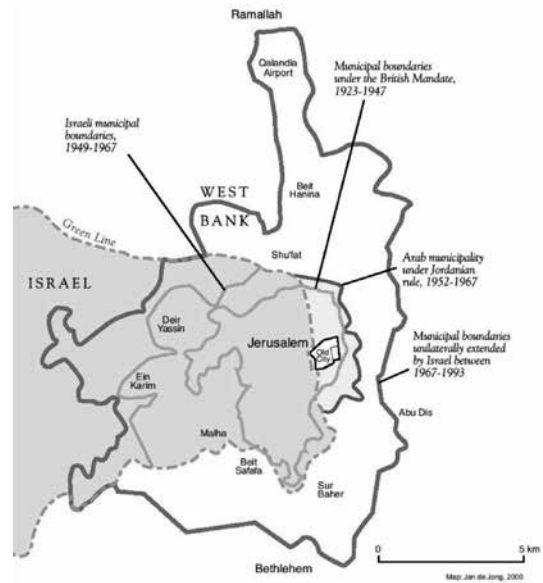


Editorial

The Red Caravanserai and Demographic Gerrymandering



Jerusalem's extended boundaries into the West Bank (map by Jan de Jong, 2000, PASSIA).

Anyone observing the map of the expanded municipal boundary of Jerusalem, as amended in 1968 and 1980, will be struck by the odd shape of the extended Israeli boundaries in the northeastern direction (toward al-Ram, Qalandiya, Kafr 'Aqab, and al-Bireh). It is not an accidental cartographic phenomenon; successive Israeli governments planned these boundaries out of demographic concerns, and used zoning measures to maximize urban expanses, and minimize the Arab population under its municipal control. The case of the Jahalin Bedouins in Khan al-Ahmar ("the Red Caravanserai") in the southeastern corridor of the city is the latest episode in this continuous campaign, which now seeks to remove the last demographic obstacle in Area C to the merger of Ma'aleh Adumim – a large, exclusively Jewish settlement on the approaches of Nabi al-Musa and the Jericho road – with Jerusalem. The Israeli government has been targeting this area in the context of the E1 zone, an area of some

twelve square kilometers located on the eastern periphery of Jerusalem between Ma'ale Adumim and Abu Dis. In "Letter from Jerusalem" in this issue, Hanan Awad ponders the fate and long travails of the Jahalin Bedouin, forcefully moved from their homes in the Naqab into Jordanian-administered territories in the early 1950s. Since then they have been displaced several times on the claim that grazing Bedouins are not territorial, and that "absentee territory" in Area C becomes the national patrimony of the Jewish state. One of Awad's interlocutors among the Jahalin, Eid Abu Ghaliya, clearly seems to grasp the essence of land politics behind the legal obfuscations.

In 1979 the Israelis started building the Ma'ale Adumim settlement. ... They kept this strategy of displacing the Bedouins until 1993, when the eastern side became a military zone and three fourths of the land came under the domain of the Ma'ale Adumim administrative area. The Jahalin Bedouins ended up without land. The confrontations started between the settlers and the Bedouins. The Bedouins protested against the shrinking of their land. I remember living in an area called Umm al-Ghalin, in the middle of the Ma'ale Adumim. We used to have around two hundred goats; we did not need to be workers and search for jobs. Most of the Bedouins lived off of the livestock they owned. They were happy, but unfortunately, when the land started to shrink on them and the Israelis forced them to leave the area, they went to the Israeli courts, but the Israeli courts were always on the settlers' side. The courts ruled against the Bedouins and supported the displacement policy. They did offer an alternative, but what alternatives? God knows. Families who used to live on forty to fifty dunams [about forty to fifty thousand square meters] were offered an exchange of five hundred square meters of land, and next to a garbage dump.

David Shulman, professor of religion at Hebrew University, writing in the *New York Review of Books* in October 2018, examines the larger political picture behind the assault on Jahalin Bedouins at Khan al-Ahmar as part of an Israeli effort to consolidate control over E1, severing the West Bank at its middle, and further rendering the idea of a territorially contiguous Palestinian state impractical in the extreme. Shulman writes:

Lest anyone think this idea is far-fetched or impractical, settlers from nearby Alon issued a statement on October 9, when it seemed that the Bedouins would soon be gone. These settlers happily envisioned groups of "Hebrew shepherds" grazing their huge flocks of "Hebrew sheep" starting with what they expected to be the newly vacated land and extending as far east as the settlement of Mitzpe Jericho, on the outskirts of Jericho city.

But the Jahalin were not docile in the face of these incursions into their land. They have mounted a spirited campaign of resistance for the last eighteen months. While the state bulldozers began to demolish their modest huts and cabins, they mobilized thousands of international and local supporters – who saw the assault as part of the campaign to annex Area C and transform the quest for Palestinian self-determination into the deal for “autonomy plus” recently floated by Israeli prime minister Netanyahu and echoed by U.S. president Trump’s “ultimate deal.”

The case of Khan al-Ahmar should be seen today as the sharpest manifestation of the Israeli scheme for incorporating increased segments of Area C into the settlement zones, and undermining any possibility of a territorially contiguous Palestinian Authority. The most significant areas in this campaign are the Jordan Valley, where Palestinian farmers suffer daily from diminishing access to land and water, and the greater Jerusalem area, where Khan al-Ahmar is only the latest arena of battle against the efforts to seal Jerusalem off from its West Bank hinterland.

