Viewpoint

Re-shaping Jerusalem: The transformation of Jerusalem's metropolitan area by the Israeli barrier

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ABSTRACT

The paper analyses the territorial implications of the Israeli barrier/wall with reference to the metropolitan area of Jerusalem. The thesis argued is that the barrier continues both the 'Judaisation' and 'de-Arabisation' process of the city implemented by the Israeli authorities since 1967 and mainly practiced through urban policies. However, unlike these latter, it does not primarily affect the demographic composition of the city, but the spatial conformation of the metropolitan area; its political aim is to create a 'Greater Jewish Jerusalem' composed of the city and the three main blocks of Israeli settlements close to the municipal borders. In pursuit of (and in order to pursue) this aim, the barrier breaks down the Arab metropolitan system, which closely combines East Jerusalem and the West Bank suburbs. The consequence will be the probable atrophy of Arab Jerusalem, which will be reduced to a series of residential enclaves in an alien space.

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Towards a Greater Jewish Jerusalem

Israeli political ambitions over Jerusalem have often been pursued through urban policies. It is well known, since 1967 Israel implemented a double process of 'Judaisation' (i.e. promotion of both Jewish urban and demographic expansion in the eastern part of the city) and 'de-Arabisation' (i.e. containment of Arab expansion) of Jerusalem (Yiftachel, 2006). The main political purpose of

this process has been to create 'facts on the ground' (Romann & Weingrod, 1991), i.e. permanent situations intended to 'solve on the ground', in Israel's favour, the "dispute" over the city's sovereignty.[1] This process has been implemented in particular through interventions aimed at changing the city's physical and demographic structure.

The thesis argued in this paper is that the construction of the Israeli barrier[2] put a seal on these interventions: it is "the summation of Israel's policies in Jerusalem since 1967, literally setting in concrete the fruits of decades of annexation and expansion" (Dolphin, 2006, p. 124). However, the wall does not only pursue the same political purpose of Jewish settlement in East Jerusalem – i.e. the movement of Jewish presence in the area as far east as possible (Shlay & Rosen, 2010). As Klein (2005) maintains, the wall can establish what Jewish outposts alone were unable to achieve: to destroy the idea of an Arab metropolitan centre in East Jerusalem, establishing at the same time the basis for the creation of a 'Greater Jewish Jerusalem'. In this sense, the construction of the barrier probably represents the most relevant transformation of the city since 1967 (Dumper, 2008; Shoval, 2007; Yiftachel & Yacobi, 2005).

As I will argue, despite the occupation and the intense colonisation process, East Jerusalem has been for decades the core of the whole West Bank, not only in symbolic and religious terms, but, even more importantly, in functional and economical terms. The urban development of the Arab city within the municipal boundaries has been very difficult because the obstacles and limitations implemented by Israeli authorities; however, the suburbs' development outside the municipal boundaries compensated for these limitations, making the urban area a dynamic and attractive centre (Nasrallah, 2008; Owais, 2008). Despite the increasingly tough

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[1] East Jerusalem was occupied by Israel during the 1967 Six Day War (as were the Gaza Strip and the West Bank). In 1980 the 'unified' city was declared the capital of the Jewish State by Israel. The Palestinian National Authority claims East Jerusalem as the capital of its future state. The majority of states and most international organisations do not recognise Israel's occupation and control of East Jerusalem, and condemn the Israeli activities in the eastern part of the city (e.g. the building of Jewish neighbourhoods). For a summary of the international resolutions about Jerusalem see for instance Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2011, pp. 49–60).The term 'Green Line' refers to the 1949 Armistice Agreements line after the 1948 Arab–Israeli War, representing the border between Israel and Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and Syria from 1949 to 1967. The term 'Israel proper' refers to Israeli territory within the 1949–1967 borders (i.e. the Israeli territory internationally recognised as legitimate).

