalemites rather than Gypsies. On the other hand, a minority expressed its belief that such a full engagement strategy is destructive for Domari Gypsy cultural identity, and that clan members should understand that they will not be accepted in the Palestinian majority society even if they endeavor to be. Thus, in this view, the Gypsies must use a participatory strategy through which they preserve and develop features of their ethnic and cultural identity. While there was no objection to belonging to the Palestinian Jerusalemite community, which forms another aspect of their cultural and political identity, this should not be done at the expense of Gypsy ethnic identity.

National Identity

In an interview with the Mukhtar of the Gypsy clan in Jerusalem, Mr. Abdul Hakim Mohammed Deeb Salim, considered the most prominent figure within the clan, he began by narrating the history of the clan through its association with the Arab Banu Murrah tribe and its heroism in the pre-Islamic period. As for the clan in Jerusalem, he stated: "We came to this country as liberators with Saladin". He stressed Palestinian national identity and its importance to the clan as an integral part of its culture and the clan itself: "The clan has roots in Jerusalem and in Palestine; it has withstood and defied all odds and challenges with our Palestinian people ... We have lived the calamities and tragedies together." He also connected the clan with Arab and Islamic triumphs in the battles and wars fought by Muslims throughout history.

On the other hand, it also was evident that the Mukhtar is not only close to Palestinians and Palestinian identity, but also has developed relations and shared interests the official Israeli side. He indicated that he deals with the social welfare office and the education department of the occupation municipality in Jerusalem to help the clan attain their rights and improve their conditions.

On his meeting with former Jerusalem mayor, Nir Barakat, the Mukhtar stated: "I wanted to give him [Barakat] a picture of the situation; I told him that he has a clan that is below the poverty line and in very bad shape, and that he has to be just between the west and east of the capital, and to show us what he could do."

In 2012, the Hebrew Maariv newspaper reported that the Mukhtar was seeking to obtain Israeli citizenship - considered a national taboo among the majority of Jerusalem Palestinians - because of the persecution suffered by his clan and the Gypsy minority in Palestinian Jerusalemite society. According to the newspaper, the Mukhtar requested for the mayor to: "Kindly acknowledge us as Israeli citizens," and added: "We are closer to the Jews than the Arabs. We love the state [Israel], and perhaps one day we will serve in the army."[138] Those alleged statements by the Gypsy Mukhtar caused an uproar and Palestinians considered them an abandonment of, and estrangement from, national identity. However, Salim later disavowed these statements, saying that they were a mass offabricatedlies.[139]

During the interview with Mukhtar Abdul Hakim Salim for this research, he explained that his approach to the mayor aimed to secure the return of IDs that had been withdrawn from three Jerusalemite clan families. He did not seek for them to obtain Israeli citizenship; this was a mistake in translation from Arabic into Hebrew and, according to his statement, the Israeli press exploited this unfortunate incident. As for military service, the Mukhtar denied what was attributed to him by Maariv newspaper in its entirety.[140]

What cannot be denied, which former mayor of the occupation, Nir Barakat made clear in statements to Maariv while he was in office in 2012, was his intention to undertake efforts to "Israelize" the Gypsy minority by extending a helping hand to it and holding courses to teach the Hebrew language, with the aim of integrating it into Israeli society." He also claimed he had come to save the minority from the injustice inflicted upon it by the Palestinians,[141] and it appeared evident that Barakat sought to exploit the existence of the minority and its needy situation to implement the principle of "divide and rule". Barakat's expressed desire was not realized, however, and the Gypsy minority continued to form a part of the Palestinian fabric and Jerusalem community.

On the official level, and due to Israel's control of the land and governance in Jerusalem, the Mukhtar is obliged to engage with official Israeli authorities to enhance the official status of the Gypsies, highlight their problems in the public sphere, and obtain political cover or official recognition of this minority.

On the other hand, the director of the Domari Society, Amoun Salim, stated that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict weakened the clan in times of war, when many members were forced to leave their homes, both in 1948 and again in 1967. In addition, the rise and spread of national Palestinian identity has rushed clan members to show loyalty to this identity and to abandon aspects of Gypsy culture, which Salim views as an unsound decision. She spoke about the possibility of maintaining a Gypsy identity and developing another one that would not be at its expense, providing the example of Gypsies in Jordan, who have maintained ethnic relations, clan cohesion

138 https://www.makorrishon.co.il/nrg/online/1/ART2/412/678.html

139 https://www.maannews.net/news/536321.html

140 Interview conducted with Mukhtar Abdul Hakim Salim at his home on July 20, 2020.

141 https://www.makorrishon.co.il/nrg/online/1/ART2/412/678.html

and a blood link with Gypsy groups around the world, whether in Europe or surrounding Arab countries, while maintaining their emerging national identity.[142]

Most of the research participants expressed a sense of belonging to national Palestinian identity. Readers of modern history will note that the Gypsies have played a role in national Palestinian work in Jerusalem. Some were incarcerated in Israeli prisons, especially since a large number of them live in heated conflict areas inside the Old City. Bab Hatta, in particular, saw numerous confrontations against the occupation forces, which may have instilled in the clan a sense of pride and belonging to the city, on the one hand, and led to a change in the attitudes and stance of the majority towards them on the other hand, as is the case, for example, with members of the African community.

Perhaps the ongoing conflict between the Palestinians and Israel also has contributed to the slow weakening of Gypsy ethnic identity and the emergence of a stronger national Jerusalem identity among Gypsies. The discrimination of the occupation against Jerusalemites did not exclude the Gypsy Clan; everyone is on the same boat as a discrimination target. The reality of poverty, extreme poverty, government policies encouraging ignorance, confiscation of property, restrictions on freedom of movement and residency rights, in addition to arrests, have all targeted everyone, including the Gypsy clan.

The emergence of a Jerusalem identity, at the expense of clan identity, is notable among youth. Among the five interviews conducted with youth, two subjects emphasized the status of Jerusalem identity. A 20 year old university student stated: "I don't delve much into the topic of being Palestinian, but only Jerusalem; I feel a sense of belonging to the Jerusalem identity, this is my identity, because the Palestinian situation is very complicated." In the focus groups, the participants often stressed their Jerusalem identity, irrespective of gender, and only two out of seven women emphasized their Gypsy identity and its centrality to them.

The Gypsy Clan, like many minorities in the world, endeavors to identify the best strategies to deal with the majority group or groups possessing influence and power to maintain its existence. Despite clear differences of opinion among clan members, their choice was a strategy of participation, whether at the official or individual level. They do not see a problem in being Palestinian Jerusalemites, on the one hand, and in cooperating with the Israeli Jerusalem municipality and other government institutions, on the other, in order to improve the clan's situation and status. The clan's long history additionally indicates its ability to use this dual strategy to protect clan interests and members and to ensure their survival, whether in Europe or in Palestine, during the British and Jordanian mandates and Israeli occupation.

As for the besieged culture theory by Sivan, Amoun Salim may see that the central society - the majority society - whether Palestinian or Israeli, is a negative external society that risks causing the mother culture to disappear. Her opinion may be accurate, given that some clan members may have a feeling of belonging to the mother culture that reaches a level of jealousy and defense of it against encroachment by the central, majority, community.

142 Interview conducted with Mrs. Amoun Salim in the Domari Society, Shu'fat on 20 September 2012.

Issues and Challenges Faced by the Gypsy Clan in the City of Jerusalem

The presentation of issues and challenges is based on interviews conducted with members of the clan, supported by available, but dated secondary sources and statistics on the reality of the clan. Problems and challenges are analyzed based on the ecological theory of Urie Bronfenbrenner, in addition to the aforementioned besieged culture theory.

The ecological or socio-environmental theory divides impact circles into 5 levels: micro, meso, exo, macro, and chrono. Each level affects, and is affected by, the other, and each system individually and collectively affects all individuals. The trend of impact in socio-environmental theory is reciprocal; as the environment affects a person, so it is affected by its behavior and ideas.

It should be noted that clan problems do not necessarily arise from a single source, but are linked to the overall social, economic and political system in which the clan exists. Thus, we attempt to analyze and understand the relationships between the issues and challenges faced by the clan, on the one hand, and their surroundings, on the other, at the individual and collective levels.

1. Israeli Occupation

The subjugation of the city of Jerusalem to Israeli occupation and its repercussions on the individual and Jerusalem community is at the top of the external problems that affect the clan, as this occupation persecutes all Palestinians in the city and discriminates against them in broad aspects of life, such as allocation of budgets, education, community services, material development and development of public spaces, ability to procure building permits for homes or service institutions, and so on.[143] It is natural that this discrimination is directly reflected on this minority, as is for other Jerusalemites.

2. Societal Rejection

The Gypsy minority suffers from societal rejection and marginalization by the Jerusalemite community due to several reasons. The most important is society's view that some Gypsies are inferior[144] and the majority's rejection of mixing with, marrying, or communicating with them. A 28 year old clan member who works in social service stated: "We have mixed with Jerusalemite society, there was discrimination and ridicule and they made us feel that we are remote [not part of the Jerusalem community]." This is due to the clan's dark skin color, the preconceived bad associations with all that is Gypsy, and the word "Nawari" in the vernacular of Jerusalem symbolizing an inferior culture and improper conduct. Amoun Salim believes that the policy of integration pursued by some members of the clan ended in failure: "If we want to say that we are part of the Palestinian people, we can't, and the evidence is that the proportion of marriages between Jerusalemites and the Dom clan is low because of the Jerusalemites' inferior perception of us." According to Drakeford, the marginalization and rejection faced by the clan can be analyzed

143 Ahmad Al-Asmar, Mark Stern, Through the Glass Ceiling: Palestinians and Israelis in the Jerusalem Labor Market, 2017, p.12.

