

# Israeli Settlement Colonialism and Its Impact on the Identity of Palestinians in the Eastern Part of the City of Jerusalem

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**Abstract:** The State of Israel is one of the settler states which seek to eliminate the indigenous population to acquire land to form a Jewish state. With its capital in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem and to achieve the purpose trying to eliminate the identity of the city and the identity of its inhabitants. However, the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem that has 323,700 population is governed by international law, but the reality is very different. Israeli settlement colonialism carries out racist and inhumane policies towards Palestinians. This reflected negative impact on their societal security. This research examines the impact of Israeli colonial policies on the identity of Palestinians in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem. This study uses both primary and secondary data. The primary data gathered from the in-depth interviews with the informants from the heterogeneous group. The secondary data contain books, journal articles, magazines, reports etc. This study finds that the identity crisis, the impact on the language, and the Palestinian relations are among the most important factors that suffered by Palestinians in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem.

**Keywords:** identity, Israeli settlement colonialism, the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem, Palestinians.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Settler colonialism is an ongoing structure not a historical event that has occurred in the past and ended, the settlers' goal is to seize land to achieve the requirements for the elimination of indigenous people whether by direct or indirect forms of violence including genocide (Glenn, 2014). If they not achieved like this then they are transferred from their land to other areas by displacement. The goal is to acquire land without its inhabitants to build new capitalism on it that does not accommodate indigenous people, therefore, they must be removed or expelled from the land or isolated in protected areas or by erasing their culture if not absorbed (Jong, 2017). As a prelude to clear their national and religious identity ultimately (shalhoub, 2014). The extent of the destruction caused to the Palestinians was so great that the social and the economic relations were torn apart. In order to achieve this, Israeli settler colonialism adopted the logic of extermination, like any other colonial state based on land first and last the colonized settler came to stay. So they have to get rid of the people of the country and after they finishes the genocide, they has to steal their identity and integrate it into the identity of the new settlers, so it is a zero equation that

cannot be divisible by two. zero-sum game and winner take all (Cohen, 2011).

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology is a technique to scientifically solve the research problem. Dawson (2007) sees the research methodology as a universal principle that guide or give direction to the research. For the purpose of achieving logical and coherence research techniques, this research employs a qualitative method. Because this study is interested in investigating the reason for a contemporary human behavior; i.e. why and how people think or do certain things (Kothari, 2004). Accordingly, this study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data in the form of semi-structured interviews and secondary sources in the form of documents (Marriam, 2009). The main reason for using multiple sources (triangulation) of data is to reinforce the authenticity of the information. To develop an in-depth understanding and made the study more reliable. Therefore, the informants were interviewed for semi-structured interviews. They have been chosen based on data saturation. However, the secondary data obtained from the textbooks, journals, reports and newspapers.

## III. STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The establishment of Israeli settlement colonialism in 1948 was a catastrophe and the Palestinians had a real catastrophe that shattered their aspirations for a state of their own. The repercussions on Palestinian society have exceeded the violation of their right to self-determination. It has even torn the Palestinian social atmosphere as a result of the force and mass displacement of most of the Palestinian people from their homeland. The consequences of the Nakba on Palestinian society were catastrophic. Four main Palestinian groups can be identified: Palestinian citizens in the 48 territories; Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip under Israeli military occupation since 1967; Palestinian refugees living in neighboring Arab countries; and Palestinians in the rest of the world. The dispersion of Palestinians and their living within different political and social environments illustrate the cultural differences and identities among them (Qasis, 2014). The Oslo peace process led to the exclusion of Palestinians living in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem from historical reconciliation as a key to

settling the Arab-Zionist conflict through the establishment of two states. This indicates that a Palestinian state can be established alongside Israeli settlement colonialism in the 1967 settlements, but the implications for the identity of the Palestinians was serious matter. However, the implications of the identity of the Palestinians was serious problem because the proposed solution prevented them from getting Palestinian citizenship.

#### IV. DISCUSSION ON RESULT

##### *Create an identity crisis*

The policies of Israeli settlement colonialism have created the dispersion of the Palestinians because of their loss of homeland which led to the demolishing of the society, frustration of their national ambitions and the beginning of a swift process to destroy their culture. Palestinian identity was influenced by the experience of expropriation, exile, and international recognition of Palestinian rights and suffering (Shihade, 2015). Likewise, Elias Sanbar, a Palestinian historian, he said that there has been a shift in the contemporary history of the Palestinians because their state and people have disappeared from maps and dictionaries. The Palestinian people have become non-existent and are referred to in general and ambiguous terms inappropriately either as refugees or as Israeli Arabs (Sa'di, 2002).