[2] Several terms are used to describe the barrier erected by Israel in the West Bank territories (only 15% of the barrier runs along the Green Line). It is defined as wall, barrier or fence. The term is usually accompanied by some attribute: security, separation, counter-terrorism, or apartheid. Terminology changes according to judgement (Barak-Erez, 2006; Jones, 2009; Muller, 2004. For a detailed discussion on terms used by different actors in different situations, see Rogers & Ben-David, 2010). The words employed by the Israeli authorities are security fence or seam zone; wall is the term favoured by the United Nations General Assembly and by International Court of Justice (2004) (although only a part of the barrier – almost 61 km of 437 km already built to date – is actually concrete wall). In this paper I will use the words wall, barrier and fence as synonyms – intended in a neutral manner.
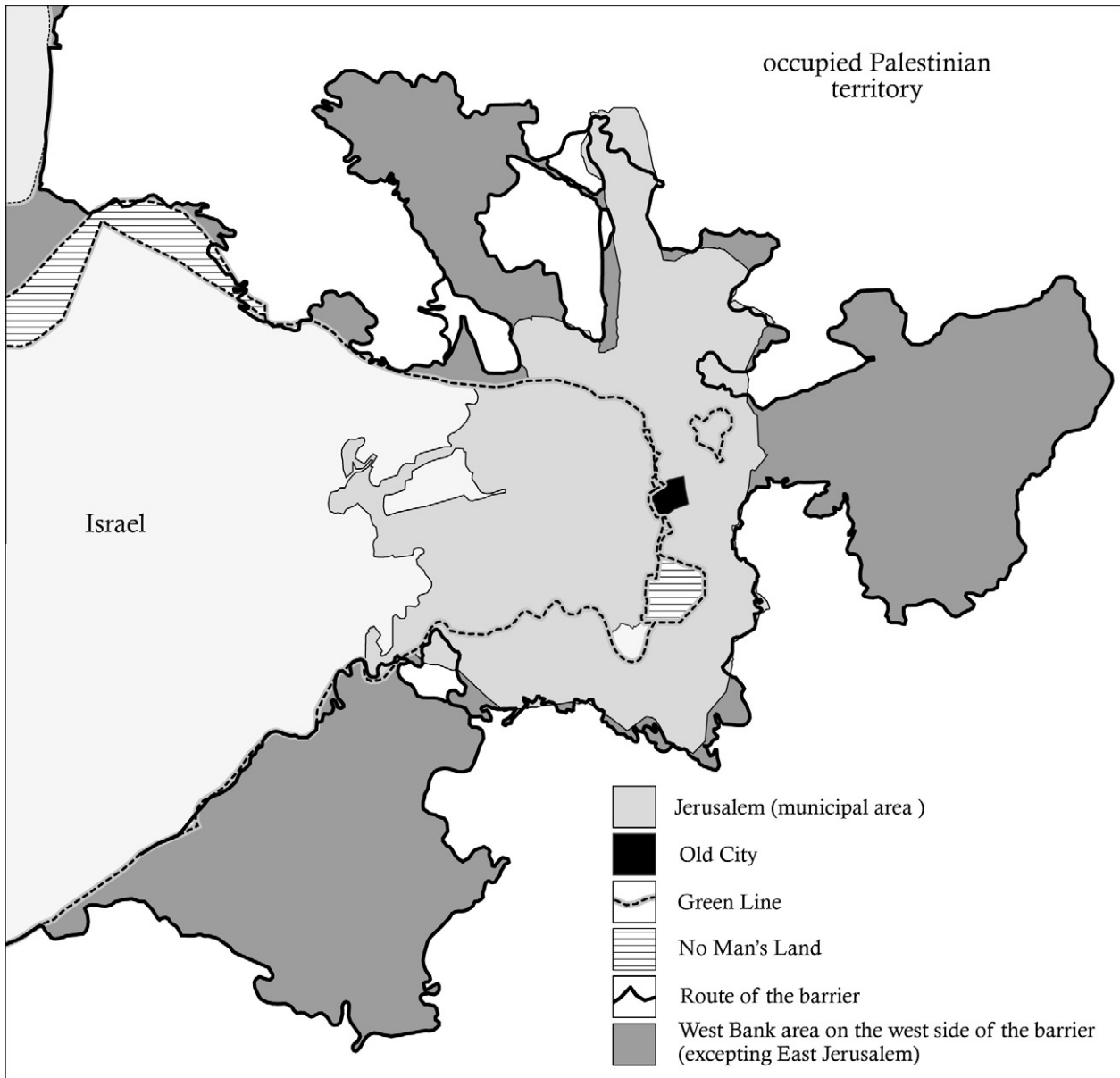
Fig. 1. The wall in the Jerusalem area. *Source*: Author's elaboration based on UN OCHA oPt (2011b, p. 52) and Peacenow (2009).

obstacles set up between Jerusalem and the West Bank by Israeli authorities, for decades East Jerusalem and the suburbs worked as a strictly integrated and interrelated urban system (Allegra, 2010; Shlay & Rosen, 2010). The wall's construction breaks off these relations, in a sort of spatial amputation of the Arab city (UN OCHA oPt, 2011b): East Jerusalem is wrenched from its historical relational space and trapped within an alien Jewish space. Atrophy seems to be its probable destiny. At the same time, through the creation of a quasi-homogeneous (Jewish) space and the inclusion of three blocks of Jewish settlements outside the municipal borders, the barrier mothers a 'Greater Jewish Jerusalem', a 10/15 km radius predominantly Jewish metropolitan area (see Fig. 1).

We are here, we are there: Sharon's wall

The political genesis

The fence was officially born on 14th April 2002, when the Ministerial Committee for Security Matters, established 1 year before by the Prime Minister Arial Sharon, enacted the decision to con-

struct a barrier, in order to "improve and reinforce the readiness and operational capability in coping with terrorism" (Government decision 64/B, cit. in Muller (2004)). The construction of the first sections of the barrier started in June 2002; the whole barrier's route was defined in October 2003 (Nasrallah, 2007).[3]

Thus, the putative father of the wall is Ariel Sharon; nevertheless, the idea to build a separation barrier with the West Bank was proposed for the first time by the Labour party in the 1990s. The idea to separate Israel from Palestinian territories, with the surrender of some areas occupied after 1967, was actually part of the political programme of the Israeli left wing: for instance, "Peace through Separation: we are here, they are there" was the election campaign slogan of Ehud Barak in 1999 (Muller, 2004). During those years, both Sharon and the Israeli right wing firmly opposed Labour's idea of separation. Nonetheless, after being

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[3] In subsequent years the route has been modified in some specific parts, for instance according to Israeli High Court decisions (see Barak-Erez, 2006). For a detailed overview of the decision-making process concerning the realisation of the wall and the definition of its route, see Michael and Ramon (2004).