144 Yaniv, p. 5.

through several dimensions, the most important of which are: social isolation, so that integration and participation in different walks of life are weak; the absence of influence and power among this group; persecution of the group on different levels and dimensions; a continued state of marginalization for a long time; and a loss of a sense of belonging.[145]

Therefore, it can be concluded that societal rejection of the Gypsy minority leads to isolation of the group or individuals from society, giving rise to a feeling of abandonment and neglect by the majority community. This feeling may generate a lack of desire to establish relations with societal institutions, whether civil society or official ones, and not resorting to these institutions in the event of a need for assistance or services. This may be evident in one of the young men's statements in an interview: "What will you do? There's nothing that can be done." Another woman in the focus groups expressed her anger and distrust towards institutions and her feeling of being discriminated against as a minority. This gap leads to the group's continuing marginalization and the difficulty of communicating with it or meeting its needs when it seeks assistance. Thus, there may be some level of communication, assistance, and services for the minority, and there may be individual or small-scale changes in some areas, but members of the clan continue to feel marginalized and excluded, clear issues requiring systematic and radical resolution.

3. Education

In the field of education, Palestinian Jerusalemites generally suffer from discrimination compared to the Jewish population in the city, as reflected in budget allocations and the shortage of classrooms. According Association for Civil Rights data, the shortage of classrooms exceeded 2,500, in addition to the establishment of schools in buildings that do not meet the needs of students and government mandated standards. The school dropout rate stands above 40% and increases in secondary school among Palestinian students in Jerusalem.[146]

Members of the clan who live in Palestinian neighborhoods attend local schools, as well, but they sometimes suffer from additional problems. From childhood, when clan children begin to mix with other majority groups and children their age, they hear the word "Nawari". A 25 year old gypsy described how he only finished sixth grade and now works in the service sector: "When we were young, they used to call us "Nawar" in the (Old) City and we used to get upset, but, slowly, it diminished." "Did it diminish because you grew up?" "Yes, I think because I grew up, this phenomenon subsided." The child is tainted through no fault or sin, and, as a result of societal rejection, he feels inferior and that his presence is unwanted, and he is not integrated into social and academic frameworks. This leads to isolation from his classmates and, in turn, may affect his educational attainment and encourage school dropout, later. This may explain the high dropout rate among clan members.

According to the Mukhtar, the majority of clan students study in public schools, which are considered to have a poor educational level compared with private schools in Jerusalem.[147] Nuseibeh be-

145 Mark Drakeford, Last Rights? Funeral, Poverty and Social Exclusion, Journal of social policy, 27 (4), 1998, pp. 507-524.

146 https://law.acri.org.il/he/2132

147 Interview conducted with Mukhtar Abdul Hakim Salim at his home on July 20, 2020.

lieves that, if marginalized groups are given the opportunity to join educational institutions, they usually go to low-level schools that do not meet the needs of these groups, on account of lacking qualified teachers and suffering shortages of other important resources.[148] As for clan women, their chances of reaching and completing secondary school are greater than those of young men, but, at the postgraduate stage, societal restrictions may prevent women from continuing into higher education. One reason is the remote distance of some universities, which may prevent women from studying or relegate them to attending a university other than the one they have chosen.[149]

At the official level, in recent years some Gypsy women and youth were able, through vocational training, to acquire different skills and professions, such as cooking, and music at the Musrara School of Arts and the Cinematheque College, respectively. These opportunities were arranged through the Social Welfare Office, but these efforts remain limited to a small number of participants. As a result of efforts made by the Mukhtar, the municipality additionally has exempted students from tuition fees in some schools.[150]

The circumstances and great challenges faced by the clan all affect the level of education, societal rejection, poverty, unemployment and overcrowding, all of which constitute factors that may push a child or Gypsy individual away from school. A 28 year old man who works in the field of services stated: "I got married at 16, and I wanted to study cooking, but today I am not able to, because I have five children."

Statistics from the Social Welfare Office indicate that the dropout rate among clan members in primary school stood at 52% in 2017.[151] This exceeds the dropout rate for all Palestinians in Jerusalem at the secondary level, which is 50%.[152] It bears noting that this dropout rate of more than half of the clan's members is at the primary stage, nearly matching the secondary level dropout rate among the general Jerusalem community. These are very worrying numbers that harm the children's future prospects and expose them to many future problems and obstacles in the job market and in social life.

In communication with the Social Welfare Office, a social worker who has worked extensively with the clan confirmed a notable decrease in the percentage of clan children who drop out of school and indicated an improvement in their educational level. According to the Social Welfare Office, only two students dropped out of three Old City primary schools in 2019.[153]

Basic and higher education are key foundations of modern society because they are primary source of personal development. Education is closely related to the poor financial situation of clan members, as low income or unemployment hinders the ability of parents to provide children with

148 Rawan Asali Nuseibeh. Political Conflict and Exclusion in Jerusalem: The Provision of Education and Social Services, Routledge, 2015, p.13.

149 Rawan Asali Nuseibeh, The Social Exclusion of the Domari Society of Gypsies in Jerusalem: A Story Narrated by the Women of the Tribe, 2020, p. 10.

150 Interview conducted with Mukhtar Abdul Hakim Salim at his home on July 20, 2020.

151 Asali Nuseibeh, 2020, p. 8.

152 https://law.acri.org.il/he/2132

153 An interview conducted with the social worker who accompanied the clan for the last five years, on 24 June 2020.

basic needs such as books, clothes, and other necessities. It also is difficult for parents facing this situation to send their children to extracurricular courses and activities, such as sports, culture and self-development. According to Raewyn Connell, an Australian sociologist, students coming from a poorer economic class find it difficult to escape poverty and obtain quality higher level education.[154] Hence, a generation develops that cannot complete its studies at school or reach the stage of higher education, a scenario especially impacting women due to the pressure of social restrictions.

4. Work

The employment challenge starts with finding an opportunity in the Israeli labor market, as the open market for Jerusalemites is basically in services and labor. Many Jerusalem Palestinians do not work in jobs that are compatible with their educational level and specialization, when compared to Jews, and systematic discrimination towards them impacts salaries and opportunities for advancement in the workplace. Palestinians, including in Jerusalem, also suffer from a lack of recognition of their academic degrees by Israeli institutions, as well as weakness in the Hebrew language, which reduces their ability to integrate into better jobs or even to be hired.

All of these challenges apply equally to clan members. Finding work becomes even more difficult due to their ethnic identity, social class, and comparably low level of education. Efforts of clan members to obtain a job in the Israeli labor market are more complicated when compared to others in Palestinian society in general.[155]

The societal image of Gypsies in the minds of many contributes to injustice and marginalization of the minority in the labor market, which subsequently impacts the economic situation of clan members and their families negatively and contributes to increased poverty. One 20 year old university student recounted the story of one of her relatives: "A nurse who worked in a hospital for a long time and should have been appointed to its board of directors, but could not take the office because she is a Gypsy." This may have been the reason, or it may have been something else or a combination of factors, but the Gypsies feel marginalized and persecuted, and this is what is important here.

5. Marriage

According to Yaniv, members of the face difficulties in finding a spouse from outside the clan and often are forced to marry from within it. The main reason is a prevailing view of the clan as inferior, preconceptions and negative stereotypes held by a majority of Jerusalemites. Marriage in the Arab community is a connection between families, for it is a society mostly based on extended family, and the association with Gypsies may affect the family's reputation within the Jerusalem community; thus, the majority try to avoid intermarriage with clan members, whether by directly refusing or by providing dubious excuses.[156] A 26 year old member of the clan who works in ser-

154 Raewyn Connell, Poverty and Education, Harvard Educational Review, 1994, p. 64.

155 Asali Nuseibeh, 2020, p. 10.

156 Yaniv, p. 7.

vices stated: "Sometimes there is no acceptance for marriage. For example, my brother proposed to a girl from here, from Jerusalem, but they refused, even though there was no convincing reason."

The prevalence of rejection may raise the possibility of inbreeding among Gypsy families, which may lead to increases in disabilities and genetic problems among children of the new generation. In the women's focus groups, all the women agreed that during recent years there is more openness towards marriage to men and women outside the clan, and that things are changing. Nuseibeh, in her study, supports this view of an increasing rate of marriage from outside the clan, but adds, reservedly, that these marriages usually are from a low socioeconomic class, according to testimonies collected by the researcher from clan women.[157]

6. Poverty and Unemployment

According to data from the Social Welfare Center in Jerusalem, the rate of employment among the clan's men was 50%, and 15% among women in 2017.[158] The employment rate in the city, according to 2018 data, stood at 89.6% for Arab men and 21.3% for Arab women.[159] Through this data comparison, one notes large gap between the clan's members and the city's residents in terms of employment and unemployment, especially among men. Thus, many families still live on national insurance benefits, whether for children or unemployment, and are still poorer than other Jerusalemfamilies.[160]

As for the poverty rate, 2004 Social Welfare data (no more recent data on poverty in the clan exists) indicated that 97.5% suffer from severe poverty in the city of Jerusalem. According to 2018 data, the overall poverty rate in the city (Arab and Jewish residents) stood at 40%, and 59% among Arabs.[161] It appears that the 2004 data about the clan may not reflect the picture today accurately. Anecdotally, based on focus group participants, all the men were working (except for the Mukhtar), but most were working in the field of services, with only one employed in his field of academic training and expertise, and another who worked as a professional technician.

