



**THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN**

**And**

**THE STATE OF PALESTINE**

**STATUS REPORT**

**THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE OLD CITY OF  
JERUSALEM AND ITS WALLS**

Presented to

**THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE**

**April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

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# INTRODUCTION

## A- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Status Report focuses on Israeli violations and aggressions against Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif, the Holy Sites and many other historic places in the Old City of Jerusalem and Its Walls during the last two years, as well as explaining conservation projects conducted by the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf.

In order to create a pretext for Israeli control of Jerusalem's heritage sites and landscape, and to justify Israeli expansion policy, the Israeli authorities continue to violate the historic *status quo* at Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif in the following manners:

- (1) unprecedented escalation in the number of Jewish extremists storming Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif;
- (2) allowing Jewish prayer and rituals;
- (3) regulating barefooted extremists into Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif;
- (4) substantial increase in the IOA's uniformed and armed police and special forces incursions into Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif;
- (5) allowing non-Muslim tourism without permission and coordination with the Jerusalem Awqaf;
- (6) restrictions on Muslim access to and worship at Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif;
- (7) physical abuse and arrest of Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf employees;
- (8) interference by IAA and Israeli police in the work of the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf;
- (9) obstruction of Hashemite renovation projects at Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif;
- (10) closure of Bab Al-Rahmah (the Golden Gate);
- (11) closure and confiscation of Matharat Bab Al-Ghawanmeh;
- (12) conversion of Ribat Al-Kurd into a mini wailing wall;
- (13) damage to the structure and furniture of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif;
- (14) incitement by Israeli officials and Knesset Members against Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif

Furthermore, Israeli authorities continue to violate the historic *status quo* against the surroundings of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif in the following manners:

- (1) excavations and digging around Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif;
- (2) excavation and removal of the Magharbeh Gate Pathway;
- (3) Judaization of names of pathways leading to Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif and many streets and sites in and around the Old City of Jerusalem;
- (4) confiscation of Tankaziyyah School and the conversion of the Islamic Shari'yah Court into a police station;
- (5) confiscation of parts of Al-Rahmah Cemetery;
- (6) prohibition of Muslims burying their dead in Al-Rahmah Cemetery;

- (7) changes to the authentic shape and function of Bab Al-Asbat Pathway;
- (8) increase in number of IOA surveillance cameras over the roofs of buildings at Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif

However, and in spite of the proliferation of challenges presented by the actions of the Israeli authorities, the Hashemite Fund and the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf continue in their efforts to restore and maintain Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif, including renovations of various external and internal aspects of the Dome of the Rock, the Qibli Mosque / Al-Jame' Al-Aqsa, and the Marwani Mosque

Furthermore, churches and Christian Holy Sites in Jerusalem have experienced significant aggressions at the hands of the Israeli authorities, including aggressive taxation policies, confiscation of properties and pressure upon Christian communities to leave the Holy Land.

In addition, the period 2017-2019 has marked an intensive period of Judaization of the historic character of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls, in the course of which many non-Jewish historic sites have either been removed entirely or converted into Jewish prayer spaces. In February 2018, cranes and other building equipment were installed at the location designated for the Judaization project “Beit Haliba”, designed to alter the shape of Al-Buraq Plaza. Furthermore, extensive underground tunnelling beneath the Magharbeh Gate Pathway has been undertaken, involving the construction of enormous wooden platforms/pathways on the pretext of needing separate prayer spaces for Jews. The IOA also installed three metal/concrete security towers at the Damascus Gate at Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif.

These (and many other) violations carried out by the Israeli authorities are set out in greater detail in this Status Report, which concludes with Jordan and Palestine requesting the World Heritage Centre to present this Status Report in its entirety to all members of UNESCO, to upload this report to the website of the World Heritage Centre, and to take all possible measures to pressure Israel to stop its constant attempts to alter the *status quo* of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Holy Sites.

## **B- STATUS QUO ARRANGEMENTS OF JERUSALEM HOLY SITES**

### **1852**

There is now a well-recognised arrangement that is often referred to as the ‘Status Quo Arrangement of the Holy Places’. This arrangement was originally established in 1852, when the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Majid issued an edict (firman) freezing claims of possession by religious communities over the Christian holy places in Jerusalem and Bethlehem and forbidding any construction or alterations to their existing status.

### **1856-1878**

Subsequently, this arrangement was internationally recognised at the 1856 Conference of Paris (at the end of the Crimean War) and through the 1878 Treaty of Berlin (between European Powers and the Ottomans). Article 62 of the Treaty of Berlin stated that: “it is well understood that no alterations can be made to the

status quo in the Holy Places”. Article 62 extended that arrangement to include all – not only Christian – holy places.

### **1920**

Following the defeat of the Ottomans and the partitioning of their Empire after World War I, the British Mandate authorities in Palestine (1920-1947) upheld the status quo arrangement, and included Al-Buraq (Western) Wall at Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif in Jerusalem and Rachel’s Tomb on the outskirts of Bethlehem.

### **1928**

The first major violation of the status quo arrangement occurred in September 1928, when a group of Jewish worshippers set up chairs at the Al-Buraq Wall to separate men and women performing Yom Kippur prayers, triggering one of the first periods of serious unrest in Jerusalem. A subsequent White Paper, submitted to the British government in November 1928, reiterated the rights of Muslims to Al-Buraq Wall. Although unsuccessful in their search for documentary evidence of Jewish rights to Al-Buraq Wall, the Zionist movement continued to demand that it be expropriated for the Jews.

### **1929-1930**

A dispute over prayer arrangements at Al-Buraq Wall escalated and, in August 1929, protests turned violent and resulted in the deaths of dozens of Jews and Arabs, and the injuring of hundreds more. The conclusions of the subsequent British Inquiry Commission, presented in December 1930, included the following:

“Subsequent to the investigation it has made, the Commission herewith declares that the ownership of the Wall, as well as the possession of it and of those parts of its surroundings that are here in question, accrues to the Moslems. The Wall itself as being an integral part of the Haram-esh-Sherif area is Moslem property. From the inquiries conducted by the Commission, partly in the Sharia Court and partly through the hearing of witnesses' evidence, it has emerged that the Pavement in front of the Wall, where the Jews perform their devotions, is also Moslem property.”

<https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/59A92104ED00DC468525625B00527FEA>

### **1967**

Despite this, in the course of the 1967 War, Israel forcibly seized control of Al-Buraq Wall, confiscated the key to the Al-Magharbeh Gate of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif, and destroyed the Al-Magharbeh Quarter, located in front of Al-Buraq Wall. In place of the Al-Magharbeh Quarter was created a large prayer plaza for Jewish worshippers, which was gradually extended from an area of 66m<sup>2</sup> (22m x 3m) to an area of some 6300m<sup>2</sup> (90m x 70m).

Immediately after the 1967 War, Israel nominally recognised the historical status and religious significance for Muslims of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif, as well as the custodianship of Jordan (i.e. the responsibility for administration and religious arrangements) in respect of the site. Despite this nominal recognition, however, the Israeli authorities have ever since controlled entry to the Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif’s gates and can enter (or cause others to enter) at will. Moreover, successive Israeli governments and their police and military forces have made efforts to undermine the internationally-recognised status quo.