elected Prime Minister in 2000, within a deeply modified national and international political context, Sharon quickly changed his mind, persuaded by the barrier's usefulness (and political benefits).[4] In embracing the idea of the wall, Sharon modified the concept of separation: it was no more "we are here, they are there", as in the Labour version, but instead "we are here, we are there" (Weizman, 2005, p. 249). Israel should have kept both sides of the barrier under its control and, from a political point of view, the wall would have been a further step in the West Bank colonisation process.[5]

The rationale

According to the Israeli authorities, "the sole purpose of the Security Fence [...] is to provide security",[6] and the construction of the barrier represents a military requirement, an essential counter-terrorism measure related to the failure of some repressive methods in preventing suicide bombings.[7] Nevertheless, it has been argued that, regardless of the rationale for the construction of *the fence in itself*, the choice of *its route* has been guided also by other considerations apart from security. The best known case is surely the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice: "the Court [...] is not convinced that the specific course Israel has chosen for the wall was necessary to attain its security objectives. The wall, along the route chosen, and its associated régime gravely infringe a number of rights of Palestinians residing in the territory occupied by Israel, and the infringements resulting from that route cannot be justified by military exigencies or by the requirements of national security or public order" (International Court of Justice, 2004, p. 61). As the Court states, the barrier *also* seems to be built in order to achieve political purposes (Barak-Erez, 2006).[8] In fact, the route of the wall has been actually planned to include the maximum number of Israeli settlements in the West Bank (and the minimum number of Palestinians).[9] In this sense, the fence's construction may be considered as the last step of half-a-century of expansion and annexation policies. It is possible to argue that with the wall, in fact, Israel puts down (unilaterally) an anchor point as regards its territorial expansion: it concretises the annexation efforts carried out since 1967 and establishes *de facto*, once and for all, a new starting point for future peace negotiations (no more the Green Line, but the wall).[10] As Shlay and Rosen state (2010, p. 374), "The fence/wall established what Sharon's government hoped would 'delineate the optimal borders' in the event of a two state political solution". This is particularly clear in the

Jerusalem area (notoriously one of the major hot-spots of Israeli–Palestinian conflict), which is the place where the diversion of the wall's route from the Green Line is greater (see Fig. 1).

The conformation

The planned total length of the barrier is 708 km, more than double that of the Green Line (320 km). To date, 61.8% has already been realised, and 8.2% is still under construction. The barrier runs for almost 15% along the Green Line, while the majority of the route is inside the West Bank.[11] After the fence's completion, around 9.4% of West Bank area will be on the Israeli side of the barrier (including the whole of East Jerusalem) (UN OCHA oPt, 2011a, p. 5).[12] In the Jerusalem area, the barrier measures almost 142 km, only 4 km of which run along the Green Line.

In the main urban areas (it is also the case in Jerusalem) the barrier consists of a concrete wall 8–9 m high. The sections outside the most urbanised areas consist of a complex system of protection, composed of several elements, 40–70 m total breadth (see Michael & Ramon, 2004).

Generally speaking, the barrier route creates two types of enclaves: seam enclaves and internal enclaves (Bimkom, 2006). Seam enclaves are constituted of Palestinian communities trapped between the wall and the Green Line. These areas are considered closed military areas; to continue living there, Palestinians have to acquire a particular permit. Non-residents' access is controlled by a strict system of individual permits. Although they live on the Israeli side of the barrier, these Palestinians there are not allowed to cross the Green Line (even if no physical obstacle exists) – they are considered, in all respects, as West Bank residents, without the right to enter Israel. The movement towards the West Bank is controlled using military check-points at the barrier. After the barrier completion, almost 25,000 Palestinians will be locked in these areas (UN OCHA oPt, 2011a).[13]

Internal enclaves are constituted of Palestinian communities completely or almost completely surrounded by the wall.[14] The barrier prevents not only crossing the Green Line, but also freely moving towards the West Bank (the movement is restricted by Israeli army check-points). Thousands of Palestinians live (will live) in these areas (UN OCHA oPt, 2004).

It is interesting to note that some of the farmlands belonging to Palestinians are on the Israeli side of the barrier too. The access to these areas is heavily controlled, permitting only the landowner (or one of his family members) to pass through a limited number of check-points – many of them are open only during specific periods of the year (for instance, during olive harvest). The permits issuance mechanism and check-points make the cultivation of the land quite impossible; this fact has not only an economically negative impact, but also means that these areas are at risk of confiscation by the Israeli State (on this argument, see, for example, Vitullo, 2005).

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[4] See Jones (2009) on the resistance to the construction of the wall by the Israeli radical right wing and on the meaning of wall construction in terms of domestic politics.

[5] As Yiftachel (2004, p. 609) states, the construction of the wall can be regarded as "a new phase, a new method, to pursue the ultimate goal of the Jewish state – maximize the Judaisation of Palestine, while maintaining Israel's image as 'normal', democratic nation state".

[6] See www.securityfence.mod.gov.il/Pages/ENG/default.htm. Accessed 26.09.11.

[7] The construction of the wall started after a period of growth in the number of terrorist attacks against Israeli cities; the pace of these attacks (in particular suicide bombing) increased in particular after 2000, with the eruption of the second *Intifada* in October 2000 (see Kliot & Charney, 2006). For a literature review on suicide bombing, see Kimhi and Shemuel (2004). For information on terrorist attacks in Jerusalem and their consequences on city's economy and urban space, see Savitch (2005).