As for women in the Palestinian Arab community, in general, they face a multitude of obstacles to joining the labor market, the most important of which is the issue of access to the workplace and the unsuitability of many jobs to the families' circumstances. Arab women generally prefer to work in the local labor market, close to their homes, in jobs such as teaching or social services, without affecting their status as women and mothers in its traditional sense.[162]

This obstacle also is present for clan women. As a 26 year old housewife explained: "I studied at a college in Jerusalem to be a medical secretary and worked for a year or a year and a half. When I got married, I left work. When a woman gets married and has children, she only has her home." Although many women have indicated a desire to enter the labor market, many obstacles prevent this, the first of which is the need to take care of the home and children.

157 Asali Nuseibeh, 2020, pp. 11-12.

158 Asali Nuseibeh, 2020, p. 9.

159 https://jerusaleminstitute.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/shnaton_G0520.pdf

160 https://www.domarisociety.com

161 Maya Hoshan, On Jerusalem Data 2020, 2020, p. 58.

162 Al-Asmar and Stern, p. 16.

Poverty directly affects both the group and the individual. The lower the income of the individual in the clan, the worse the situation, and the more children in a Gypsy family, the worse the financial situation as well. Poverty may be passed on to more than one generation of the same group or family, and many factors control the severity and extent of poverty, notably: education, culture, health, extent of involvement in society, existence of a secure home, and whether a home is overcrowded.

Poverty is not impacted only by temporary absence of work for the head of a family in the clan because an unemployment situation may persist for months or years. In some cases, unemployment becomes a condition that the family lives in for the long term and that even passes from one generation to the next. In addition, poverty may cast a shadow on the psychological state of parents and children and lead to despair and depression. In reality, it may force parents to send their children to work at an early age, leading them to drop out of school.

7. Residential Hardship

Israeli policies strongly impact housing issues and problems. As mentioned previously, it is difficult for Palestinian residents to obtain building permits in the city, and this dilemma directly impacts clan members where they live. A report by the Ir Amim Foundation found that more than less than 25% of Jerusalem's 200,000 housing units are located in Palestinian neighborhoods,[163] while the percentage of Palestinians in Jerusalem is 38%, according to 2018 statistics.[164] This shows a wide gap between available housing units for Palestinians and their proportion of the city's population. If equality existed in the number of housing units among groups, Palestinian neighborhoods should have 26,000 more available housing units than they do today. This imbalance leads to a lack of housing, housing cost inflation and overcrowding in Palestinian neighborhoods. The neighborhoods inhabited by clan members rank among the poorest in Jerusalem, according to the last classification issued by the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics in 2015. This classification of residential neighborhoods is based on socioeconomic status where the standard of living of the population is examined, in addition to the average family size within a home, educational level, and income. This classification then places neighborhoods on a scale of 1-10 (10 being the highest and 1 being the lowest). Palestinian neighborhoods in Jerusalem are located between 1-3 at the highest level, while Jewish neighborhoods in the city reach 8 or 9 in some cases. The neighborhoods inhabited by the majority of the clan's members, the Islamic Quarter of the Old City, Shu'afat refugee camp, Anata, and Ras Al-Amoud, are all classified as 1, the lowest point on the scale, that is.[165]

The problem of overpopulation in Jerusalem, in general, and in the Old City, in particular, cannot be hidden. Housing units in the Old City are small and crammed, and the problem of finding alternative housing is exacerbated among the Gypsy minority due to the high poverty rate and general societal rejection of the clan, in addition to the overall scarcity and high cost of available housing for Palestinian Jerusalem residents. This all contributes to the effective confinement of

163 East Jerusalem - Important Data, a study issued by the Ir Amim Foundation, 2016, p. 2.

164 https://jerusaleminstitute.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/shnaton_C0120.pdf

165 https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/mediarelease/DocLib/2019/246/24_19_246b.pdf

clan members to certain places of residence specific to them, where, according to statistics, 3.6 people live in one room[166] and 70% of Gypsy families live in a house comprised of one or two rooms.[167] The average size of a Gypsy family includes 5.9 persons, while the average family size in Jerusalem in general (Arabs and Jews) in the same year was less than 4 persons.[168] That is, the average Gypsy family size is about 150% of an average Jerusalem family. If the aforementioned poverty and unemployment data additionally is taken into account, the overall picture strongly suggests adversely impacted standards of living, education, and family cohesion for Gypsies in Jerusalem. A 28 year old clan member man working in the field of services says: "I tried to go back to school, but my parents have 11 mouths to feed. I told my father that I wanted to finish my Bagrut (Israeli high school matriculation) and he told me he does not have enough money. That is why I did not return."

In the focus groups, many participants reported that they do not own a house and that they pay monthly rent to homeowners, especially those who live in the Bab Hatta area in the Old City, which burdens the head of the family with increased financial strain.

The housing conditions of Gypsy families directly affect their social and economic conditions, daily problems and overall standard of living. Not owning a home increases the burden of the family and sometimes causes tension with the owner of the house, which increases psychological pressure on all family members. This situation leads to a decrease in the family's standard of living and may lead to poverty. Additionally, overpopulation in clan residential areas raises friction between neighbors, which increases the psychological pressure on the family.

166 According to the data of the social welfare center in 2004.

167 Yafa, p. 234.

168 https://old.cbs.gov.il/publications/households_families03_04/pdf/h_intro_mavo6.pdf

8. Low Parental Awareness[169]

Low parental awareness and a lack of basic physical and health care for some gypsy children constitutes a grave social problem that includes leaving children unsupervised and, in some cases, exploiting them for begging. Children may sometimes be exposed to harm or neglect that leads them to harm themselves, which poses a direct danger to them. In an interview with a social worker who has worked extensively in the gypsy community, it was evident that the practices of some parents, especially mothers, is the result of a lack of awareness and understanding of the risks that their children may face if they are left without supervision or care.

The other side of parental negligence is the practice by some Gypsy mothers of taking their children, even as infants, to the streets to beg, or sending children old enough to do so to the streets and to traffic lights to beg. According to the social worker, these women are not embarrassed about this, as they view beggary as a vital source of family income and have continued the practice for many years.[170] A 28 year old clan woman who works in social services stated: "Most of the clan have [committed] bad deeds in the street and so do their young children, whom they have no responsibility for whatsoever."

The Social Welfare Office located in Wadi Joz has held sessions for 28 clan families on parental awareness in recent years, with the aim of reducing the phenomenon of neglect and increasing parental awareness of children and their proper upbringing.[171] In the women's focus group, the majority of them confirmed that this phenomenon has been receding within the clan in the recent period.

The overall state of poverty may overwhelm the economic and social situation of a family within the clan. Poverty directly impacts children and how their parents deal with them. According to Benina Klein, parents who suffer and strive for their livelihood and face problems in earning a living are candidates for the loss of psychological energy and desire to spend time with their children. Poor families, especially marginalized ones, do not usually feel that they have anything to give theirchildren.[172]

According to socio-environmental theory, the nature of the relationship and interaction between parents and children cannot be separated from the environment in which the family lives, whether in poverty or misery. Parents' fears, psychological pressure, layoffs, and temporary or permanent unemployment all have an effect and lead to parental neglect and inadvertently depriving children of their basic rights and the care they deserve. These rights are not limited to the provi-

169 Parental neglect refers to the neglect of caring behaviors necessary for the healthy growth and development of the child. It differs from other types of violence as other types are related to harmful acts that are committed directly against the child, while parental neglect is an indirect act that includes failure to provide the necessary care that parents are required to provide for the healthy growth and development of the child, such as insufficient food provision, lack of school attendance, lack of medical care and poor parental supervision.

170 An interview conducted with the social worker who accompanied the clan for the past five years, on June 24, 2020.

171 An interview conducted with the social worker who accompanied the clan for the past five years, on June 24, 2020.

172 Benina Klein, Poverty and Behavior, Early Parent-Child Mediation, J. Gal (ed.), Poor Children in Israel, 1997, pp. 39-48.

sion of material needs, but also include moral and psychological support from parents, as well as child development, social communication, and increasing their self-confidence. It is difficult to provide these needs and rights for the child by parents suffering from financial and psychological distress.

9. Internal Disputes

In interviews and focus groups undertaken for this research, clan members did not hide the existence of disagreements between clan families. Problems may sometimes exist due to marriage that has ended in divorce or separation, affecting both families, or due to small disputes that gave rise to resentment among and between clan members. In a statement by the Mukhtar: "Internal conflicts between some of us, I mean, they don't like each other. It's three families: Salim, Nimer, and Ba'arani ... Some thugs try to create friction between the families, so this is the aversion we see, but, in the end, we are one family, each related to everyone else, or married to their sister."[173]

173 Interview conducted with Mukhtar Abdul Hakim Salim at his home on July 20, 2020.

General Conclusion of the Research

The Gypsy clan is an integral part of the diverse Jerusalem social fabric, and, despite differences and conflicting views on its origins and roots, and the difficulty in resolving that debate, the marginalization and challenges clan members suffer from cannot be denied. Thus, the clan must work to reject its differences and improve its conditions, on the one hand, and work collectively through individuals, institutions and clan members to change the stereotypes held about this minority, on the other. Work must be done to integrate it into society without giving up its characteristics and cultural specificities. Change begins through raising the group's economic and social level, and working to remove barriers and break the group's isolation. All the previous elements are linked to one other, starting with the individual within the family and ending with the system that drives the country's politics. It must be noted that tangible change is underway among some clan members, but these changes remain at the individual level and do not appear to have meaningfully reached the collective level yet.