Responding to the questions regarding the implications of the policies of the Israeli colonial settlement on the social security of Palestinians in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem all are the informants, experts and non-governmental organizations. According to the interviews conducted in the course of this study, all the informants belong to category A, B and C. Respondents considered that their identity did not develop normally because life inside the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem is abnormal. Palestinian Jerusalemite identity is threatened every day, so the respondents expressed their fear of being distorted identity. While answering the question regarding to the impact of Israeli colonial policies on the identity of Palestinians in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem one of the informants from category A (expert) asserts that:

“There is a big difference to live in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem because life is complicated there, the world recognizes the Palestinians in the areas of the West Bank Gaza is Palestinian because they have identity cards and passports issued by the Palestinian Authority, so they are considered Palestinians in the whole world”(personal interview with an informant A2, July 28, 2018).

Reaffirming the above opinion, another informant laments that:

“Now about the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem their situation is different. But the Palestinian Authority does not deal with them based on that, so it does not have a Palestinian identity, but Zionism is treated as if they are citizens like Jews. They do not recognize them as

Palestinians, so they are treated as Jordanian citizens. Because Israeli settlement colonialism took the eastern part of Jordan in 1967, when the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem was part of Jordan at the time. Therefore, they are treated as Jordanian citizens. Opposite to that Jordan treats them as Palestinians. Because Jordan does not differentiate between Maqdisi and the West Bank regards all who are living east of the river as Palestinians, so the Palestinians in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem area are Jordanian, Israeli, and not Palestinian. And they are neither Jordanians, nor Israelis legally. This legal complexity reflected on everything in their lives, the difference is that I, as a Jerusalemite, when I was studying in Britain, they asked me where are you from? If I say I am from Palestine, they think I am from the territory of the Authority and I am not one of them. If I say Israeli that I am not, and the Israelis do not admit it because I have a Jordanian passport and Jordan does not recognize me as Jordanian. So, the best way to say I am from Jerusalem. This has produced suffering for Palestinians even in the definition of their identity, in contrast to the Palestinians in the territory of 48 in Haifa and Acre hold full Israeli citizenship. Therefore, the legal definition of the state of Israeli colonial settlement, and to the Palestinian Authority, Jordan, and all the world that these are Israeli citizens because they have Israeli citizenship, but Jerusalem does not have a nationality”. (personal interview with an informant A3, AUGUST 3, 2018).

Also, informants A1, B1 expressed the following point which is the unclear legal status of Palestinians in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem that created an identity crisis and he stated:

“Of course, mothers teach their children that we are Palestinian Jerusalemites. But there is a note that Maqdisi is in this temporary situation and they live dealing with the Israeli colonial authorities, whereas Jordan created more belonging towards the city, than to the nation and the nation in general. But the question is Jerusalem belongs to whom. He attributes himself to the city of Jerusalem directly and this is an important point in the personal identity of Jerusalem that he considers himself belongs to Jerusalem. More than he belongs to another region and more than he belongs to the name of Palestine to the name of the Arab-Islamic nation. When the matter comes to the legal point of view, the issue is strange, complex and therefore, the identity crisis does not mean that Maqdisi does not know who he is, but his legal definition is difficult.” (personal interview with an informant B1, July 14, 2018).

The multiplicity of Palestinian belonging resulted in a fragmentation of identity as a result of the policies of Israeli settlement colonialism. Many respondents attribute themselves more to the city, when asked how they identify themselves, this stems from their emphasis on their Jerusalem identity as a key element in their identification, rather than on the national identity as noted during the interviews. The answer given by Detective C3 is as follows:

“Subconsciously, I know myself as Jerusalemites and someone is asking me why is Jerusalem? What is the difference? Why don't you say you're Palestinian? And I stood for a moment thinking, did you hold on to the challenge that makes me know that I am a Jerusalemite? I don't know, I didn't introduce myself as a Jerusalemite, we feel that at any moment we may be expelled, and we may be prevented from entering again.” (personal interview with an informant C3, June 5, 2018).