[8] As regards the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, security and political reasons are inextricably intertwined. The Israeli concept of security has an 'intimate' political value. For instance, it includes both the defence of Israeli citizens within the occupied territories of the West Bank and the maintenance of the Jewish nature of the state.

[9] It is worth noting that the barrier also includes a number of important West Bank water wells. On this topic see for instance Malone (2004), Trottier (2007), Zeitoun (2008). For details of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict over water resources, see Shuval and Dweik (2007), Zeitoun, Messerschmid, and Attili (2009).

[10] Despite what its supporters maintain, the barrier can hardly be considered a temporary measure. Not only will it probably remain for many years, but its outcomes, for example concerning territorial changes, will presumably be permanent (Weizman 2007).

[11] On the different forces which influenced the definition of the wall's route, see, for instance, Weizman (2005) and Shoval (2007).

[12] The data about this issue are diverse. For instance, the International Court of Justice (2004, p. 52) calculates this to be about 16% of the West Bank, while Muller (2004) argues that it is 770 km², i.e. 13.1% of the West Bank.

[13] About the rationale in the creation of seam enclaves, Shaul Arieli (one of the main Israeli negotiators during the 2003 Geneva Initiative) states: "The rationale is to create the conditions for voluntary transfer so that the Palestinians will abandon their homes and go [east] to the big Palestinian cities [...]. [This will make it] possible to expand the borders of Israel without paying the demographic price" (cit. in Usher (2005, pp. 35–36)).

[14] Some of these enclaves are completely surrounded by the barrier (this is the case, for example, in Bir Nabala). In other cases it is the combination of the wall with settlements, military bases or check-points that physically encircle the area (this is the case, for example, in Anata). For an overview of the West Bank see UN OCHA oPt (2009).

Additionally, the barrier includes, on the Israeli side, a number of Jewish settlements in the West Bank: 71 settlements in 150 (including all Jewish East Jerusalem settlements) and 85% of all Israeli settlers in the West Bank (almost 250,000 persons, plus 195,000 Jews living in East Jerusalem) (UN OCHA oPt, 2011a, p. 5).

The wall in Jerusalem

Territorial outcomes of the barrier

The barrier determines a relevant transformation of the Jerusalem metropolitan structure. It is possible to identify four main territorial outcomes of the wall:

(i) annexation to the city of Jewish settlements in the metropolitan area;

(ii) annexation to the city of de-populated West Bank areas for the future expansion of Jewish settlements in East Jerusalem;

(iii) exclusion from the city of Arab Jerusalem neighbourhoods;

(iv) separation of the city from Palestinian suburbs in the West Bank.

(i) *Annexation to the city of Jewish settlements in the metropolitan area.* As UN OCHA oPt (2011a, p. 12) states, "the location of Israeli settlements, including land allotted for their future expansion, constitutes one of the principal factors for deviation of the route of the Barrier from the Green Line". In the Jerusalem area, the wall annexes to the city three of the main settlement blocks around the municipal borders: Ma'ale Adummim block in the east (53 km². surface; 40,000 inhabitants)[15]; Giv'at Ze'ev block in the north-west (34 km² surface; 17,000 inhabitants); and Gush Etzion block in the south-west (64 km² surface; 52,000 inhabitants)[16] (see Fig. 2). Many of these settlements were already functionally, economically and socially integrated within Jerusalem before the wall's construction; in fact, they represent the residential suburbs of the city where, because of low housing costs and benefits provided by the State, a part of Jewish Jerusalem's population moved looking for nearby homes (see Shabi, 2010).[17] Due to the barrier these suburbs will become *de facto* part of the city, with a shift from a situation of *functional contiguity* to one of *territorial continuity* with Jerusalem and the rest of Israel. In this framework, Ma'ale Adummim block has a prominent position: because of the expected development within the so called E1 expansion area (see Fig. 2) and the construction of nationally relevant infrastructures, it aims at becoming a new urban centrality in the metropolitan area, with an expected population growth of up to 100,000 inhabitants (Shalev, 2009).

(ii) *Annexation to the city of de-populated West Bank areas for the future expansion of Jewish settlements in East Jerusalem.* Besides physically and symbolically restating the annexation to Israel of Jewish settlements of East Jerusalem (195,000 inhabitants), the wall includes some de-populated West Bank areas external to the actual municipal borders on the Israeli side (about 4 km² surface) (Nasrallah, 2007) (see Fig. 2). The probable function of these areas is to provide some future expansion zones for the Jewish municipal set-

tlements close by: Neve Ya'akov and Pisgat Ze'ev in the north-east and Har Homa in the south. In the case of Neve Ya'akov, this expansion could guarantee continuity with the Geva Binyamin settlement (4,100 inhabitants), located on the eastern side of the wall (Kimhi, 2006a).