Suggested Mechanisms and Solutions

We suggest solutions to the challenges, based on socio-environmental theory, at the following different levels:

At the Microsystem Level:

1. Work to increase parenting awareness among Gypsy family members through programs targeting parents, by conducting workshops on how to deal with children and protect them from societal risks and problems surrounding them.

Medium System (Mesosystem):

2. Establish a parents' committee for clan students to follow up with their academic achievement, and to ensure there is no bullying or inappropriate tags against them from their peers.

3. Raise awareness, among administrations of schools attended by clan children, of clan characteristics and challenges and the need to support clan children within school and educational frameworks.

Coaxial System (Exosystem):

4. Work to create a youth leadership within the clan that contributes to the development and advancement of the clan's members in future, and overcomes the internal problems and disputes that exist between families and clan members.

5. Hold courses and workshops for clan members at employment institutions in Jerusalem to facilitate their integration into the labor market.

6. Conduct vocational training projects for young Gypsies, especially those who did not complete their school education to help them earn a living.

7. Work to increase the level of education and eradicate illiteracy among the Gypsy minority through programs that stimulate education for the new generation and assimilate them into safe, stimulating educational frameworks, which empower individuals who are able to change the situation of the clan and its members for the better.

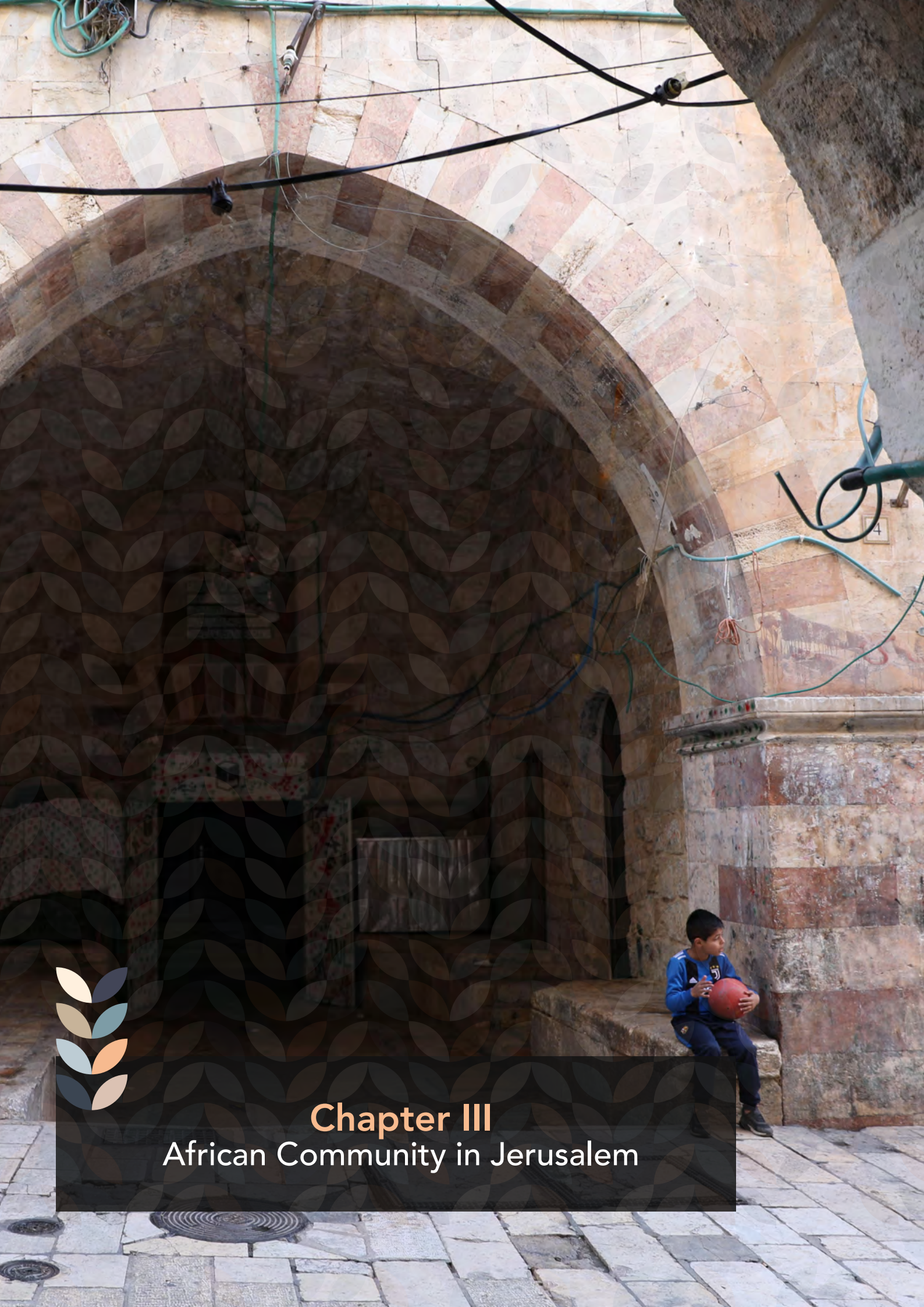
8. Increase awareness of the problems of intermarriage between relatives and warn of inbreeding dangers, whether hereditary or societal. Work on social programs to integrate the minority into the Jerusalem community, thereby contributing to increased openness towards marriage to clan members.

9. Attempt to eliminate negative phenomena among some clan members, such as begging.

Large System (Macrosystem):

10. Increase general awareness among the Jerusalemite community about the existence of the minority, its characteristics and the importance of its presence within the Jerusalem community fabric. Work to end persecution and discrimination against the minority in various fields by disseminating information through media platforms, whether community or classic media.

11. Work to place the minority on the agenda and priority list of local and civil society institutions to encourage their allocation of special projects for the clan that support and create appropriate programs for it. This is a special priority because only one existing institution, the Burj Al-Luqluq Foundation in the Old City, deals with minority affairs, which some of the clan see as ineffective and not benefitting them. While some Gypsies evidently benefit from the foundation's activities, Gypsies are not a specific or prioritized focus group and, for example, many girls cease attending and participating in the foundation's social activity after childhood.



Chapter III
African Community in Jerusalem

Introduction

Palestine connects the two largest continents in the ancient world, Asia and Africa. Some peoples have passed through Palestine and continued on their way, while others have settled in to stay, among them African groups of different religions. Some embraced Christianity, such as the Ethiopians, who were converted during the 4th century and lived in Jerusalem thereafter. They now own the Ethiopian Monastery adjacent to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher; the monastery has been a site of conflict between Ethiopians and Copts for hundreds of years. The Ethiopians also have a church outside the Wall, to the northwest of the Maskobiyya (near the Musrara neighborhood).[174] Some were Jews and came with the Occupation, especially after 1973, when Jewish Rabbi Ovadia Yosef passed the ruling that Ethiopian Jews were halachically Jewish. Israel thus brought them from Ethiopia between 1983-1985 under the government's "Operation Moses", which brought in approximately 20,000 Ethiopian Jews. In 1991, Israel brought in another approximately 18,000 more Ethiopian Jews in "Operation Solomon".[175] The eligibly aged among these new immigrants were recruited into the occupation army.

This research focuses on the African community, the majority of which came from West Africa and are Muslim. We will review the history and identity of this minority, and its challenges in the Holy City. With the arrival of Islam in Palestine during the 7th century AD, many Muslims began to visit Jerusalem after visiting Mecca and performing the Haj rituals. Despite the presence of many Africans for centuries in the city and in Palestine, a large number of more settled in Palestine and Jerusalem during the British Mandate, especially in the 1930s. They came from various African countries, notably Chad, Senegal, Sudan and Nigeria, after performing the Hajj pilgrimage and visiting Mecca and Medina.[176]

In spite of the divergent origins of African immigrants that settled in Arab countries, including Palestine, and although these immigrants arrived from a wide range of heterogeneous societies, diverse in terms of ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, these African immigrants have been viewed as a single entity.[177]

Irrespective of the different countries that these immigrants came from, they have become an integral part of the fabric of Jerusalem society. Conversations with members of the community for this research revealed members of the African community as proud of, and affirming their connection and belonging to, the city of Jerusalem and Palestinian national identity, with the rights and challenges that this accrues.

174 Aref al-Aref, History of Jerusalem, Dar al-Maarif, Second Edition, 1951, p. 254.

175 https://dbs.anumuseum.org.il/skn/he/c6/e195130/%D7%9E%D7%A7%D7%95%D7%9D/%D7%90%D7%AA%D7%99%D7%95%D7%A4%D7%99%D7%94

176 Irit Back, From West Africa to Mecca and Jerusalem: The Tijāniyya on the Hajj Routes, The Journal of the Middle East and Africa, 2015, p. 12.

177 Yasser Qous, The West African Community in Jerusalem: Process of Settlement and Local Integration, Maghreb-Machrek, 2018/1, p. 117.

Research Problem

Some members of the African community view their African identity as an integral part of their Palestinian national identity. Despite the multiplicity of African countries and regions that they have come from, there is a union and solidarity between them. On the other hand, the African community suffers some challenges and obstacles in the city of Jerusalem, represented by the occupation's practices; the socioeconomic situation; the serious housing problem that the community faces, in particular; and some preconceived ideas of some Jerusalemites towards the community. In this research, an attempt will be made to understand these themes in a more clear and better way.

The importance of this research lies in its attempt to paint a more insightful picture of the African community, especially because academic sources on the community are not widely available. We will shed light on the identity of the community and how its members define themselves, in addition to portraying the group's most important characteristics, as well as the challenges and problems it has encountered and continues to face. At the end of the research, suggestions will be made to alleviate these challenges and problems.