### **1981**

International efforts have been made to protect the status and integrity of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif, including through the United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organisation (“UNESCO”). In 1981, the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage site upon the request of the Government of Jordan <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/repext81.htm#148>. In 1982, UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee decided to inscribe the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls on the List of World Heritage in Danger, thereby highlighting the threats and risks to the cultural heritage of the Old City sites <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/5284> . Since that time, the World Heritage Committee, its Executive Board and the UNESCO General Conference have taken tens of decisions which call on Israel, as the occupying Power, to stop the continuing violations against the heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/148/documents/> . Israel, however, has continued to attempt to change Jerusalem’s pre-1967 status quo.

#### **1994**

Until the Oslo “Negotiations” Process in the early 1990s, the Jordanian Awqaf’s administration of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif and the Waqf properties attached to it was relatively respected and stable. Article 9 of the Jordan-Israel Peace Treaty of 26 October 1994, <http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/peacetreaty.html> , stipulated that:

“Israel respects the present special role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Muslim holy shrines in Jerusalem” and that “when negotiations on the permanent status will take place, Israel will give high priority to the Jordanian historic role in these shrines”.

With the Oslo process, however, Jewish extremist elements came to the foreground, who, fearing that Israel would abandon Jewish worship rights to Al-Buraq Wall, pledged to prevent this.

#### **2000**

These extremist elements have become increasingly more vocal, powerful and mainstream in the past few decades. Since the second Palestinian Intifada, which erupted in September 2000 after the provocative visit of then Likud opposition leader Ariel Sharon to Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif, and against the wider backdrop of the failure of the Oslo process, there have been thousands of Israeli police and soldiers deployed in and around the Old City of Jerusalem (including inside Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif).

#### **2003-2004**

During the course of the Second Intifada, Israel constructed a wall in and around East Jerusalem on the pretext that it was necessary for security purposes. On 8 December 2003, the General Assembly of the United Nations requested the International Court of Justice to give an advisory opinion on the question of the legal consequences of the construction of that wall by Israel as an occupying Power. On 9 July 2004, the International Court of Justice delivered its advisory opinion, <http://www.icj-cij.org/files/case-related/131/131-20040709-ADV-01-00-EN.pdf> . The International Court of Justice was of the opinion that the construction by Israel of that wall was contrary to international law as it impeded the Palestinian people’s right to self-determination and further constituted a breach of Israel’s obligations under international humanitarian law and human rights instruments. Israel continues to fail to comply with the

findings of the International Court of Justice that it is obliged to respect the international law obligations that it has violated.

### **2013**

In furtherance of the ongoing and ceaseless efforts to maintain the status and integrity of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif, on 31 March 2013, His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan and His Excellency Dr. Mahmoud Abbas of Palestine signed an Agreement on the Holy Places in Jerusalem, <http://en.lpj.org/2013/04/04/full-text-of-the-jordanian-palestinian-agreement-on-holy-places-in-jerusalem/>, which recalled the “unique religious importance, to all Muslims”, of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif.

## **C- ISRAELI VIOLATIONS AGAINST THE STATUS OF JERUSALEM**

Israeli unilateral archaeological excavations continue taking place in in the Old City of Jerusalem and its surroundings at an unprecedented rate. The main purpose of these illegal excavations in form of practical violations is to create facts on the ground, control the Jerusalem heritage sites and landscape, and to justify the expansion policy of Israeli Judaization of Jerusalem’s heritage and its narrative. Most excavations are concentrated in the Old City and its environs and include overt and covert salvage tunneling and excavations. Israel claims these are restoration and renovation works aiming at supporting the conservation of the Jerusalem heritage. In fact, most works are imposing Jewish historical narrative, while disregarding, undermining and many times eliminating evidence of other civilizations.

Renaming monuments, sites, streets and valleys continue at many neighborhoods in East Jerusalem. The worst violation against the heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem is the blatant removal of non-Jewish remains. Most of these works are funded by the Israeli government-supported settler organizations, which administer important archaeological sites and develop them in line with their ideological goals. This allows such organizations to effectively redraft the history of Jerusalem and control the narrative that is presented to the visitors of the city.

Settler and extreme organizations, mandated by the Israeli government and the Israeli Antiquities Authority (IAA), also continue digging a network of tunnels beneath the Old City of Jerusalem in order to facilitate the movement of tourists around the Old City from one site to another in tours, which aim at presenting most of Jerusalem under the ground, as exclusively Jewish history.

The abovementioned violations will be detailed in the following chapters of this report. These violations are policies that are changing the status of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls, thereby highlighting the threats to the cultural heritage of the Old City sites.

**The sixteen decisions of the UNESCO Executive Board** (185 EX/Decision 14, 187 EX/Decision 11, 189 EX/Decision 8, 190 EX/Decision 13, 192 EX/Decision 11, 194 EX/Decision 5.I.D, 195 EX/Decision 9, 196 EX/Decision 26, 197 EX/Decision 32, 199 EX/Dec.19.1, 200 EX/Decision 25, 201 EX/Decision 30, 202 EX/Decision 38, 204 EX/Decision 25 and 205 EX/Decision 28, 206 EX/Decision 32) **and the ten World Heritage Committee decisions** (34 COM/7A.20, 35 COM/7A.22, 36 COM/7A.23, 37 COM/7A.26, 38 COM/7A.4, 39 COM/7A.27, 40 COM/7A.13, 41 COM/7A.36, 42 COM/7A.21 and 43 COM/7A.22 recalled almost the all the relevant legal references, including the provisions of the four Geneva Conventions (1949) and their additional Protocols (1977), the 1907 Hague Regulations on Land Warfare, the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954) and its additional Protocols, the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970) and the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), the inscription of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls at the request of Jordan on the World Heritage List (1981) and on the List of World Heritage in Danger (1982), and the recommendations, resolutions and decisions of UNESCO on the protection of cultural heritage, as well as resolutions and decisions of UNESCO relating to Jerusalem.

The Old City is an integral part of occupied East Jerusalem and internationally recognized as such. Since June 1967, the UNSC and the UNGA have frequently condemned the Israeli violations against Jerusalem and called on Israel to stop them. Similar to the Israeli Knesset legislations in 2017, when Israel passed its own law in 1980, annexing East Jerusalem, the international community responded immediately through UN Security Council resolutions 476 and 478 *inter alia*:

“Recalling its resolution 476 (1980),

Reaffirming again that the acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible,



Deeply concerned over the enactment of a "basic law" in the Israeli Knesset proclaiming a change in the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, with its implications for peace and security,

Noting that Israel has not complied with resolution 476 (1980),

Reaffirming its determination to examine practical ways and means, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, to secure the full implementation of its resolution 476 (1980), in the event of non-compliance by Israel,

1. Censures in the strongest terms the enactment by Israel of the "basic law" on Jerusalem and the refusal to comply with relevant Security Council resolutions;

**2. Affirms that the enactment of the "basic law" by Israel constitutes a violation of international law and does not affect the continued application of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since June 1967, including Jerusalem;**

**3. Determines that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, which have altered or purport to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, and in particular the recent "basic law" on Jerusalem, are null and void and must be rescinded forthwith;**

4. Affirms also that this action constitutes a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East;

5. Decides not to recognize the "basic law" and such other actions by Israel that, as a result of this law, seek to alter the character and status of Jerusalem and calls upon:

(a) All Member States to accept this decision;

(b) Those States that have established diplomatic missions at Jerusalem to withdraw such missions from the Holy City;"

**After 37 years, 2017 witnessed a knockback to the Jerusalem Status Quo mainly due to the fact that many Israeli legislations tightened legal grip on Occupied East Jerusalem,** most important legislations were the Knesset's February 2<sup>nd</sup> legislation, which requires special two-thirds plenum support to approve relinquishing any portion of the city to non-Israeli power under any future peace deal; and the Israeli Ministers' approve of Jewish state bill states that an Israeli Jew has exclusive right "to preserve his culture, heritage, language and identity," and the right to realize self-determination "is unique to the Jewish people."