Respondents stated when asked about their identity. They attribute themselves to the city to the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem. This illustrates a problem that Palestinians living in the eastern part of the city of Beit al-Maqqdis facing identification issues. Which produced an identity crisis because self-identification in that way has two components: the first is to return the identity of these people as Palestinians and return them to the city. The Jerusalem identity is a clear sign of a problem in identifying themselves. Because of the policies of Israeli colonial settlement especially legally, they have no nationality which makes them the strangest legal status in the world. The results of the interviews reflect the confusion of Palestinians in identifying themselves. These findings reveal more about the Palestinian identity in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem and its transformations through the number of Arabs who see themselves as Jerusalemites without a Palestinian element.

#### *Influence on language*

Language is an important role in communication and culture. Culture holds language, especially through public speaking and literature. Language is an integral part of the society which determines its shape and personality and holds its history (Norton, 2013). This is why most Settler colonialism societies focus on the linguistic identity and the language of the communities because they realized the importance of language and culture to achieve domination, so the settlers try to convey their thoughts, beliefs and customs through language as a cultural tool in an invisible and intangible way. By using this policy, they can complete and reinforce the process of infiltrating and colonizing others to subordinate them to defeated societies (Shakib, 2011). Language is a real tool for acquiring knowledge, especially if it is used in education. Language is critical in the educational process, especially when mother tongue is used in early education. In other words, there is a tendency to a better understanding when using the mother tongue to teach including when the mother tongue is not the language of the majority in society. Every child has the right to learn their mother tongue to preserve their cultural identity. Language is an essential part of culture. It is a distinctive sign of identity. A country that lacks its culture is nothing more than a group of people without a spirit that cannot be a nation (Agbanusi, 2017) .

While conducting interviews for the purpose of this study all the informants from category A (experts), two informants from category B (NGOs), all informants from category C (Indigenous people) said the same. The evolution of our

identity within a blueprint to Judaism our language, our culture which negatively affects our natural development. For example, we use many Hebrew terms in our daily life which affects the development of the national language, we will review the language problem as no other choice noticed:

“We have Israeli colonial travel documents and our papers and certificates are issued in Hebrew. The policies of Judaization reflected on the language, culture, religion, customs and traditions of the Palestinians in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem. At the same time, Zionist policies influenced the population's social and linguistic culture” (personal interview with an informant C2, SEPTEMBER 18, 2018).

Similarly, another informant from the indigenous people reaffirms that:

“Therefore, the Israeli settler colonization is fully aware that the spread of the Hebrew language is done only by violating the Arabic language, in order to ensure their dominance over the Palestinians. Because language has a great role in spreading influence, its means to strengthen the sense of belonging to a thought and adopt a certain ideology. Imposing the language of the settler is the main entrance to break the identity of the indigenous”. (personal interview with an informant C1, June 11, 2018).

Confirming the foregoing opinion, another informant corroborates that detective expressed concern about the impact of Hebrew on their Arabic due to the policies of Israeli settlement colonialism. He continues that:

“A societal change has begun to take place in the eastern part of the city of Beit al-Maqqdis. We're talking about societal change which happens in stages. And for several decades to feel the real change and I feel that there is a change in the youth of Jerusalem, as happened in Algeria. And what happened to the influence of the French language which also became the tyrant in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem became the Hebrew tyrant. Even our young people hear Hebrew songs using Hebrew words. There is a Zionist pressure in terms of education, so that the city is emptied of the correct method of education until illiteracy is spread. Ignorance is widespread and therefore it is easy to overthrow Jerusalemites by the Israeli colonial authorities. This leads to the reduction of the quality of education intentionally and distort the educational system to undermine societal security.” (personal interview with an informant B4, AUGUST 9, 2018).

The foregoing opinions of the informants from the semi-structured interviews are in tandem with the literature and reports on the humanitarian situation of the Palestinian. Arguably, imposing the Zionist curriculum as a study on the Palestinians of the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem to completely alienate them, and skinning them from their Arab-Islamic assertions in the full sense of the word. These methods do not call for pride and jihad at all, these omitted completely focusing about civilization what we call social or national, where they are taught the establishment of Israeli

settlement colonialism. And point out that their capital is the united Jerusalem and from the Temple Mount instead of Al-Aqsa Mosque. Of course, our students and our children enter the fourth-grade son, and the fifth after ten years graduating from the baccalaureate, enter the university and will be completely estrangement for his Palestinian family. They are fighting us, and they succeeded in some schools through contracting, they came to people interested in money, and they opened these schools. They sacrifice huge money on them, where they invested thousands of dollars, in return for the generation to generation studying these curricula, and thus spoiled it in one way or another.