Research Aims

The research aims to define the national and social identity of the African community, its distinguishing features, the position of African identity within that identity, and the extent of the community's sense of belonging to the Jerusalem and Palestinian community, in addition to addressing the challenges that the African community faces, and attempting to propose solutions to its problems.

Research Methodology

The research is based on available sources and references about the African community, the writings of some community members, as well as semi-structured interviews with prominent community figures and youth.

Research Limitations

There are no accurate statistics and figures on the African community, whether at the socioeconomic or demographic level. Most of the statistics and figures mentioned in this research are estimates by prominent community figures.

Theoretical Background

Introduction
Islam and Africa

Islam emerged in the Arabian Peninsula and quickly spread to the African continent, but its spread in Africa differed from region to region. Today, almost half the population of the continent is Muslim, making up a quarter of Muslims in the world. As such, the Arabic language has spread and become an official language in a number of African countries, such as the Arab countries in North Africa. Yet, despite the proliferation of Arabic and its influence on local languages in various African societies, especially with regard to religion, law, war and trade, most Africans still speak their local languages.[178] According to Hosni Shaheen, the merging between Arabs, Islam and Africa formed a wide geographical area from the Dakar region (the capital of Senegal, today) in west Africa to Port Sudan in the east, with some African tribes retaining their original names or modifying them under the influence of Arabic.[179]

Islam came to Africa gradually, through Arab migration and Islamic conquest, and then moved from north to Sub-Saharan Africa with the arrival of Arab travelers from the East in the 14th century. The spread of Islam to Africa took place for several reasons, primarily: expanding the Islamic state; the huge slave trade at that time, which existed before the existence of Islam in Africa; and the gold mines in West Africa, especially the regions of Ghana and Mali. It must be noted that Islam encouraged the emancipation of slaves, improvement of their living conditions and contributed to raising their social status by changing the reality of the slave trade on the continent.[180]

African Muslims in Jerusalem

Naming and Titles

In the past, the African community in Jerusalem was called "Takarneh" (singular: "Takruri"). Searching for the origin of the word, no clear meaning is apparent, but some historians ascribe it to the Tukulor Empire, the Muslim population that inhabited the area of Senegal, and another group in western Mali.[181] In the 19th century, Tukulor was established by Hajj Omar Tal, a Sufi who waged jihad in the area of Bambara and other regions of Africa.[182]

According to the author, Qous, the term "Takrur" or "Takroni" is widely used in the Middle East and Hijaz region to denote black Muslims from West Africa and the Chad Basin. In the kingdoms

178 David Robinson, Muslim Societies in African History, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 27.

179 Hosni Shaheen, African Muslims in Jerusalem, Department of Revival of Islamic Heritage, Department of Islamic Endowments in Jerusalem, 1984, p. 9.

180 Charmaine Seitz, Pilgrimage to a New Self: The African Quarter and its People, Jerusalem Quarterly, Vol. 16, 2002, p. 44.

181 https://web.archive.org/web/20190425183650if_/https://www.britannica.com/topic/Tukulor

182 Anthony Appiah and Henry Gates, eds., Encyclopedia of Africa Vol. 1., Oxford University Press on Demand, 2010.

that ruled West Africa in the Middle Ages, the Takrur/Takroni designation had a religious connotation associated with the obligation of Hajj but subsequently became more widely used to refer to Africans as a race. In the Old City of Jerusalem, the title of "Falata" was common, associated with the religious Fulani elders and other notables of West African origin. The two labels, "Takrur" and "Falata", bore a bad connotation associated with poverty, illiteracy, religious fantasies, roaming the streets, and lowly, inappropriate acts. These characteristics reflect the viewpoint of slave owners, who viewed these people as having a low social status, but these views also reflect the broader negative stereotype of class discrimination between human beings.[183]

The historian, Al-Aref, in his detailed book on the history of Jerusalem, has referred to the African community as "Takarneh". He attributed this name to historian Mujir Al-Din al-Hanbali and his 15th century AD book, "The Glorious History of Jerusalem and Hebron." Al-Aref described the "Takarneh" as inhabitants of African race who came from Darfur and its region.[184] In addition, some residents of Jerusalem refer to members of the African community by the racist title, "slaves", which causes members of this community to feel discrimination.[185] Today, they are often called "the African community", which is the name that the community members give to themselves.

The Road to Jerusalem

According to unpublished research written by Mahmoud Jiddah. a member of the African community, the presence of African Muslims in Jerusalem dates back to the Omari Conquest in the 7th century. Jiddah attributes their arrival in Jerusalem to two main reasons. The first was religious, for the sake of "sanctifying the pilgrimage". That is, after performing the rituals of Hajj in the holy city of Mecca and visiting Medina, African Muslims visited Jerusalem to sanctify their pilgrimage, thus visiting the three holiest places for Muslims. The second reason was jihadist, to defend Islamic holy sites against the British Mandate, and thereafter the Israeli occupation.[186] African Muslims who sanctified their pilgrimage had high status upon returning to their countries and among their communities were referred to as "Hajj Maqdisi" ("Jerusalemite Hajj").[187]

The writer, Back, also links the immigration of Africans, especially from West Africa, to the Hajj pilgrimage. She links this journey with Sufism and the Tijani Sufi order, in particular. The Hajj pilgrimage created channels of spiritual and cultural exchange between Muslims in West Europe and the Middle East region, just as the colonial period in the 19th and 20th centuries changed the scope and intensity of the Hajj. Mass transportation became available during that period, and the colonial authorities sometimes planned the Hajj. The long pilgrimage route, named "Sudan Road", extended from the cities of Katsina and Kano, located in Nigeria, today, through the Arab Maghreb, then Fezzan, in today's Libya, and through Egypt, until it reached the Islamic holy sites in Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem.

183 Qous, pp. 123-125.

184 Aref al-Aref, A Detailed History of Jerusalem, al-Andalus Library, 1951, p. 241.

185 Mahmoud Jiddah, The African Community in Jerusalem, 2010, p. 14.

186 Ibid, pp. 1-2.

187 An interview conducted with Mr. Mousa Qous, Director of the African Community Association, on 5 December 2020.

According to the writer, William Miles, many residents of West Africa, whether Muslims or Christians, came to Jerusalem during the First World War to work on the railway or water pipelines for the British Engineering Corps, and to ease the passage of General Allenby through the Sinai Desert during the war. The journey of the British through Africa, passing through Egypt and leading to Palestine, paved and facilitated the way to Jerusalem for many Africans, especially in the 1930s; this included Chadians, Senegalese, Sudanese and Nigerians, as part of a long journey to the Islamic holy places, after visiting Mecca and Medina.[188]

The writer, Miles, tells the story of "Hajj Jiddah", the mayor of the African community in Jerusalem and one of the community's members, and quotes him stating: "I was born in N'Djamena (the capital of Chad), which, at that time, was called Fort-Lamy. I went to a town that spoke the Beri language in Nigeria, and there I began to study the Holy Quran. After that, I traveled to Jekoa and Diaroa, and went to a village called Moracarawa, which is divided into French and English parts. Five years later, I returned to N'Djamena and stayed there for a year."

Jiddah continued: "Then, I accompanied my aunt Amina overland to Sudan, on foot, and, sometimes, on donkeys. It took us about two months to reach Sudan, and I was then 15 years old. We finally arrived in the town of Haile Selassie, got on a boat until we reached Yemen, then walked from Yemen to Mecca. After performing the rituals of Hajj, we went to Medina and set off to Jerusalem. We spent some time in Jordan, then we set off to Palestine and settled in Jerusalem."

After Jiddah's arrival in Jerusalem, he recounts: "There were, indeed, people from Sudan and Nigeria, and we stayed with them. There were also others from the Hausa[189] who came for the Hajj."

Jiddah narrates that there was a Mukhtar named Mohammed Siddiq, and, after his death, a new Mukhtar name Sani was appointed. After that, people gathered to choose between Jiddah and the son of Sani, but Jiddah was chosen as Mukhtar because of his knowledge of languages, including Arabic.

Describing his wife's family, Jiddah explained: "My wife was born here, in Jerusalem, and her mother was born here, too, and she only speaks Arabic. But her father was a Fulani and was born in Nigeria. He came to Jerusalem during the Ottoman period and married her mother, who gave birth to 13 children, all of whom went to live in Saudi Arabia (except for Jiddah's wife)." Jiddah's wife bore three daughters and five sons, one son of whom died."[190]

In Jerusalem

According to the writer, Qous, Africans have lived in the city of Jerusalem for centuries, but there are not many documents that explain their life and situation during the early periods. The majority of immigrants who live in the Old City and its environs arrived in Jerusalem at the end of

188 William F. S. Miles, Black African Muslim in the Jewish State: Lessons of Colonial Nigeria for Contemporary Jerusalem, A Journal of Opinion, Vol. 25, Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 40.

189 One of the largest ethnic groups in Africa which lives in the Sahel, Sudan, northern Nigeria and southeast Niger, in addition to parts of Chad, Togo, Cameroon, Ghana, Gabon, and Senegal. Most of the Hausa are concentrated in West Africa. They also speak Hausa, an Afro-Asian language written in Arabic.