The **majority of the United Nations members rebuked the above changes of Jerusalem status,** when the United Nations General Assembly voted 128 in favor to 9 against, with 35 abstentions, for a resolution demanding Israel, the Occupying Power, to rescind from all illegal decisions and actions that change the

status of Occupied East Jerusalem, as clearly reaffirmed in the text of the following UNGA decision ES-10/L.22:

### **Status of Jerusalem**

*The General Assembly,*

*Reaffirming* its relevant resolutions, including resolution 72/15 of 30 November 2017 on Jerusalem,

*Reaffirming also* the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 252 (1968) of 21 May 1968, 267 (1969) of 3 July 1969, 298 (1971) of 25 September 1971, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 446 (1979) of 22 March 1979, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980, 476 (1980) of 30 June 1980, 478 (1980) of 20 August 1980 and 2334 (2016) of 23 December 2016,

*Guided by* the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming, inter alia, the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force,

*Bearing in mind* the specific status of the Holy City of Jerusalem and, in particular, the need for the protection and preservation of the unique spiritual, religious and cultural dimensions of the city, as foreseen in relevant United Nations resolutions,

*Stressing* that Jerusalem is a final status issue to be resolved through negotiations in line with relevant United Nations resolutions,

*Expressing*, in this regard, its deep regret at recent decisions concerning the status of Jerusalem,

1. *Affirms* that **any decisions and actions which purport to have altered the character, status or demographic composition of the Holy City of Jerusalem have no legal effect, are null and void and must be rescinded in compliance with relevant resolutions of the Security Council**, and in this regard calls upon all States to refrain from the establishment of diplomatic missions in the Holy City of Jerusalem, pursuant to Security Council resolution 478 (1980);

2. *Demands* that all States comply with Security Council resolutions regarding the Holy City of Jerusalem, and not recognize any actions or measures contrary to those resolutions;

3. *Reiterates its call* for the reversal of the negative trends on the ground that are imperiling the two-States solution and for the intensification and acceleration of international and regional efforts and support aimed at achieving, without delay, a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, the Madrid terms of reference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative<sup>1</sup> and the Quartet road map, and an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967;

**The Old City of Jerusalem and Its Walls, World Heritage Site  
in Danger since 1982**

**80% is Muslim or Christian Waqf Property**



*Figure 1: The Old City of Jerusalem and Its Walls, View from South Western Corner*

## **CHAPTER 1: ISRAELI VIOLATIONS AGAINST AL-AQSA MOSQUE / AI-HARAM AL-SHARIF**

### **A- DEFINITION OF THE AL-AQSA MOSQUE / AI-HARAM AL-SHARIF**

“Al-Aqsa Mosque” and “Al-Haram al-Sharif” are identical terms. They *must* be consistently referred to jointly as the “Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram al-Sharif”. It is the mosque that God Himself, Exalted be He, named “Al-Aqsa Mosque” in the first verse of *Surat Al-Isra*’ (The Holy Qur’an, *Al-Isra*’ 17:1). It is Islam’s First *Qiblah* (direction of prayer) and it is the Mosque to which Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) ordered Muslims to make pilgrimage as one of the three holiest mosques in Islam. The Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram al-Sharif is a sacred site of unutterable significance to Muslims all over the world.

His Majesty King Abdullah II and His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas in Amman signed the “Jordanian-Palestinian Agreement to Jointly Defend Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif,” on 31 March 2013. The agreement defines Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram al-Sharif, in the Preamble at paragraph C, as the 144 Dunums, i.e., 144,000 m<sup>2</sup>, with lengths of 491m west, 462m east, 310m north and 281m south). The Al-Aqsa Mosque includes the Qibli Mosque of al-Aqsa, the Mosque of the Dome of the Rock and all its mosques, buildings, walls, courtyards, attached areas over and beneath the ground and the Waqf properties tied-up to Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif, to its environs or to its pilgrims.<sup>1</sup>

### **The Omari Pact and the Churches’ Definition of Al-Aqsa Mosque**

The General Assembly of the Middle East Council of Churches assembled in Amman, September 8<sup>th</sup> 2016, including the major four Church Families: The Eastern Orthodox Family, the Orthodox Family, the Catholic Family and the Anglican Family. Their final statement reaffirmed:

“The General Assembly acknowledged the role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and its historic efforts in the Hashemite custody of the Christian and Islamic holy places in the Holy Land, especially in Jerusalem, for the Church of the Holy Sepulcher belongs to Christians just as Al-

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<sup>1</sup> See the Agreement to Jointly Defend Al Masjid Al Aqsa signed by His Majesty King Abdullah II and His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas in Amman on 31 March 2013, Preamble, paragraph C.  
[http://kingabdullah.jo/index.php/en\\_US/news/view/id/10779.html](http://kingabdullah.jo/index.php/en_US/news/view/id/10779.html)

Aqsa Mosque and Al-Haram Al-Sharif belong to Muslims, as this matter is of great importance in establishing the foundations of the dialogue of life in that blessed land.”

During the Christian religious leaders and figures Christmas’ assembly at the Baptism Site, in the presence of His Majesty King Abdullah II on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2017 and in the presence of His Majesty and President Mahmoud Abbas in Amman on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018, all Churches reaffirmed the same abovementioned principle of coexistence. Greek Orthodox Patriarch Theophilos III (2017) stated the following:

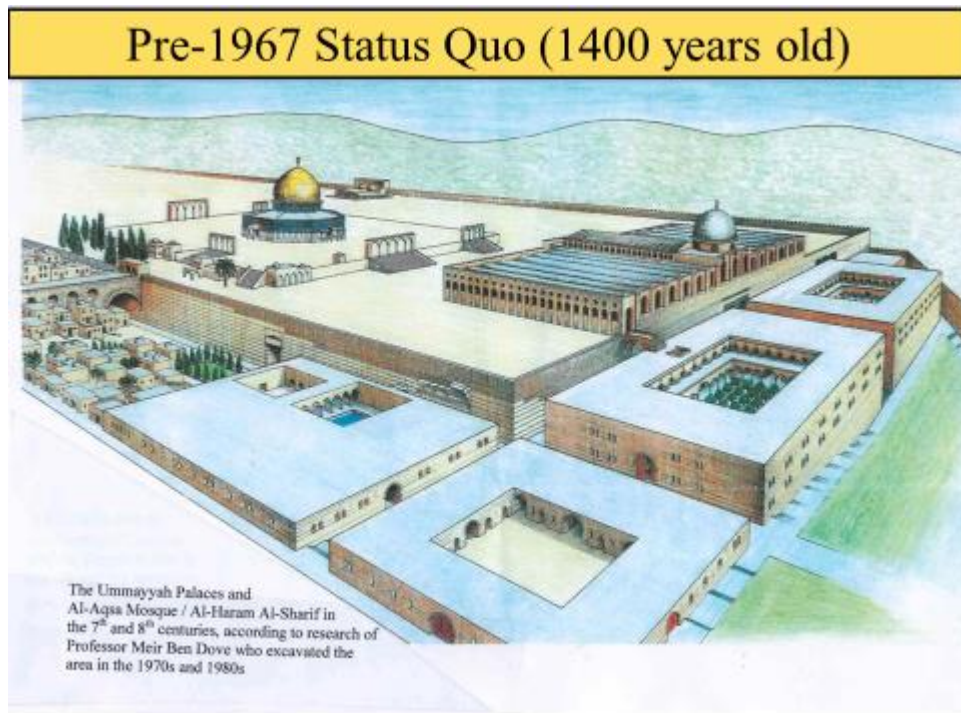
“Your Majesty King Abdullah II Bin Al Hussein, Custodian of Islamic and Christian holy sites, and the protector of the holy sites in Jerusalem. I come today, carrying from the land of Nativity and Resurrection, the land of Al Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock, enormous gratitude. I stand witness to your great devotion to Jerusalem, as the rightful custodian over its holy sites. For us, Your Majesty, you represent an icon of love and peace, which was embodied when the Patriarch of the Holy City, Saint Sophronius, met with Caliph Al Faruq Omar Bin Al Khattab, bringing together the first Christian-Muslim spiritual encounter in Jerusalem.