#### *Influencing social relations among Palestinians*

Because of the different situations and contexts in which the Palestinians live, this leads us to the question of the existence of a comprehensive national identity for Palestinians because they live as separate Palestinian groups within political, social and economic environments. And cultural differences due to the isolation imposed on each other, the severance of social relations between Palestinians residing in the West Bank, Gaza and for residents in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem (Qasis, 2014). Israeli settlement colonial measures violate moral rights and the humanity of the Palestinians because the conflict stems from negative (Shalhoub, 2014). that is, the exclusion of the other and demolished their house to prevent Palestinians from communicating with one another because of the fragmentation imposed on them (Shihade, 2016). They suffer from the siege, the separation wall, and other obstacles to geographical communication (Farinacci, 2017). So, it is important to understand the nature of relations between Palestinians and whether they have been reduced by these obstacles imposed by Israeli settlement colonialism on them. Which tore up family relations, which are a tool for maintaining national cohesion, sustaining social relations, and communication. Social communication is an important issue for communities as a need, and their right, especially with family and friends, focusing on the importance of face-to-face communication, as a human right and to promote unity among people (Al-Sakka, Majeed, Zeidan, Shamoun, Daher, & Ladadwa, 2016).

According to the interviews conducted in the course of this study, all the informants from category A, all informants from category B, all informants from category C, confirms that, Social relations help in the formation of a unified identity which indicates the importance of its formation with Palestinians from different geographical areas and the importance of strengthening their relations with others. To establish Zionist settlement colonialism which touched Palestinian society as a whole and led to the development of Palestinian identity in different places and directions. While answering the question with regards to the effects of Israeli colonial settlement on the identity of a Palestinian in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem, one informant from category B (NGOs) asserts that:

“The rate of contact with Palestinians living in the West Bank is low due to roadblocks, the policy of entering cars so the distance of 10 minutes takes two hours. Because of the roadblocks and the traffic, this has negatively affected our relationship with other Palestinians” (personal interview with an informant B2, June 11, 2018).

The policies of separation followed by Israeli settlement colonialism led to the development of the Palestinians in their own framework. Even the question of marrying Palestinians from the West Bank needs to be reunited. This is what limits the marriage from abroad and the mixing of families, as another B3 informant interviewed noted:

“Difficult communication between the Palestinians of the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem and the residents of the West Bank due to the policies of separation, and unjust laws of Israeli settlement colonialism, to prevent the residents of the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem from marrying someone who does not have a Jerusalem identity card. Many problems were born for us and forbidding intermarriage relations between us and other Palestinians” (personal interview with an informant B3, June 11, 2018).

The foundations of Israeli colonial settlement for a discriminatory regime between the areas in which Palestinians live with different privileges and identity cards. Different political and legal situation, there are areas of entry and exit specific to the population of each region. This applies to checkpoints, roadblocks and the construction of the separation wall, which aim to divide the areas where Palestinians live. To different areas with special privileges, these divisions generated a feeling among Palestinians that they differ in privileges from other Palestinians. Especially in the issue of ease of movement between the territories, these imaginary imaginations have produced social and cultural stereotypes among Palestinians living in the divided Palestinian areas. Who were assimilated into social identities that divide them?

#### V. CONCLUSION

The study identified that the impact of colonial policies on the identity of Palestinians in the eastern part of Beit al-Maqqdis. In line with this, this research identifies about three effects on the identity of Palestinians in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem including Identity crisis, impact on language, impact on Palestinian relations. However, these recommendations have been offered based on the findings of the research obtained from interviewing from experts, NGOs and Indigenous people. They have significantly major effects on identity crisis that has been facing including contributed by expressing their opinions with regard.

#### VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) This study suggests that future studies should focus on the issue of identity crisis and its measurement in the eastern part of the city of Jerusalem because it is an important issue but is being withheld.

- 2) The Palestinians were only talking about their relationship with the West Bank Palestinians and the Palestinians of the Gaza Strip were completely absent.
- 3) Future study should find a legal solution to the issue of Palestinian citizenship in the eastern part of the city of Beit Al-Maqdis.

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