(iii) *Exclusion from the city of Arab neighborhoods.* The wall physically excludes from Jerusalem some Arab neighbourhoods located within the municipal area. These neighborhoods, inhabited by almost 55,000 persons, are: (i) Samiramis and Kafr Aqab; (ii) Shu'fat refugee camp, Ras Khamis and Dahiyat As Salam; (iii) Al Walaja (Nasrallah, 2007) (see Fig. 3). The future of these neighborhoods is uncertain. Officially, they are still part of Jerusalem: they are located within the municipal borders, although they are situated on the eastern side of the wall; as a consequence, their residents continue to pay the municipal taxes and to have right of access to the municipal facilities. In real terms, however, the barrier's construction has actually excluded these Arab neighbourhoods from Jerusalem and from the control of the Israeli authorities, leading to, for instance, the deterioration of basic services and increase in crime (the Palestinian National Authority has no jurisdiction over these areas, so it is not allowed to deal with such problems). As Yakir Segev (who holds the East Jerusalem portfolio in the Jerusalem municipality) argues "the Jerusalem municipality has no hand in managing these neighborhoods, and doesn't have the power to address the difficult situation facing the 55,000 people who live there. [...] [The neighbourhoods] are outside the jurisdiction of the state, and certainly the municipality. For all practical purposes, they are Ramallah. [...] Outside the half delusional right wing camp, I don't know anyone who wants to enforce Israeli sovereignty over this area" (Hasson, 2010).

Probably, the inhabitants of these areas suffer the worst negative effects owing to the wall's construction. Public facilities and urban environment are quickly worsening. Moreover, the commuting to Jerusalem – they still depend on the city for work, education, health and public services – is very long and costly, and also subject to many uncertainties and inconveniences connected to the check-points system at the barrier (see Kimhi, 2006b).

(iv) *Separation of the city from Palestinian suburbs in the West Bank.* Since the 1967 "unification" of Jerusalem under Israeli control, many Arab suburbs around the city have grown and flourished (see Fig. 3), developing economic activities hampered within East Jerusalem by Israeli policies (Owais, 2008). These areas have also constituted a relief valve for the East Jerusalem housing crisis (low availability and high prices); many Arab Jerusalemites moved there, commuting to Jerusalem daily while keeping their Jerusalem resident status.[18] For example, in 2002 Ar Ram suburb hosted as many West Bank residents (23,000) as many Arab Jerusalemites (UN OCHA oPt, 2011a). The growth of these suburbs also continued when, in the 1990s, Israeli authorities increased the access restrictions to the city from the West Bank.

After the completion of the wall, the relation between these suburbs and the city became *de facto* quite impossible; suddenly, an urban area functionally integrated for decades is

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[15] The barrier's construction around Ma'ale Adummim was halted in June 2009 because of budget and legal problems (UN OCHA oPt, 2011a, 2011b).

[16] The data on population refers to 2009. (*Source*: Peacenow, http://peacenow.org.il/eng/content/settlements-and-outposts. Accessed 26.09.11.)

[17] This is above all true concerning the "secular" blocks (i.e. non radical-orthodox) of Ma'ale Adummim and Giv'at Ze'ev.

[18] This permits them to continue to benefit from many social entitlements connected to the Jerusalem residency. Nevertheless, this is illegal according to Israeli law: to maintain Jerusalem resident status an Arab Jerusalemite must have his own "centre of life" in the city (i.e. he absolutely needs to live within the city borders). On this topic see HaMoked and B'Tselem (1997), HaMoked and B'Tselem (1998), UN OCHA oPt (2011b).
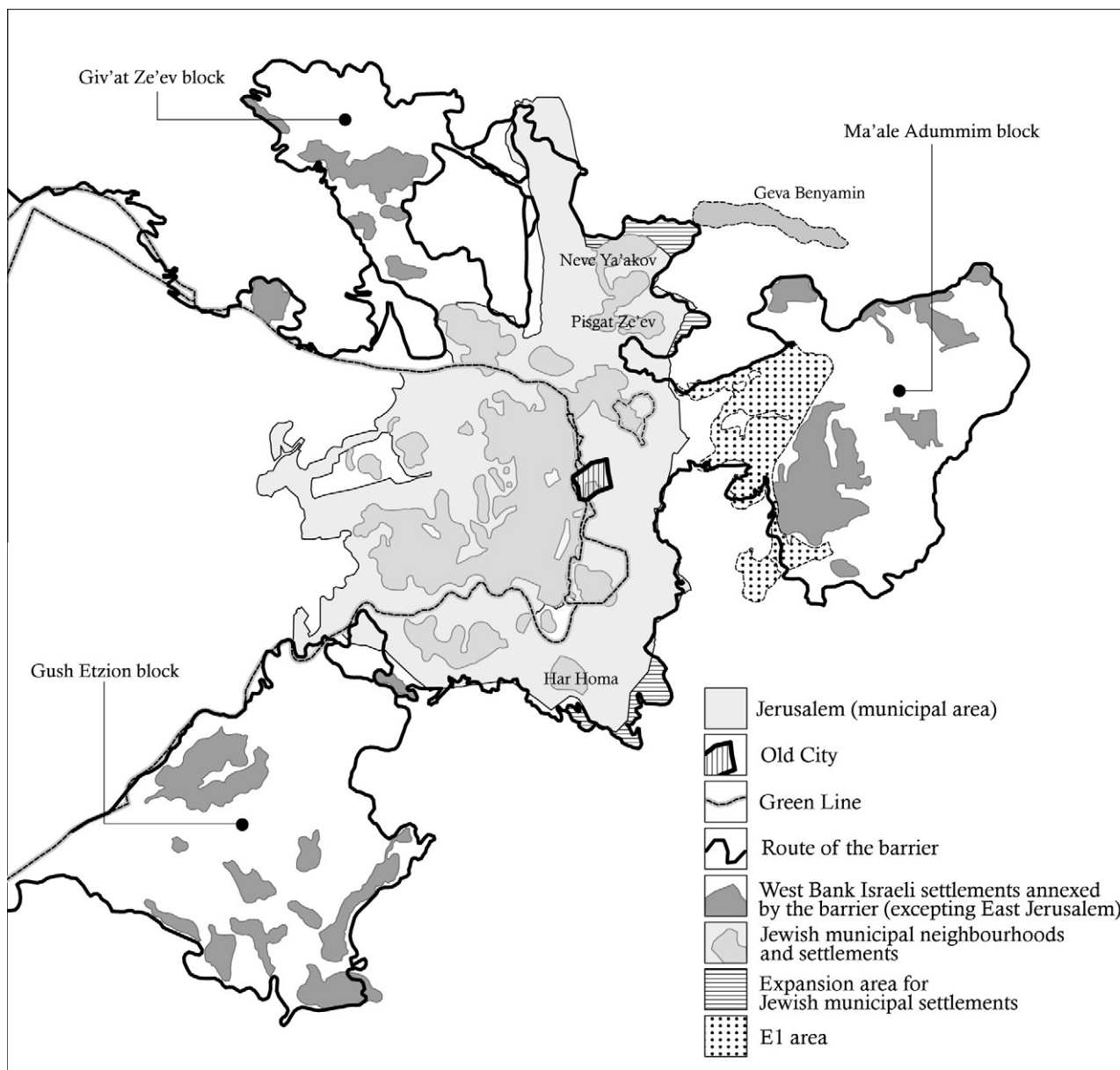
Fig. 2. Jewish settlements and the wall in the Jerusalem area. *Source*: Author's elaboration based on UN OCHA oPt (2011b, p. 52), Peacenow (2009), and Shalev (2009, p. 20).