**Today, we emphasize the most important principles of the Pact of Omar: that the Church of the Holy Sepulcher is for Christians and Al Aqsa Mosque/Al Haram Al Sharif is for Muslims. Based on this fact, the Churches of Jerusalem will not hesitate to protect Islamic holy sites, just as the Jerusalem Awqaf protects our safety and property whenever we are threatened.”**

The same speakers who affirmed Al-Aqsa is for Muslims and the Holy Sepulcher is for Christians reaffirmed the importance of Jerusalem for the three monotheistic religions. Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa's remarks (2017) stressed the following:

“ Your Majesty, The Holy Father, Pope Francis, publicly expressed his deep concern by making a heartfelt appeal to ensure that, I quote: “everyone is committed to respect the status quo of the city, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. Jerusalem is a unique city, sacred for Jews, Christians and Muslims, who in her venerate the Holy Places of their respective religions, and has a special vocation to peace.” End of quotation from the Pope Francis .

You, together with the Hashemite family, are the Custodian of the Holy Places of the city and of the communities that live and express themselves in those places. While we thank you for your testimony, which is one of the few sources of consolation in this tormented Middle East, we hope that you can have a voice at all international seats like the UN and UNESCO, and in chancelleries of the various countries.”

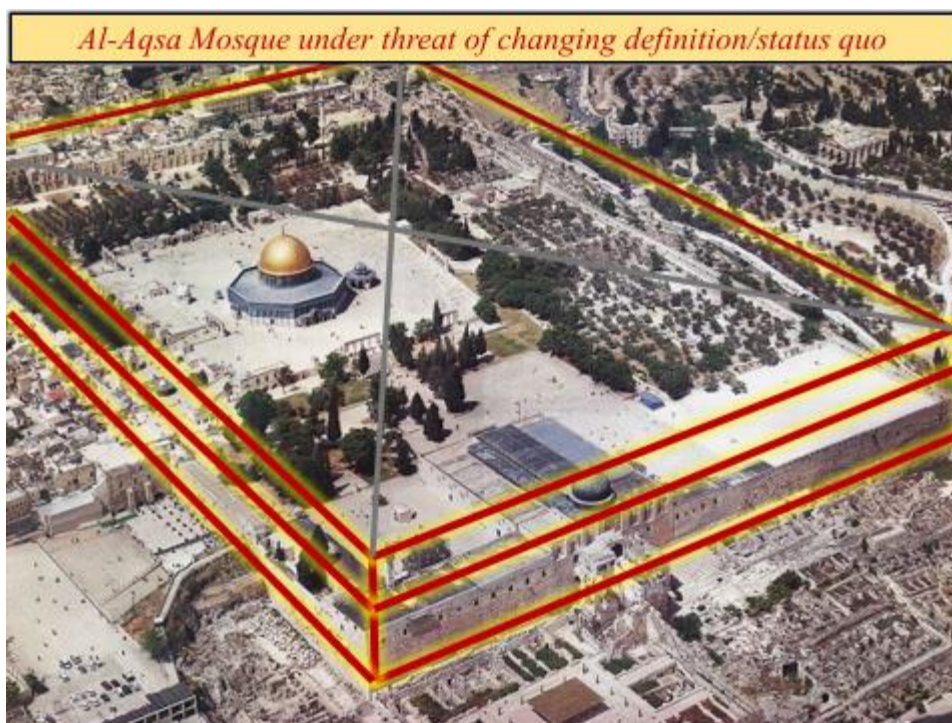


*Figure 2: Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif during the Umayyad period, third Islamic Era (7<sup>th</sup> Century CE)*

#### **B- PRE-1967 STATUS QUO AT AL-AQSA MOSQUE / AL-HARAM AL-SHARIF**

The historic pre-1967 *Status Quo* regarding the regulations at Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif is the situation that prevailed up until September 2000, under which the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf Department exercised exclusive authority over Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif, and its mandate extended to all affairs relating to the unrestricted administration of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif, including maintenance, restoration, and the regulation of access of Muslim worshippers and non-Muslim visitors. The Peace Treaty of 1994 between Jordan and Israel respected this Status Quo expressed in article 9 of the treaty, “as the special role of Jordan” at Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif.





*Figure 3: Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif*

The *Status Quo* regarding the Occupied City of Jerusalem, its heritage and Holy Sites is the pre-1967 situation. The clarification of pre-2000 regulations below is made without prejudice to the broader pre-1967 *Status Quo* and the administrative and property rights of the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf, including and without limitations the possession of the key of Al-Magharbeh Gate of AL-Aqsa and other historic rights and remains confiscated by the IOA from Waqf properties. The United Nations General Assembly, the Security Council and the UNESCO, in many resolutions since 1967, have declared the measures taken by Israel, the Occupying Power, to change the status of Occupied Jerusalem as invalid. For example, the Security Council resolution 252 (1968) considered “that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, which tend to change the legal status of Jerusalem are invalid and cannot change that status”. Israel was urgently called upon “to retract all such measures already taken and to desist forthwith from taking any further action which tends to change the status of Jerusalem”. The UNSC Resolution 2334, taken on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016, *reaffirmed* its relevant resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 446 (1979), 452 (1979), 465 (1980), 476 (1980), 478 (1980), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), and 1850 (2008); all of these resolutions assure Israel is an Occupying Power and that any actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, to impose its laws, jurisdiction, narrative and administration on the City of Jerusalem, are illegal and therefore null and void and have no validity whatsoever.