A number of different plans have emerged as part of a larger Palestinian recognition of the concerted effort required to reverse this alienation. This issue of *JQ* reproduces key sections of the most recent of these, the Strategic Sectorial Development Plan for Jerusalem (2018–22). This study was commissioned jointly by the Palestinian Authority’s Office of the President and al-Quds University, with the aim, apparently, of pre-empting Israel’s creeping annexation of Arab Jerusalem. The plan was generated from four committees that address policy making, guidance and consultation, coordination with donor partners, and implementation. Excerpts from the plan are complemented here by a contextualization and analysis by Nur Arafeh. Though stressing the urgency of such a plan, Arafeh notes that “since the plan lacks any information on the decision-making process in these committees, their effectiveness is uncertain.” Arafeh stresses the plan’s dependency on donor aid for implementation, in an environment where limited Palestinian financial resources are already being tested by the Trump administration’s decision to defund UNRWA and East Jerusalem hospitals. Moreover, as Arafeh notes, Palestinian planning must compete with Israeli plans to Judaize Jerusalem, including, for example, the Leading Change Program, which “allocates around \$125 million to the education sector, in order to urge Palestinian schools to use the Israeli curriculum, among other objectives. This is more than 2.5 times the amount allocated by the SSDP (2018–22) for the education sector.

In historical perspective, Palestinians are working to overcome not only the half-century of Israeli rule over the entire city of Jerusalem since the 1967 war, or the seven decades of Israeli planning in the western part of the city, but a century of planning divorced from local interests, initiated with the British conquest of the city in World War I. In the “De-Municipalization of Urban Governance,” Falestine Naïli examines the erosion of Jerusalem’s power during the British administration of the city. She sees this as a deliberate policy that emerged from Field Marshall Edmund Allenby’s

“blind spot” toward its Ottoman patrimony. The city’s political marginalization was accompanied by the creation of competing institutions such as the Pro-Jerusalem Society (led by Charles Ashbee) and the Town Planning Commission (controlled by military governor Ronald Storrs), in which “representatives from the main religious groups joined [a] regime of ‘experts’ imposed by the mandatory authorities.” This led, according to Naïli, to a combined control by religious leaders and the governor, which contributed to the patrimonialization of the Old City and the confessionalization of its local authority during the Mandate period.

An alternative, locally-generated understanding of the Palestinian built-environment emerges in Lana Judeh’s “Architectural Conservation in Palestine’s Central Highlands.” Judeh analyzes and critiques movements for the architectural conversation of rural communities in the central highlands in the post-Oslo period and examines measures in Palestine (and in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon), in which emerging decentralization tendencies are challenging centralized governance and control, against “a universal idolatry of gigantism.” In contrast to neighboring regions, however, the case of Palestine suffers from a dual (and contradictory) central hegemony of Israeli colonial and Palestinian Authority regimes. In this context conservatory movements have to be wary of the politics of NGO-ization and the transitional aid industry.

This issue of *JQ* also includes two visions of ecumenical Christianity, in contrast to the confessionalism that guided the British administration. Vicken Kalbian, the veteran Jerusalem physician and local historian, draws an affectionate portrait of the late Edward Blatchford, director of relief efforts for Armenian refugees during the Mandate period, based on the latter’s unpublished memoirs. Blatchford’s main work was with orphanages in Nazareth and Jerusalem. His beneficiaries were mainly Armenian refugees, but they also included a large number of Arab war orphans in Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. His biographic note includes Blatchford’s tragic career during the collapse of welfare services in the years leading up to the 1948 war.

“Palestinian Evangelicals and Christian Zionism” by Jonathan Kuttab examines the efforts of local Palestinian evangelical Christians to counter American Christian Zionists’ impact on U.S. policies toward the Arab-Israeli conflict, manifested most bluntly under the Trump administration. These Palestinian Arab Christian evangelicals defy the Christian Zionist interpretation of religious doctrines at the political and theological levels. From this position, an admittedly marginal one within both Palestinian society and the global evangelical movement, Palestinian evangelicals derive a particular leverage. Kuttab remarks:

What bothered Christian Zionists the most was that Palestinian evangelicals were not using the usual arguments of international law, human rights, and secular politics, but were using religious and biblical arguments that were very conservative, even fundamentalist, but which

rejected and challenged Christian Zionist dogma using the very language and concepts they had successfully used themselves to garner support for Israel and its policies.

Finally, *JQ* uses this issue to offer its respects to Ahmad Nawash, a native of (ʿAyn) Karim and an artist in exile, who died in Amman on 18 May 2018. In a review of his collective works, artist Samia Halaby recalls two interviews she conducted with Nawash in 2007 and 2011, which were never published. Here she has reconstructed their dialogue which focuses on his formative years in Jerusalem, and his early influences in Italy and France (including Paul Klee and the Surrealists), and his later involvement with resistance art.

Endnotes

- 1 David Shulman, "The Bedouins of al-Khan al-Ahmar Halt the Bulldozers of Israel," *New York Review of Books*, 26 October 2018, online at www.nybooks.com/daily/2018/10/26/the-bedouins-of-al-khan-al-ahmar-halt-the-bulldozers-of-israel/ (accessed 8 November 2018).