190 Miles, pp. 40-42.

the Ottoman period and during the British Mandate of Palestine.[191] The first wave was in the late Ottoman era (which lasted until 1917), the second was in 1935, and the third and final wave was in 1948. After that, there were new arrivals, but only in small numbers.[192]

The African community in Jerusalem is descended from eight tribes: Fulani, Hausa, Kanuri (Borno), Zaghawa, Salamat, Bargo, Kanembu and Bulala. Each of these tribes falls into different linguistic groups: Niger-Congo/Atlantic (Fulfulde), Afro-Asian (Hausa), and Nilo-Saharan (Kanuri). These groups and divisions are the result of a long and complex historical process of mixing and merging.[193] Those families branch out into others which now take local and Arab names.

When the Africans came to Jerusalem, many of them settled in neighborhoods within the Walls of the Old City, near the Aqsa Mosque, especially in the area of Bab El-Majles, which was later named the African Quarter.[194] The Africans lived in two buildings. The first is Ribat Al-Mansouri, which dates back to the Mamluk king Al-Mansur Qalawun, who endowed it to the poor who visited Jerusalem. It is also known as Ribat Qalawun. Writings in old Mamluk script are inscribed at the entrance to the building: "In the name of God the Merciful, Praise be to God, who endows us with all. May God bless our Prophet Mohammed and his family. Our Sultan King Al-Mansur Abu Al-Malek, sword of the world and religion, Qalawun Al-Salhi, may he live long, ordered the construction of this building and its endowment to the poor and to visitors of Jerusalem, in the year eighty-one and six hundred [1282 AD]." This building was later used as a prison during the Ottoman period that was called "The Ribat Prison".[195]

The other building inhabited by the community is Ribat Aladdin Al-Basiri, or what was known as the Abasiriyyah School. The school was endowed in 1261 during the Mamluk period, at the time of King Zahir Baybars. There was no document of endowment for the building, so one was written and confirmed with the Sharia governor in 1341.[196] Writings were inscribed on a marble slab atop the entrance to the building: "In the name of God the Merciful, Prince Aladdin (Aydoghdi) has forever endowed all within this door, the cellars and the courtyard, to the poor who come to visit Jerusalem, in the year six hundred and sixty-six."[197] At the end of the Ottoman era, both buildings became prisons, one for arrested suspects awaiting trial, and the other, known as the "Blood Prison", where convicts served their sentences. They remained as such until the prison was moved to today's Maskobiyya (outside the Old City walls). The two buildings then became a place of residence for Africans or, as Al-Aref called them, Takarneh, in the early Turkish era in the 16th century.[198] Africans moved there because most of them were working as guards and gatekeepers of the Aqsa

191 Qous, p. 124.
192 Shaheen, p. 8.
193 Qous, p. 121.
194 Seitz, p. 47.
195 Al-Aref.
196 Al-Aref, p. 241-242.
197 Shaheen, p. 35.
198 Al-Aref, p. 241-242.

Mosque, and they settled in this place with the help of Hajj Amin Al-Husseini[199] at the time.[200]
During the Ottoman period, members of the community worked as guards and in the police, and the state gave them the right to guard the schools that were located in the homes and passageways around the Aqsa Mosque, from the west and the north, in addition to guarding the gates of the mosque. They carried out this task perfectly and were always loyal to the state, for they were tall and able-bodied. Christians and foreigners, including princes and kings of foreign countries, were forbidden from entering the Haram Al-Sharif, except by permission of the African guards. According to Al-Aref, this led to the emergence of a dispute between the governor of Jerusalem and the Takarneh in 1855, because they refused to allow one of the kings to enter the mosque, forcing the governor of Jerusalem to imprison the Takarneh.[201]
As for the number of members of the African community, according to Miles' article, published in 1997, 20,000 African Muslims live in Gaza, the West Bank and Jordan, while less than a hundred families live in the African Quarter in Jerusalem. In the same Miles article, Hajj Jiddah is quoted stating that, during the Mandate period, there were more than 3,000 Africans living in Jerusalem, generally in the Muslim Quarter, but the numbers decreased to about 300 people during that year.[202] The reason was that some of them moved to live in Jordan during the Jordanian rule of the city, while others settled in Jericho.[203] Today, according to Mahmoud Jiddah, the number of residents of the quarter is 350, in addition to 150 outside the African Quarter, thereby comprising a total of approximately 500 people in Jerusalem.[204]

Culture and Society

According to Shaheen, the African community enjoys authentic and virtuous customs, and their embrace of Islam has led them to being influenced by Islamic social customs that were added to the customs of their countries of origin. In Shaheen's telling, asceticism, chivalry, reluctance to inflict harm, and patience rank among the most salient characteristics of the Jerusalem Africans. They are close in character and principles to the people of the city, Muslims and Christians, and there are bonds of love and brotherhood with everyone.[205]
According to many members of the community, strong and close relationships exist between members who come from different regions and countries in Africa. Despite the absence of a blood bond between the different families, they support each other in joy, sorrow and a vari-

199 Hajj Amin al-Husseini (1895-1974) was one of the most prominent Palestinian leaders and held important positions, most notably the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, head of the Islamic Supreme Council, and head of the Arab Higher Committee.

200 Mahmoud Jiddah, p. 4.

201 Al-Aref, p. 241-242.

202 Miles, p. 40-42.

203 An interview conducted with Mr. Mousa Qous, Director of the African Community Association, on 5 December 2020.

204 An interview conducted with Mr. Mahmoud Jiddah on 8 October 2020.

205 Shaheen, p. 36.

ety of events.[206] Mousa Qous' unpublished study describes support among community members through the "Hatetah" habit, by which money is collected to carry out the duty of solace, prepare for weddings, or take part in events.[207] Women enjoy good standing within the community, and there is no discrimination or persecution against them.[208]

As for food, the African community is known for its porridge or "Weka" dish, which was brought by ancestors from Africa. It is comprised of dried and crushed molokhia or okra, with spices added, especially chili peppers. One of the most important customs of the community was eating this meal on Friday afternoons, during and after which members of the community sat down to talk and debate, but this habit has disappeared in recent years, and this meal is no longer eaten except during social occasions.[209] As for dress, members of the African community wear traditional African dress on these occasions but, more generally, they wear the clothes that Jerusalemites wear.[210]

206 Seitz, pp. 47-48.

207 Mousa Qous, A Brief History of the African Jerusalemites, p. 23.

208 Jiddah, p. 16.

209 https://alarab.co.uk/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%82%D8%AF%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%82%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%A7-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%AC-%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D9%87%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%85-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86

210 Qous, p. 23.

Language

African languages are not spoken at all in the city of Jerusalem today, with the demise of the first generation that immigrated to the city. It is possible to indicate some words in the Hausa language, which were the most widely spoken by the first generation in Jerusalem and were affected by Arabic, for example: today: "Yoo", father: "Oba", woman: "Mata", pity: "Asara", after: "Baya".[211] In other words, members of the community today speak only Arabic as their mother tongue, and do not speak local African languages, such as Hausa or Beri, which were spoken by their ancestors. The African culture also has merged with the culture of the Palestinian Jerusalemite community and Arab Islamic culture, due to the lack of communication between the community members and the African societies from which they came.[212]

Community Civil Society Organizations

The African community is an active group that has set up several bodies to serve its members and the city of Jerusalem. Despite these bodies facing many problems, financial and otherwise, community members have always tried to continue giving. The following is an introduction to these bodies:

1. Sudanese Charity Club

This organization was established by the Africans in early 1935 and was based in the Rabat Prison and headed by Hajj Abd Al-Jalil Idris. It aimed to raise awareness in the cultural, health, social and sports fields.[213] Its most important interest was sports, especially boxing. The club was forced to close its doors after the occupation of East Jerusalem in 1967.[214]

2. African Youth Club

Founded in 1978 to revive the experience of the Sudanese Charity Club, this club offered its membership to Muslims and residents of the Old City from outside the community. It was headed by Fathi Bayan, followed by Khaled Idris, then Hosni Shaheen. However, the club could not continue for more than two and a half years, due to inadequate financial resources.[215]

211 Shaheen, p. 12.

212 Miles, p. 41.

213 Shaheen, p. 13.

214 Qous, p. 20.

215 Ibid.

3. African Community Association

In 1983, the community members wanted, again, to establish the African Community Association, but it did not work effectively until 1997, after the Small Business Center, with the help of Faisal Al-Husseini,[216] renovated and rehabilitated its office so that it could be used. The association continues to work to this day, with the aim of helping residents of the Old City, in general, and African community members, in particular.[217]

4. Aladdin Al-Basiri Mosque

The members of the community set up a mosque inside the Ribat of Prince Aladdin Al-Basiri, who is buried near the mosque. The mosque was established with funding from the Islamic Endowments Department in 1971.

Results and Discussion

The discussion in this research will be based on the information in the references and that obtained by the researcher through interviews with figures in the African community: the freed prisoner and activist in the Jerusalemite community, Mr. Mahmoud Jiddah, and the director of the African Community Association, Mr. Mousa Qous, in addition to personal interviews with youth. Accordingly, the problems and challenges that the community faces will be classified.

Identity

Qous states that the African community in Jerusalem came from different backgrounds and regions of Africa, and spoke multiple languages of the continent. This diversity was more evident in the period of the first generation of immigrants to Jerusalem. The Hausa tribe, which came from Chad, formed the largest African community in the city.[218] It seems that, despite the migration of the community from different countries, tribes and speaking different African languages, community members today feel that they belong to one family. This is evident through their common customs, such as the previously mentioned "Hateta" habit and through their solidarity in joys and sorrows. A 28-year-old community member, who works in the services sector stated: "We are one family living in the same area. We all know each other, and, at times of happiness and distress, we stand together."