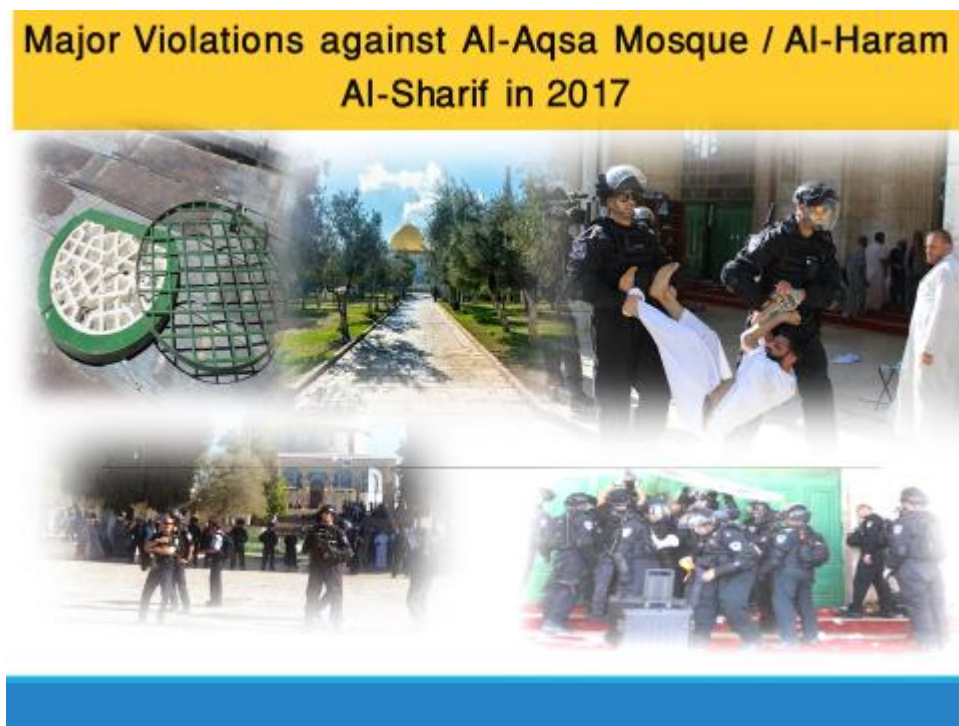
Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif is part of the Occupied Territories of Palestine and any change to its Status Quo is null and void.

The following clarification includes the main elements of the pre-September 2000 *Status Quo* regarding the administration of the access of non-Muslim tourists to Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif:

- a. Access of non-Muslims was subject to the approval by the Jordanian Awqaf Department through a prior written request to the Jordanian Awqaf Department.
- b. Non-Muslim prayers were not permitted in Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif nor were prayer tools / instruments allowed in.
- c. Deployment of armed personnel in Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif was not allowed.
- d. The Jordanian Awqaf Department had the authority to regulate entry and access to Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif for non-Muslims, which included determining:
  1. The respectful dressing, conduct, and behavior in Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif.
  2. The security measures that were intended to preserve order in Al-Aqsa Mosque/ Al-Haram Al-Sharif.
  3. The security escort in Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif was exclusive for the Jordanian Awqaf Department.
  4. Tourists who breached visit regulations were put on a black list and were prohibited from entering in the future.
  5. The time, route, and duration of visits were predetermined by the Jordanian Awqaf Department;
    - Size of Jewish tourist groups (usually three and not exceeding five).
    - The route of the visits. (The route was predetermined by the Jordanian Awqaf Department, usually 150 meters in each direction).
    - The frequency of the visits.



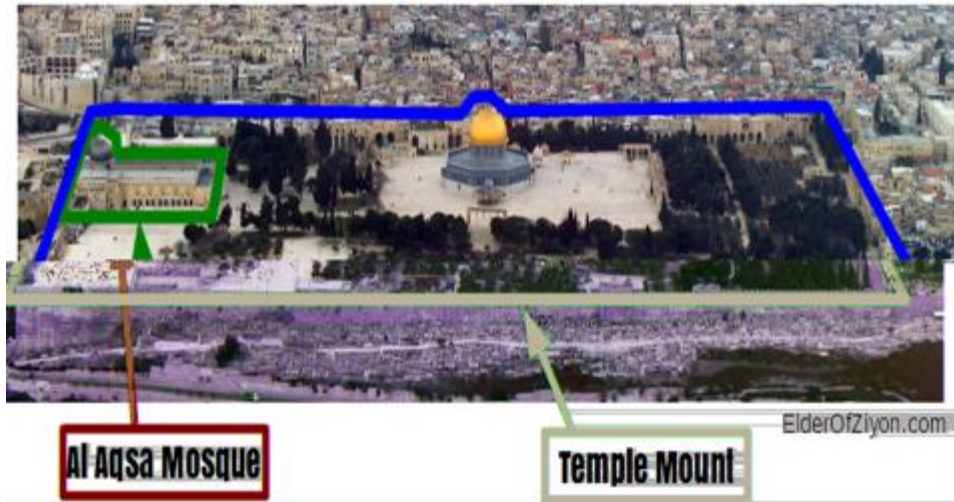
C-- ISRAELI VIOLATIONS AGAINST *STATUS QUO* OF AL-AQSA MOSQUE / AL-HARAM AL-SHARIF



*Figure 4: 2017/2018 records of Israeli violations against Al-Aqsa*

Reduced definition of Al-Aqsa by Israeli MFA  
Nov2014, the Dome of the Rock is not a Mosque

**The Al Aqsa Mosque is not the same as the Temple Mount**



*Figure 5: Israeli aggressive definition of Al-Aqsa Mosque*

In a flagrant violation against International Law, International Humanitarian Law, the Jordan–Israel Peace Treaty of 1994, Hague conventions and UNESCO decisions, Israeli Occupation Authorities (IOA) continued its changing of the pre-1967 authentic *Status Quo* of the function and shape of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif and its surroundings. Among the major violations against Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif are the following:

a. **Unprecedented escalation in number of Jewish Extremists Storming Al-Aqsa:** JJA records a clear escalation in the number of extremist intruders: from 2915 intruders in 2012, 11878 in 2014, 14,806 in 2016, 25630 in 2017 to 29801 in 2018. The extremists' incursions increased 16% from 2017 and the incursions of special occasions increased by 28% from 2017. Jewish extremists, protected by Israeli armed Special Forces and police, accelerated their storming into Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif almost on a daily basis during 2017 and 2018. These aggressions of storming Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif led to many injuries, abuse of Awqaf employees and the ban of hundreds of Muslims from access to Al-Aqsa. The aggressions, attempting to impose the Israeli right wing policy of Judaization of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif, threaten the historic function and identity of the mosque. The IOA also continued the violation of December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016, of extending the time set for Jewish incursions by a daily

additional hour. Instead of starting at 7:30 a.m. and ending at 10:00 a.m., incursions started at 7:00 a.m. and ended at 10:30 a.m. Extremists are demanding and threatening to allow incursions also on Saturdays.<sup>2</sup> Israeli officials, such as Minister of Public Security Gilad Erdan made many provocative statements of his pride to register a new record of Jewish incursions into al-Aqsa 4 times than it was 10 years ago.