broken down, with significant negative impact on both East Jerusalem and Palestinian suburbs.

With reference to East Jerusalem, many Arab Jerusalemites who in the past moved to the suburbs have been forced to return to live within the city (Shlay & Rosen, 2010). This is due to many factors connected to the wall's construction: for instance, the increased time needed to reach the city from the suburbs (e.g. the average time to reach the old city from Bir Nabala increased from 20 to 60 min. See UN OCHA oPt, 2011b, p. 77); and the uncertainties and inconveniences related to the check-points at the wall (access through the wall can be closed at any moment, and the controls cause long queues and frustration among Arabs). This migration has (will have) a negative impact on Arab East Jerusalem neighbourhoods: the worsening of the housing crisis (lack of houses, overcrowding, unauthorised buildings; see Chiodelli, 2012); further deterioration of public services, which are insufficient to meet the needs of all the inhabitants of these neighbourhoods; and growing poverty, social tensions and criminality (Kimhi, 2006a).

Worse negative effects are suffered by the Arab suburbs. These areas, whose vitality and development depends upon relations with Jerusalem, are affected by economic and demographic collapse because of the wall (Owais, 2008). To give an example, according to UN OCHA oPt (2011b) at Bir Nabala the wall has led to the halving of land value and the closure of half of commercial establishments.[19] It is important to emphasise that some of these suburbs are not only separated from Jerusalem, but also locked within an enclave. After the completion of the barrier, in the Jerusalem area 1600 Palestinians (distributed into 16 communities) will live in seam enclaves (UN OCHA oPt, 2011a) and tens of thousands in internal enclaves (Brooks, 2007).