216 Faisal al-Husseini (1940-2001), a Palestinian political figure who had a major role in the Palestine Liberation Organization. He was the founder of the Arab Studies Association (Orient House) in Jerusalem, was responsible for the Jerusalem file in 1996, and continued to play a major role in Jerusalem until his death.

217 Qous, p. 21.

218 Qous, p. 122.

Palestinian Identity

Palestinian identity dominates African identity in the community. Members of the community believe that the Palestinian identity and struggle against occupation are largely central in their lives, and they assert that they came to this country as free people, were not slaves and did not belong to anybody.[219]

Community members can be classified in three generations. The first is represented by Adam Jiddah, his story of immigrating from Chad and knowledge of the Hausa language. In Qous' information about Mukhtar Jiddah, in the statements of Shaheen and the interviews, many among the first generation married Palestinian Arab women from the local community.[220]

The second generation is represented by the writing of Mahmoud Jiddah (the son of Adam) on his identity and feelings expressed in his unpublished article, "I am who I am". Mahmoud narrates what was on his mind when he was ten years old: "He [my father] held French citizenship, and my mother was Jordanian, with white skin. We all lived in Jerusalem, which was considered Palestinian, but was under Jordanian rule. I asked myself: Does my father's being African make me African, too? What about my mother? If I considered myself African, I felt I was being unjust to my mother, and, if I said I was Jordanian or Palestinian, I would be unjust to my father, for I belonged to both of them. The difficult matter I face is that, until now, I do not know who was more kind-hearted to me: my mother or my father. Once again, if I said I was African, I would be unfair to my mother, and, if I said I was Arab, I would be unfair to my father. This debate went on inside me for years, and I did not find the best way out of this impasse."

Mahmoud Jiddah goes on to describe changes in his identity, for, after a period of time, he began to feel the discrimination against members of his community and their feeling of being strangers. "I asked my father if we could go back to Chad, for those Arabs did not deserve us living among them, after all the Africans had done for them. To preserve our dignity and live as citizens, let us return to Chad." But, according to Mahmoud Jiddah, his view of the Arabs changed later. "If there are good Arabs and bad Arabs, why do I look at the bad and deny the good? Thus, I began to return to my senses and got rid of my hatred towards Arabs and Arabism." Mahmoud Jiddah later joined the ranks of the Palestinian resistance and spent 25 years in Israeli prisons because of his activism.[221]

Today's generation, the third one, expresses its full affiliation with Palestinian identity. From the interviews, it can be concluded that there is no confusion or debate as there was among the second generation. A 23-year-old man, working in the field of services, stated: "We were raised and grew up as Palestinians; this is the identity that represents me." His voice was repeated among young men and women whom the researcher interviewed, who were proud of their belonging to the Palestinian Jerusalemite identity.

From the forgoing, it can be concluded that the first generation did not convey or bequeath a significant part of its African identity to the second generation, namely the local African languages spoken by the people of the first generation. Some of the second generation may have lived through a floundering identity, as happened with Mahmoud Jiddah. Today, however, the commu-

219 Ibid.

220 Shaheen, p. 32.

221 Mahmoud Jiddah, I am who I am, p. 13.

nity is more integrated into the Palestinian Jerusalemite one. Most of the African community has neither heard African languages nor lived in Africa, but, rather, belongs to the Palestinian identity and grew up with it in their homes and schools.

In addition, a strengthening of national identity has evolved as a reaction to the presence of a common threat or enemy against society.[222] This has made community members feel a sense of belonging to Palestinian identity; they even belong to various Palestinian parties, such as Fatah and the Popular Front, and as a result, dozens of the community's members have languished, or are languishing, in Israeli prisons.[223] In addition, national leaders have emerged from the community, such as Nasser Qous, who belongs to the Fatah movement, was close to Faisal Al-Husseini, and is, today, director of the Palestinian Prisoners Club. Members of the community suffer, like the rest of the Palestinian people, under the Israeli occupation (this will be expanded on in the "Problems and Challenges" section). Most of them live in the first line of defense of the Aqsa Mosque, as their place of residence is situated directly adjacent to it. At times of incursions into the mosque, their areas flare up with clashes and skirmishes with the occupation forces, and, when a siege is imposed on the Old City or the Aqsa Mosque, they are the first to be impacted by these measures.

From the above, the community can be classified as a multiple-identity minority. According to the Theory of Acculturation, that is, it belongs to the Palestinian and African identities alike. Here, one cannot deny the role of Islamic religious identity, which was one of the most important factors that drew this community to Jerusalem. This religious aspect continued in the Holy City through the community's major role in protecting and guarding the Aqsa Mosque; the community's geographical proximity to the mosque also contributed to that. Further, one cannot deny Palestinian internal politics, highlighted by the Palestinian side absorbing the African community, as in the step taken by Hajj Amin Al-Husseini when he permitted the African community to reside in Ribat Al-Mansouri and Ribat Aladdin, which became known as the African Quarter.

According to Berry's theory, we can assume that the community chose a strategy of integration and genuine participation in Palestinian community in Jerusalem, that is, the group participated and mixed within the majority and, at the same time, maintained parts and features of its original identity, as represented in the linkage and solidarity among all community members to form their internal identity, in addition to the African food and clothing that appear on occasion.

222 Adrian Hastings, The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism, Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 111.

223 Jiddah, p. 13.

Problems and Challenges

The following assessment will endeavor to review the most prominent problems and obstacles that the community faces, which are:

Restrictions by the Occupation

Most of the community members who live in Ribat Al-Mansouri and Ribat Aladdin suffer from the harassment of the occupation. According to Mousa Qous, director of the African Community Association, a checkpoint operates at the entrance to the quarter most of the time.[224] The quarter has two outlets. The first is at the entrance, no more than three meters wide, leading to the Aqsa Mosque, where policemen or occupation soldiers stand and question the people of the quarter, visitors, and worshippers heading to the mosque. This checkpoint is removed at night, but the settlers enter the quarter and try to provoke its people, and, in the event of a clash with the settlers, the police arrest the people of the quarter. The second outlet is the one leading to Bab El-Majles and to the Aqsa Mosque. There, a checkpoint is closed by the occupation soldiers at night and manned by them during the day. Thus, the quarter is geographically besieged, which makes its people feel pursued and monitored by the occupation army, in addition to the presence of surveillance cameras in all the alleyways of the Old City, including the African Quarter.
Adding to that are the arrests suffered by the youth of the quarter, with 80% of the community's members having been arrested. There are also the incursions carried out by occupation soldiers into Ribat Al-Mansouri and Ribat Aladdin, accompanied by searches and physical attacks on communitymembers.[225]

Persecution

In interviews, some youth spoke about being subjected to racism by the occupation army, which can distinguish them by the color of their skin. A 25-year-old man, who works in construction, stated: "They can identify us quickly through our color, and they sometimes call us 'Koushi', which is a racist word."
As for internal persecution, Shaheen describes the racism emanating from a group of people in the city as stemming from the extension of racist ideology and education, and the oppression of Africans by Western colonialism through calling them slaves. As an example, he says, some Jerusalem residents have opposed the Africans' stay in the Holy City. During the British Mandate, three people wrote a letter to the British High Commissioner calling for the deportation of Africans from Jerusalem, as the writers explained that they "did not want foreigners in Jerusalem".[226] According to Qous, the community of African Arabs is implicitly qualified by the term "slaves",

224 An interview conducted with Mr. Mousa Qous, Director of the African Community Association, on 5 December 2020.

225 https://www.grassrootsalquds.net/ar/community/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%81%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%A9

226 Shaheen, p. 39.

that is, a population of African origin that speaks Arabic and lives as outcasts – socially trapped – in the Old City of Jerusalem, and who are considered by some to be descendants of slaves.[227] It appears, through the interviews, that there is a decline in this racist phenomenon towards the community, but that it is still present among some of the city's residents.

Although many of the community's members are married to Palestinian women, they are sometimes rejected by Palestinian families due to the color of their skin. However, this is receding, as community members indicate.

Deprivation of the Jordanian Passport

Most of the Palestinian population living in Jerusalem holds Jordanian passports. After the occupation of East Jerusalem, Palestinians continued to hold Jordanian passports and only received Israeli permanent residency, not an Israeli passport or citizenship.[228]

Some members of the African community still suffer from not obtaining the Jordanian passport. According to Mahmoud Jiddah, Jordanian authorities refuse to grant them the passport because they are considered "aliens". Today, an estimated 60 members of the community do not hold a Jordanian passport, but only an Israeli travel document.[229] This means that, if they want to travel, they need a visa for all the countries that they want to travel to on the Israeli travel document. They also cannot travel to countries that do not have diplomatic relations with Israel.