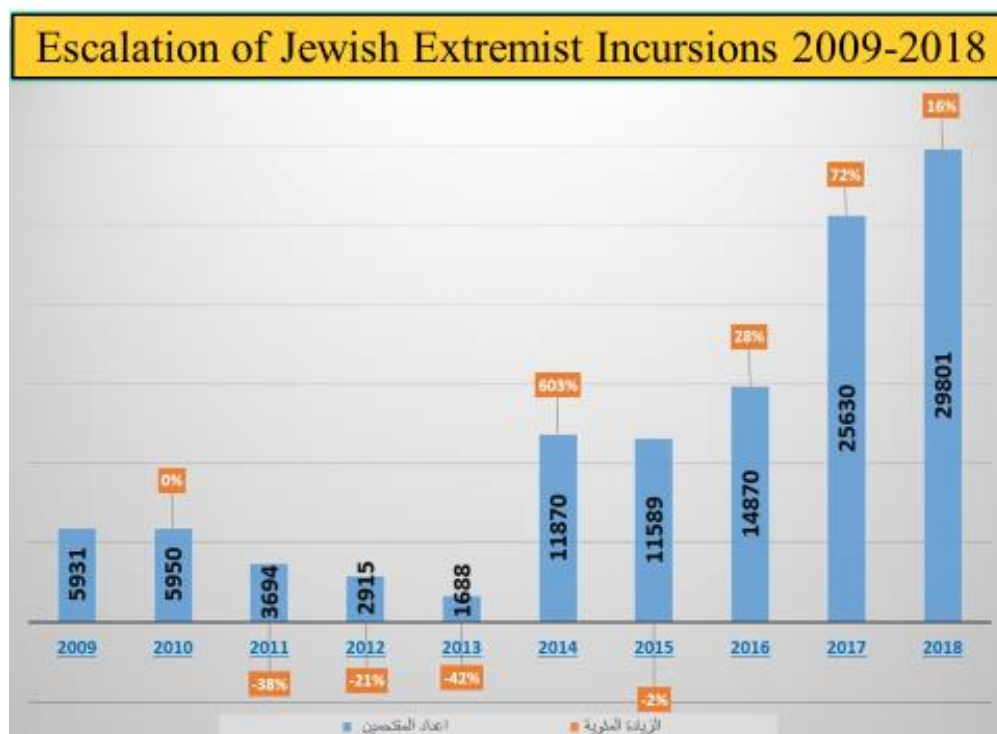


Figure 6: Jewish extremists' escalatory incursions 2009-2018

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.breakingisraelnews.com/136638/first-chief-rabbinate-looking-biblical-justification-jews-pray-temple-mount/>



Largest politicized incursions ever since 1967, groups of 200 to 300 extremists on the so call "Jerusalem Day," May 2018



Figure 7: 2018 Politicization of extremist incursions enlarged groups

Largest Jewish extremist collective prayers and incursions, May 2018. Next to Bab Al-Rahmah



انتهاك: سماح الشرطة الإسرائيلية لمتطرفين يهود باقتحام المسجد الأقصى المبارك بأعداد كبيرة ولباس المخلعات وحفاة الأقدام وأداء المطقوس التلمودية  
المكان: بالقرب من باب الرحمة  
التاريخ: 20.05.2018  
المصدر: دائرة أوقاف القدس وشؤون المسجد الأقصى المبارك

Figure 8: 2018 enlarged collective prayers and incursions

Many Jewish extremists are calling for escalating the incursions to include non-limited groups, unlimited time during all days of the week and to enable the incursions through all gates of Al-Aqsa. Extremists are also expanding the incursions routes. Extremist Rabbis are increasing and pushing for changing the Israeli Chief Rabbinate's ban on Jews to enter Al-Aqsa.

b. **Allowing Jewish prayer and rituals:** The last two years 2017/2018 can be recorded, as the 2 years of daily violation of the Israeli police's tolerating hundreds of incidents of Jewish prayer, rites and religious behavior. The Police defectively keeps justifying this phenomenon by saying that "Jews don't pray; they are just standing"! While the year 2016 witnessed IOA's tolerance with extremists' practice of new forms of Jewish rituals and mainly barefooted extremists' incursions, 2017 marked new forms of prayers standing in groups and praying in military uniform. 2018 witnessed Jewish extremists' incitement of evangelical Christian tourists and religious people to join them in the incursions and to convince them make calls of destruction of al-Aqsa. Radical settlers were keen to push a few Christian extremists to do prostration on the ground of Al-Aqsa, mainly inside the mosque next Bab Al-Rahmah and at Bab Al-Asbat. The Jewish Holidays, mainly Passover, were extremely exploited by practicing rituals at the outside footsteps of al-Aqsa, especially at the Umayyad Palaces and over Muslim graves of the cemetery of Bab Al-Rahmah.

Many Jewish extremist groups have also made Al-Aqsa, as a place for celebrating their private holidays, marriage, age passages and death memorials. All these occasions are attempts to increase the number of Jews who intrude al-Aqsa and to Judaize the mosque's plazas in the minds of many Jews from all over the world. One of the most 2018 blunt aggressions was the frequent attempt to enter in groups carrying the Turah scrolls. In certain occasions such as the Passover 2018, extremist Jews even called on the police to completely evacuate Al-Aqsa of all Muslims in order to occupy it exclusively for Jews. In addition to these expansions of aggressions and in an unprecedented violation, the police allowed Jewish incursions during the last three days of Ramadan Month in 2018.

## Communal Prayers inside Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif (Bab Al-Rahmah)



التصوير: سماح الشرطة الإسرائيلية لأعداد كبيرة من المتطرفين اليهود باقتحام المسجد الأقصى المبارك ( الحرم الشريف بلباس الكفوف واداء الصلوات  
المكان: السور الشرقي بالقرب من باب الرحمة  
التاريخ: 24.5.2017 الساعة: 09:31  
المصدر: دائرة أوقاف القدس وشؤون المسجد الأقصى المبارك

Figure 9: One of 2017 largest prayer gatherings

## 2017 daily police enabling extremists' Jewish prostration movement



التصوير: سماح الشرطة الإسرائيلية لمتطرفين يهود باقتحام المسجد الأقصى المبارك حفاة الأقدام ولباس مكشوفين وقيام اثنين منهم  
بالغناء أو تقسيم على الأرض بوجود الشرطة والمسؤولين لاعتداء.  
المكان: بالقرب من باب الرحمة  
التاريخ: 7.3.2017 الساعة: 09:25  
المصدر: دائرة أوقاف القدس وشؤون المسجد الأقصى المبارك

Figure 10: Police tolerating Jewish rituals next to Bab Al-Rahmah



## Aug 2018, Protecting new forms of Jewish rituals inside Al-Aqsa Mosque?!



Figure 11: 2018 new forms of Jewish rituals inside al-Aqsa (Bab al-Rahmah)

## Israeli police keep claiming they stop any Jewish prayer attempt inside Al-Aqsa?!



Figure 12: Police guarding Jewish prayer close to Bab Al-Majlis, April 2017



Figure 13: As long as there is no protest, police guards Jewish prayer everywhere in Al-Aqsa



Figure 14: Police tolerating Jewish prayer being conducted conveniently



## September 2018, imitating Islamic forms of prayer?!



Figure 15: 2018 Jewish practices imitating forms of Muslim prayers

c. **Regulating barefooted extremists into Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif:** This kind of violation, which was unprecedented in 2015, has been regulated as a daily violation in 2016. The IOA has allowed hundreds of extremist Jews to intrude Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif barefoot in a physical aggression sending a provocative message to Muslims showing that “Jews are inside their holy site” and that all plazas and pathways of the mosque are “the plazas and pathways of Jewish place”. The Jerusalem Awqaf has bluntly protested the violation of these barefoot incursions, and understood it as a flagrant aggression against the definition of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif.