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[19] For a detailed analysis on this topic, see Yiftachel and Yacobi (2005), and Owais (2007). In terms of the social effects of the wall's construction on the Palestinian population, see Kimhi and Choshen (2006), and Brooks, Khamaisi, Nasrallah, Hidmi, and Wa'ary (2009).
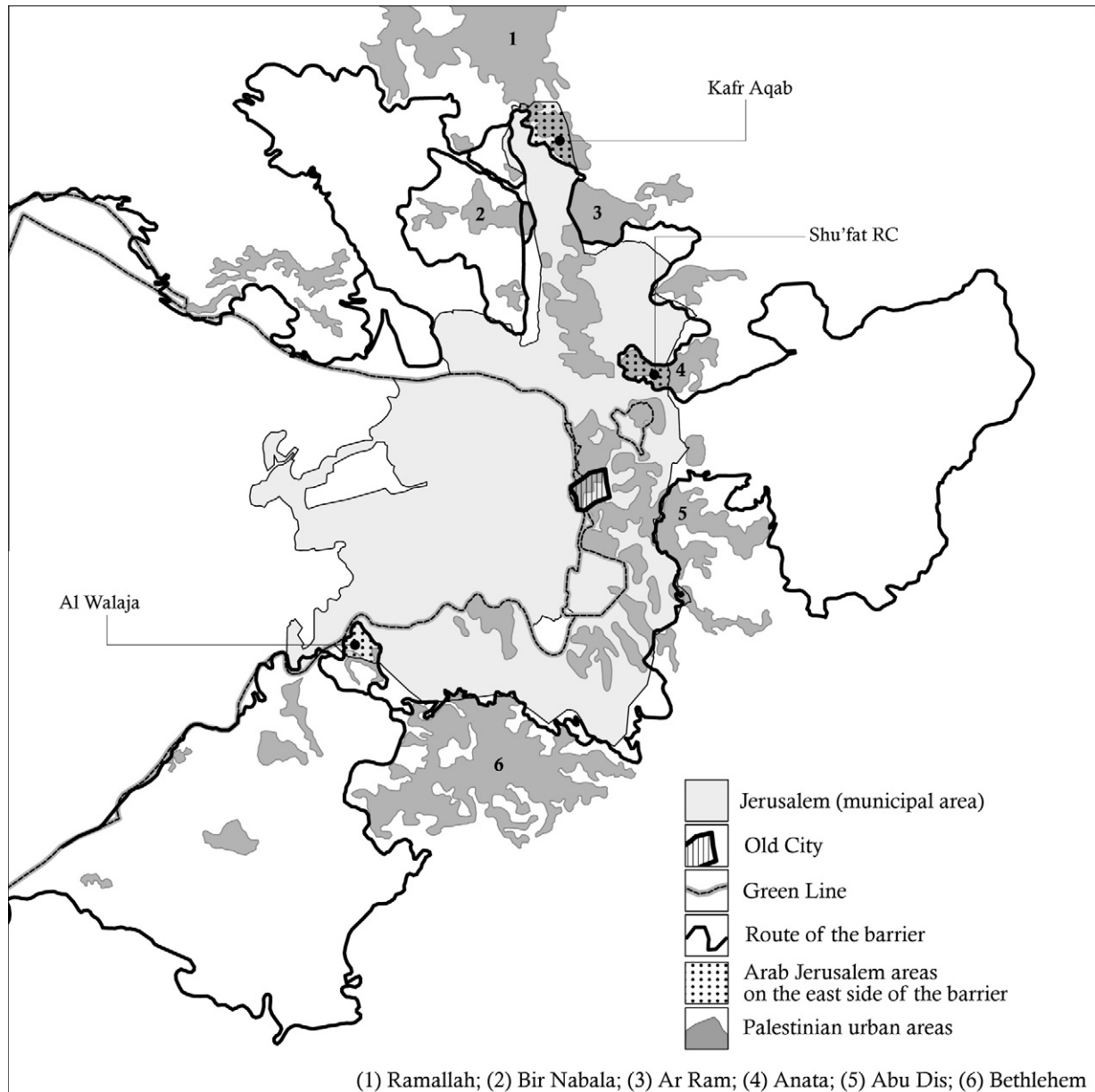
Fig. 3. Palestinian suburbs and Arab municipal neighbourhoods on the eastern side of the wall. *Source*: Author's elaboration based on UN OCHA oPt (2011b, p. 52), Peacenow (2009), and Shalev (2009, p. 20).

The destiny of the city

As mentioned earlier, since 1967 Israeli urban policies have also been devoted to pursue the double process of 'Judaisation' and 'de-Arabisation' of Jerusalem (Yiftachel, 2006). The wall may be interpreted as a continuation of this process (Bollens, 2010; Yiftachel & Yacobi, 2005); nevertheless, with the construction of the barrier, there is a shift from a (mainly) demographic emphasis – typical of urban policies implemented within the municipal borders – to a (mainly) territorial emphasis, aimed at a permanent transformation of the spatial conformation of the metropolitan area.[20]

As is well known, a demographic rationale has formed the basis of the main Israeli urban policies in Jerusalem during these last decades. The objective of the Israeli authority has been to maintain the 30–70 balance (30% Arabs, 70% Jews), through the containment of Arab growth and the encouragement of Jewish expansion (primarily in the eastern part of the city).[21] Nevertheless, as regards the wall, Kimhi (2006a) is probably right when stating that demography is not the *main* rationale guiding the route of the barrier (at least in the Jerusalem area). In fact, the barrier will not help limit the number of Arabs living in East Jerusalem: as previously argued, the Arab Jerusalem neighbourhoods on the eastern side of the fence continue to be officially included in the municipal area; moreover, a great deal of Arab Jerusalemites living in the West Bank suburbs returned (or will return) to live within the municipal borders. Obviously, the wall could *also* have demographic implications; for instance if the Israeli authorities redraw the municipality's borders along the route of the wall. If the municipality's borders coincide with the wall, the demographic composition of the metropolis will be the following (Table 1).

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[20] Obviously, as Hanafi (2009) states, targeting the land means it is possible to target the population. So, the fence probably *also* has a demographic purpose, at least in the long run and with reference to some areas (for instance with reference to seam enclaves). For a demographic interpretation of the barrier, see Usher (2005).

[21] For discussion on Jerusalem's demography, see Della Pergola (1999, 2001).

Table 1
Greater Jerusalem population. *Source*: Author's elaboration based on Jerusalem Institute for Israeli Studies.

Area	Population				
	Percentage		Thousand		
	Arabs	Jews	Arabs	Jews	Total
Jerusalem (municipal border)[a]	36.1	63.9	285.0	504.0	789.0
Areas annexed by the wall in the eastern side of the municipal borders[b]	1.5	98.5	1.6	106.0	107.6
"Greater Jerusalem"	32.1	67.9	286.6	607.0	893.6

[a] www.jiis.org, data 2011.
[b] Peace Now (http://peacenow.org.il, data 2010).