Poverty

Per 2018 data, the poverty rate in the city (among Arabs and Jews) is 40%, while the poverty rate among the Arab population is 59%.[230] There is no accurate data about the poverty rate in the African community, but most sources (Al-Aref, Shaheen, Qous, Jiddah) cite a high rate. Qous sees that many of the community's young men cannot join the Israeli labor market, because most of them are former prisoners, and they need a certificate of good conduct to prove that they were not, and that they do not have security or criminal records in Israeli courts.[231]

The Muslim Quarter, home to most of the community, is one of Jerusalem's poorest neighborhoods. In its latest classification, in 2015, the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics classified residential neighborhoods according to their socioeconomic situation. The standard of living was examined, in addition to the average family size inside the home, educational level and income. This classification places neighborhoods on a scale of 1-10 (where 10 is the highest). Palestinian neighborhoods in Jerusalem fall between 1-3, at most, while Jewish neighborhoods in the city reach 8 or 9 in some cases. The Muslim Quarter falls in category 1, the lowest in standard of living.[232]

227 Qous, p. 125.

228 https://www.aljazeera.net/news/alquds/2017/8/9/خبير-قانون-لليهود-وآخر-للفلسطينيين

229 An interview conducted with Mr. Mahmoud Jiddah on 2 February 2020.

230 Maya Hoshen, About Jerusalem Data 2020, 2020, p. 58.

231 Qous, p. 19.

232 https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/mediarelease/DocLib/2019/246/24_19_246b.pdf

Low level of Education

The Palestinian population generally suffers from discrimination in the field of education, embodied in budgets and a shortage of classrooms. According to data by the Association for Civil Rights, the shortage of classrooms has exceeded 2500, in addition to establishing schools in buildings that do not fit student needs and required standards. The school dropout rate is more than 40%, and increases at the secondary level among Palestinian students in Jerusalem.[233]

In the African community, many young students are forced to leave school to look for work, for two main reasons. The first is to help their families with the difficult economic burdens they carry. This leads to a decrease in the educational level of the community's members,[234] for most of them have left school before finishing secondary level, and few of them have obtained a bachelor's degree.[235] The other reason, according to Mousa Qous, is the high number of arrests among youth of the African community and the subjection of many of them to house arrest. A 19-year-old youth stated: "I was in the orphan school in the Old City, and the army kept coming into the school and arresting or detaining the young people. This affected our education."

Mousa Qous estimates that only 10% of the community's children finish secondary school and complete university studies. Despite the African Community Association's efforts to help and support the students, this is not always successful, and, today, three women from the community are studying to obtain a master's degree.[236]

233 https://law.acri.org.il/he/2132

234 Qous, p. 19.

235 Jiddah, p. 17.

236 An interview conducted with Mr. Mousa Qous, Director of the African Community Association, on 5 December 2020.

Residential Hardship

Israeli policies impose a general restriction on the Palestinian population in housing, and this problem directly impacts African community members in their places of residence, whether they reside inside or outside the two Ribats. In a report by the Ir Amim Foundation, of more than 200,000 housing units within the city of Jerusalem, less than 25% are situated in Palestinian neighborhoods.[237]

The African community suffers from high population density. Their homes lack ventilation, have high levels of humidity, and enjoy little exposure to sunlight. Most of the rooms are narrow and close to one another because they were not built to be fixed family residences, but, rather, to function as single rooms to accommodate visitors to the Aqsa Mosque.[238] The poverty suffered by many community members does not enable them to own or buy housing outside the African Quarter, and many young couples share rooms with their families, in areas that mostly do not exceed 2.5-3 meters. Some members of the community, especially young couples, may rent apartments outside the quarter,[239] which increases the financial burden for these young families. Despite these difficult conditions, some community members have carried out repairs and restorations within the Ribats and added residential rooms, at the residents' private expense and with the support of the Islamic Endowments Department.[240] Recently, renovations also have been made by the Cooperation Council, as well as construction in the open yards.[241] However, the various Israeli authorities, especially the Antiquities and Municipalities authorities, have always made threats to demolish buildings and prevent renovations and repairs, according to the interviews.

General Conclusion of the Research

Based on the foregoing, it is possible to link the problems that the community suffers from with the space in which the majority of it lives, which is one of the most tense and confrontation prone areas in Palestine. The presence of this community inside the Old City and at the gate of the Aqsa Mosque pushes it to face numerous problems and challenges. In a study by the researcher, Shalhoub-Kevorkian, on Palestinian children who are exposed to and face the occupation and its system, Shalhoub believes that Israeli institutional violence results in the effective theft of childhood from Palestinian children. This phenomenon is not created only by the army or the occupation police, but also through the functioning of the Israeli judicial system and judiciary, which systematically abuses the most basic rights of Palestinian children. The militarization of children's lives and customary spaces does not allow them to follow a normal routine and life, but instead threatens them with abuse, including the ever-looming threat of arrest. All these conditions lead to a negative impact on the health and psychological state of children.[242]

237 East Jerusalem - Important Data, a study published by the Ir Amim Foundation, 2016, p. 2.

238 Jiddah, p. 6.

239 Qous, p. 19.

240 Shaheen, p. 34.

241 Jiddah, p. 6.

242 Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, Childhood: A Universalist Perspective for How Israel is Using Child Arrest and Detention to Further its Colonial Settler Project, International Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies, 2015, 12 (3), pp. 237-238.

All of these conditions apply to African community members. Their public space, in the streets and alleys of the Old City, suffers under a heavy presence of occupation soldiers and police, and, even without them, Orwellian surveillance cameras monitor all the alleys of the Old City, without exception. This combined set of factors places Jerusalem Palestinian children in a highly abnormal state and childhood, loaded with psychological pressures and tangible physical threats.

As for the socio-environmental theory, Shalhoub's findings on the impact of abuse and arrests on the psychological health of individuals bears examination. Health, whether physical or psychological, is the most essential and basic thing that individuals require, and any harm to the individual leads to an imbalance in the environment in which he lives. Thus, the impact on community member psychological health because of the arrests, or on their physical health due to beatings by the occupation authorities, in addition to the poverty suffered by the majority of the community, the residential hardship, and the deprivation of a number of them of the Jordanian passport, places individuals in poor conditions that limit the continuation of education and push them to drop out of school, join the labor market, or spend periods of their lives in occupation prisons. The combination of all of the aforementioned conditions and obstacles places the individual in a situation in which it is difficult to progress within the labor market or in education.

As mentioned earlier, Jerusalem has received many races and ethnicities from all corners of the globe and throughout history, but there is a question that should, perhaps, be asked: why do we find that some groups have integrated in a faster manner than others? For example – one of many – why was the Moroccan minority able to integrate in Jerusalem faster than the African community, though they both came from the same continent?

Perhaps the answer to this question lies in the claim of the researcher, Harold Isaacs, who believes that there is a difficulty in adjusting and rearranging identities for groups that are exposed to new conditions within societies, but that these things are more difficult and complicated when there are differences in physical features and skin color.[243]

However, there are several factors that may affect the extent of adaptation of groups or minorities, especially those that may be subject to persecution. The first are personal factors, which are difficult to address. The second are circumstantial factors, and the last are contextual factors, which are represented in social resources, pressures and negative life events.[244]

Circumstantial factors have contributed to placing members of the community, who came from different countries and regions, in one melting pot, and were relocated in one common place, which has become known as the African Quarter, prompting them to unify themselves and find one internal identity under the name of the African community.

Contextual conditions are represented in the context in which the majority of the community came, settled into the city of Jerusalem. This primarily took place during the period of British colonialism, a period when Palestinians faced waves of Jewish immigration to their country. This historical context made jihad against colonialism one of the most important declared reasons for the African community to settle in Jerusalem, which, in turn, contributed to the community's integration into Palestinian society. The context of colonialism and occupation continues until this day, and the community, like the remainder of the Palestinian people, is subject to the same conditions, suffering and calamities.

243 Harold Isaacs, Color in World Affairs, Foreign Affairs 47, 1968, p. 235.

244 Aaron Ebata and Rudolf H. Moos, Personal, Situational, and Contextual Correlates of Coping in Adolescence, Journal of Research on Adolescence 4, No. 1, 1994, pp. 99-125.

As for problems and challenges, many of the community's problems intersect with the problems of the Palestinian people, in general, and the people of Jerusalem, in particular. Arguably, however, the skin color of African community members has increased their problems and their frequent arrest and abuse by the occupation, and led, at times, to persecution against them by Palestinians. Add to the above the highly charged atmosphere of their place of residence abutting the Haram al-Shareef Al-Aqsa compound , which is one of Palestine's very sensitive areas, and perhaps its most sensitive area.

Suggested Mechanisms and Solutions

We suggest solutions to the challenges based on the Socio-Environmental Theory at different levels:

At the Microsystem level:

1. Work to raise awareness among community members, directly through families and in schools, of the importance and relevance of education to the individual, by encouraging community members to complete their education, and instruct parents about how to deal with their children when they are released from prison, or during periods of house arrest.

Medium System (Mesosystem):

2. Establish a committee to follow up with students and their problems within the public space and in schools, to prevent deterioration in educational standards and effectiveness, especially for those who are arrested.

3. Follow up and keep tabs on the psychological state of students, which may be negatively affected by arrest and poverty; this can include organizing sessions with social workers or psychologists.

Coaxial System (Exosystem):

4. Support institutions working in the community and undertake vocational rehabilitation projects for community youth who did not complete their education and spent years of their lives in occupation prisons.

5. Train unemployed women and youth in an effort to integrate them into the labor market, with the goal of raising their income and raising the standard of living for community families.

6. Work with the Palestinian and Jerusalemite community to provide job opportunities for the African community, to offset the occupation's discrimination against them, whether because of their political activity or racism.

Large System (Macrosystem):

7. Find solutions to the community's problems with the help of the people of the city, by trying to find new housing areas and to reduce poverty among community members.

8. Raise awareness of the international community about what the African community, in particular, and Jerusalemites, in general, are exposed to in terms of arrests, abuse, house arrests and other practices that violate international treaties and conventions governing human rights obligations.

JERUSALEMITE INGREDIENTS

KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG
PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

الرؤيا الفلسطينية
PALESTINIAN VISION

KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG
PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

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PALESTINIAN VISION

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Palestinian Vision Organisation | Al-Rashid St. Jerusalem Arab Chamber of Commerce Building - Jerusalem | Tel: 02 6285080
info@palvision.ps | www.palvision.ps

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