*Figure 16: Extremist Jews storming Al-Aqsa protected by IOA's Special Forces and Police*

Police and special forces protecting incursions and rituals in large groups  
Left: Bab Al-Silsilah  
Right: Bab Al-Qattaneen



Figure 17: Desecration attempts to Judaize the space of Al-Aqsa

Incursion of three extremist MKs (Yehuda Glick, Amir Ohan, Shuli Mu'alem) July 9 2018



Figure 18: Three MKs intruding al-Aqsa together

**4- Ten times increase in IOA's uniformed and armed police and Special Forces incursions into Al-Aqsa:** 2017 / 2018 witnessed an increase of the presence and daily incursion from tens to hundreds of Israeli armed and uniformed police and Special Forces (5410 armed elements in 2018) who intruded Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif in a violation of the sanctity, spirituality and historic character of the Muslim Holy Site. JJA recorded the following violations:

- 1) Joint incursions and cooperation of the heads of Israeli police units and the extremists groups were frequently recorded; Chief Commission of Israeli Police has made many provocative incursions accompanied by a large number of officers.
- 2) The increasing numbers of police and special forces enabled a jump of the extremists groups from 20 to 30 in 2016 to become 80 to 120 in 2017 / 2018;
- 3) The police started to enable more than one Jewish extremist group to intrude Al-Aqsa on the same time;
- 4) The police started to enable Jewish extremists groups to go over the plaza of the Dome of the Rock and to show up Torah scrolls, "manipulated" maps and written instructions, which present Al-Aqsa, as a "Jewish synagogue;"
- 5) The police tolerated the provocative extremists' incursions into Al-Aqsa many times on the same day; their inciting plan is to increase the recorded numbers of daily Jewish intruders;
- 6) In 2017 and for first time since 1967, the police started to enable Jewish extremists' incursions into Al-Aqsa during the last ten days of Ramadan;
- 7) Upon the demand of religious-Zionist groups, the police enabled Ultra-Orthodox Jews to intrude Al-Aqsa in their religious uniform dress;
- 8) Special forces tours inside Al-Aqsa have become daily incursions; more than 5000 soldiers of the special forces entered into Al-Aqsa during 2017 and about 6000 military personnel intruded Al-Aqsa in 2018 apart from the hundreds of daily duty special forces and police.
- 9) The number of police and special forces at each of the gates of Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif increased from 3 and 5 to 15 to 20 soldiers and policemen;
- 10) In an unprecedented violation since 1967, the police has installed two check points at each of Al-Aqsa gates instead of one;
- 11) The police has installed a new check point on top roof of Bab al-Rahmah in 2018, and it has become almost a permanent check point.



12) Directed by the Prime Minister Office, the Israeli police resumed its non-compliance to the Status Quo, which enables Israeli officials and Knesset members to conduct their provocative and incitement incursions into Al-Aqsa. MKs who intrude Al-Aqsa often inflame anger and violence. Minister Uri Areil and MK Glick were the most two official extremists who led the incursions and kept calling on extremist Jews to escalate this violation.



Figure 19: Uniformed police and military personnel intruding Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif



Figure 20: Increased police numbers who protect Jewish extremists' incursions

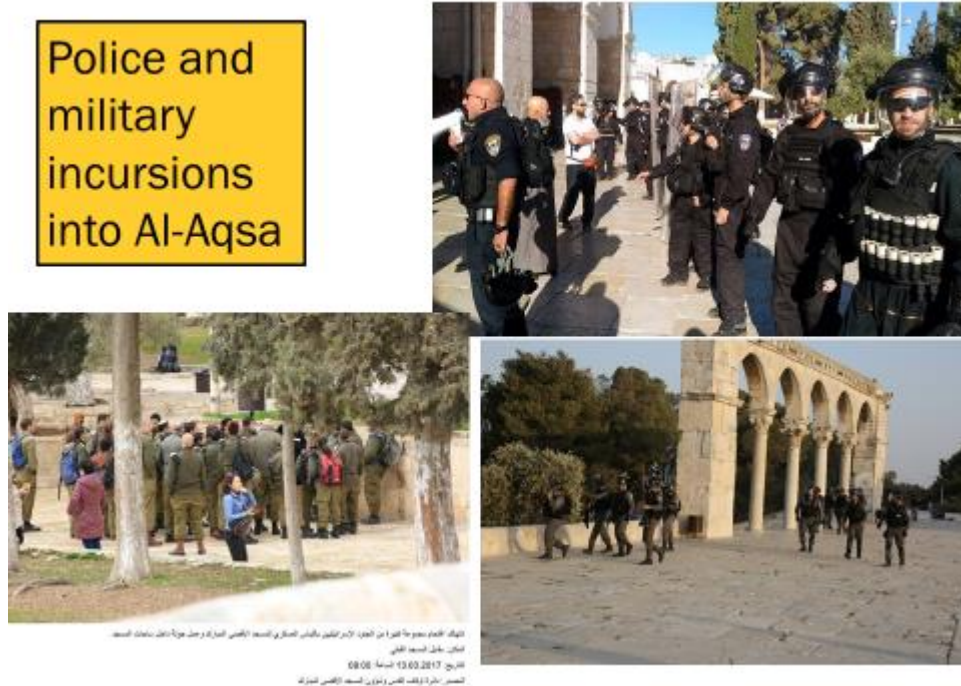


Figure 21: Militarization of Al-Aqsa esplanades

July 22 2018, 150 elements of police and special forces storm al-Aqsa



الانتهاك: تواجد شرطي مكثف من قبل شرطة الاحتلال وقواتها العسكرية الخاصة لتغطية التجمعات المتطرفة فيما يعرف بكنزى خراب الهيكل المزعوم والتي تجاوزت عديدها الـ 150 عنصر.  
المكان: 22/07/2018  
التاريخ: أمام باب المسجلة  
المصدر: دائرة الأوقاف الإسلامية وشؤون المسجد الأقصى المبارك.

Figure 22: Al-Aqsa under heavy armed police presence

Left: Protection of ultra-extreme right wing incursions – next to Bab Al-Qattaneen  
Right: Special Forces protecting large extremist incursions entering through Bab Al-Magharbeh



الوقائع: صباح اليوم (الجمعة) الموافق 15/07/2018، تواجدت قوات الشرطة وقوات الاحتلال وقواتها العسكرية الخاصة لتغطية التجمعات المتطرفة التي تدخلت من باب القاتنة (باب المغاربة) في المسجد الأقصى المبارك. في الصورة: عناصر من قوات الاحتلال وقواتها العسكرية الخاصة يرافقون مجموعة من المتطرفين الذين دخلوا المسجد الأقصى المبارك من باب القاتنة (باب المغاربة) في المسجد الأقصى المبارك. التاريخ: 15/07/2018  
المصدر: دائرة الأوقاف الإسلامية وشؤون المسجد الأقصى المبارك.

Figure 23: Special forces and police protect extremists' incursions

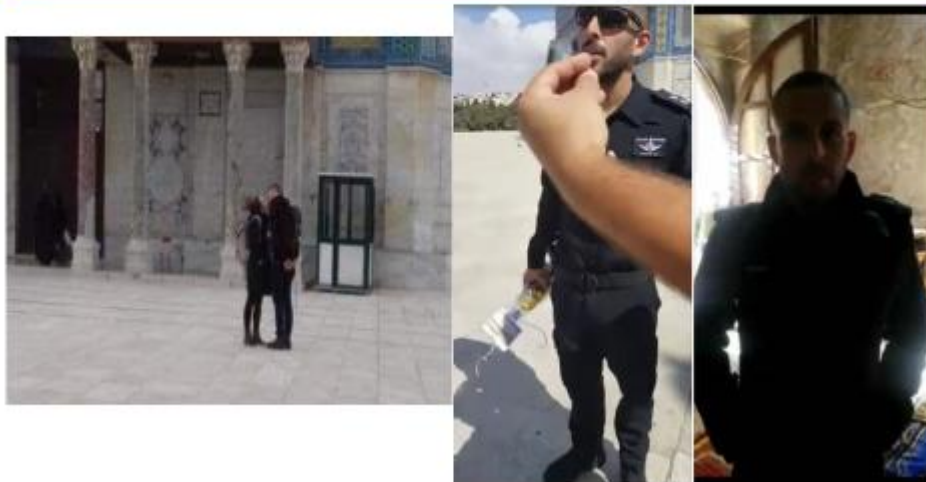


**5- Non-Muslim tourism without permission and coordination with J-Awqaf:** More than 300,000 non-Muslim tourists were enabled to intrude Al-Aqsa Mosque/ Al-Haram Al-Sharif without any permission or coordination with the Jerusalem Awqaf in 2017. The number increased to about 546,931 in 2018.