The main spatial purpose (and result) of the barrier with reference to Jerusalem seems to be the radical and permanent modification of the urban structure of the metropolitan area. More exactly, the wall mothers a 'Greater Jewish Jerusalem', a predominantly Jewish urban area composed of Jerusalem and large Jewish settlement blocks in the West Bank.[22] This deals a fatal blow to the Arab city, severing relations between East Jerusalem and the West Bank. As Klein states (2005, pp. 71 and 75), "Over and above extending the area annexed, Israel wants to destroy Arab metropolitan Jerusalem and control it without annexing it. [. . .] East Jerusalem metropolis must be destroyed both by damaging its periphery and by weakening of the center itself, as well as cutting it off from its natural hinterland".

Since 1967, Israel has promoted the construction of a settlement system in the West Bank areas close to the city; the aim was to create a "protective belt" in order to separate East Jerusalem from West Bank Palestinians (Cheshin, Hutman, & Melamed, 1999). This settlement process has been very intense; nonetheless neither the relations between East Jerusalem and the Palestinian hinterland nor the development of Arab Jerusalem were hindered: Jerusalem areas remained, also after the 1967 occupation, the core of the West Bank (Shoval, 2007; Usher, 2005).[23]

Nevertheless, the construction of the fence completely changes the situation, and can be regarded as the ultimate step in the process of 'Judaisation' and 'de-Arabisation' of Jerusalem. In fact, while giving physical (and symbolical) continuity to a wide Jewish metropolitan area, at a same time it breaks up the Arab metropolitan system and transforms Arab Jerusalem into a series of residential enclaves within a mainly Jewish space (with which they can only have dependence relations). The probable result seems to be the Arab Jerusalem atrophy and the worsening living conditions of Palestinians (Arab Jerusalemites and inhabitants of the suburbs).

It is relevant to note that many observers argue that also the Jewish city will be negatively affected by the construction of the barrier. The wall may have a negative impact on the coexistence of Arab and Jewish Jerusalemites, with consequences concerning the safety of Jews (although the construction of the barrier increased the feeling of security of Jewish Jerusalemites, Brooks, Kha-

maisi, Nasrallah, Hidmi, & Wa'ary, 2009); moreover, the barrier is likely to have a negative impact on the economy (in the form of the weakening of the tourism and commerce sectors), urban environment (deterioration of Jewish neighbourhoods close to Arab areas), public finance (increasing of municipal spending to provide services and assistance to the Arab population that has witnessed rising poverty and social decline), and demography (increasing of Jewish emigration connected to the increasing problems of the city) (see, for instance, Kimhi, 2006a; Shoval, 2007).

A physical barrier to peace

In Jerusalem "the language of the conflict is often that of planning: the lingua franca of ordering space" (Sorkin, 2005, p. viii): Israeli political aims are also pursued through physical devices which modify in a permanent way the territory and the urban fabric, hiding intimately political actions behind technical or security rhetoric. In my opinion, this is, of course, the ultimate case of the barrier.

As I argued in this paper, there is some evidence that the wall will definitively transform Jerusalem into a Jewish metropolis (above all from a spatial point of view) and, at the same time, it will constitute a sentence of death for the Arab city – which will be reduced to a series of residential enclaves without any possibility of viable relations with the Palestinian territories. This is troublesome not only from an urban and social point of view, as I argued in the previous paragraphs, but also from a political perspective. The barrier risks dealing a fatal blow to the peace process: drawing what Israeli authorities consider to be the optimal borders of the city, the fence makes definitely East Jerusalem *de facto* an unsuitable capital for a future Palestinian State. It is well known that, from the Israeli occupation in 1967, East Jerusalem experienced an intense process of Jewish settlement (in 1967 it was completely inhabited by Arabs; today almost 195,000 Jews live there). Nonetheless, until the 1990s, Jerusalem was still suitable (at least theoretically) for some kind of sharing or division between Palestinians and Israelis also because, from and urban point of view, it remained a divided city (Bollens, 2000): it was a two-headed city so, although there were many problems connected to the occupation and colonisation process, the Arab part of the city maintained a functional and economical autonomy, and a territorial integrity. On the contrary, the fence risks making a negotiated solution to the conflict even more difficult to achieve precisely because there is the risk that, from an urban point of view, an Arab *city* will cease to exist.

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[22] The term 'Greater Jerusalem' has never been officially codified and it does not appear within the official statistics. It is an ambiguous term, used to indicate different territorial extensions according to different situations (Sharkansky & Auerbach, 2000). Nevertheless, the idea of a city extended beyond the current municipal borders is not something new. For instance, in 1995 Yitzhak Rabin stated: "we envision and want [. . . a] united Jerusalem, which will include both Ma'ale Adumim and Givat Ze'ev – as the capital of Israel, under Israeli sovereignty [. . .]; changes will include the addition of Gush Etzion, Efrat, Beitar and other communities, most of which are in the area east of what was the 'Green Line' prior to the Six-Day War" (Address to the Knesset by Prime Minister Rabin, 5th October, 1995. Available at: www.mfa.gov.il).

[23] This fact contributed to nourish Palestinian claims over the city. For example, further to the Oslo accords, Abu Dis suburb was chosen as the location of the future Palestinian Parliament (see Owais, 2007).

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