Jerusalem Awqaf asserts its demand that it has been its mandate to administrate non-Muslims' entry and tourism inside Al-Aqsa as the Status was ante-2000. In the last quarter of 2017, the Jerusalem Awqaf returned only one role of its status in this regard, which is the Awqaf's distribution of modest clothes to non-Muslim women. Because Awqaf is not allowed to practice its right of monitoring and managing the tourists' affairs, the 2018 high number of tourists' incursions included many Jews and thousands of cases of entry of women in immodest clothes were recorded. The worst aggression of the Israeli Occupation of non-Muslim tourism in Al-Aqsa is telling the story of the site in an exclusivist Jewish narrative.

After the US' recognition of Jerusalem, as capital of Israel State, many extremists Jews guided new groups of Christian Zionists to intrude Al-Aqsa in religious form of tourism, which calls for destruction of the Muslim Holy Structures of Al-Aqsa Mosque and building a Jewish synagogue in its place. It is very frightening that these groups are mobilizing for religious war under the religious belief that these aggressions will speed up the redemption and revival of the Messiah.

Left: two non-Muslim tourists kissing at the gate of the Dome of the Rock 28 Mar 2019; Right: Policeman enters al-Aqsa with a bottle of wine and he steps over prayer carpet again 9 Mar 2019



*Figure 24: Non-Muslim tourists' and police's disrespect of holiness of the Mosque*



**6- Worship and access restrictions:** IOA police and armed forces continued to obstruct Muslims' access to Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif on many incidents and occasions during 2017 / 2018, especially Palestinian Muslims from the West Bank and Gaza. A strict ban of access was imposed on groups of Israeli Muslim citizens who come from the north of Palestine inside the Green Line, especially the ban of school trips to Al-Aqsa. In an attempt to detach the Palestinians from their Holy Sites, most East Jerusalem neighborhoods have frequently been blocked by check points at their entrances under different excuses. The Israeli Separation Wall continues to be the worst physical barrier between Palestinians and their Holy Sites in East Jerusalem. .



*Figure 25: The Separation Wall and the Palestinian worshippers' risky route to Al-Aqsa*



Figure 26: abuse and ban of access of Muslim children and worshippers to Al-Aqsa

**7- Physical abuse and arrest of Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf employees:** The Israeli Occupation police continued to attack Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif guards who protested Jews' prayers. While 2016 recorded Israeli police's detention of 3 guards and exile of 7 guards from Al-Aqsa, each of the two years 2017 and 2018 recorded about 200 incidents of physical aggressions against Awqaf employees. Awqaf recorded 219 incidents of physical beating of Awqaf employees. While 40 employees and guards were exiled from Al-Aqsa for different periods in 2017, the number jumped to 95 exile incidents in 2018. Aqsa guards and each year recorded more than. The police has obstructed the entry of 130 new employees into Al-Aqsa since July 2017; 72 newly appointed guards are still banned entry into Al-Aqsa until March 2019.

Incitement media and releases by the extremist Jewish groups against Awqaf employees has also made a new record in 2018. In many videos and releases, extremist Israelis called for outlawing the Awqaf administration and restricting the mandate and presence of Aqsa guards in monitoring and managing the admin affairs of the mosque.

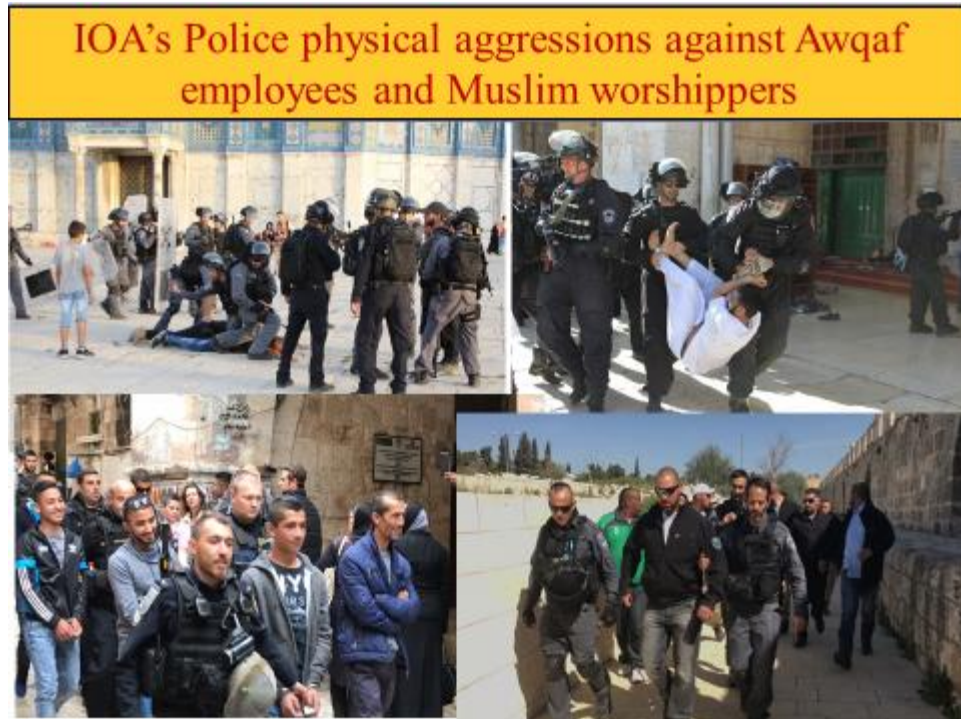


Figure 27: Israeli police arresting Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf employees



Figure 28: Awqaf employees targeted





Left: Ban of renovating fountain/Sabil of Qasem Basha, Aug 2018  
 Right: Ban of cleaning Al-Aqsa Mosque during incursion hrs, Sept 2018



Figure 30: Detaining Awqaf employees who conduct their work

Israeli Occupation AA interfered and obstructed the repair of a water pipe more than 7 times in 2016



Figure 31: IOA Police obstructed the repair of water pipe more than 7 times

**9- Obstruction of the Hashemite renovation projects at Al-Aqsa Mosque:** Through the beginning of 2019, the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf and the Hashemite Fund for the Restoration of Al-Aqsa Mosque reported that the IOA continues the ban of Awqaf to implement more than 20 restoration and renovation projects in Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif. Among the obstructed projects are the following:

1. **Outside lighting system for the Dome of the Rock.** In March 2018, the IOA facilitated part of the project but it continues to obstruct the proper execution of lightening the Dome of the Rock.
2. **Firefighting system**, which is of vital importance for all parts of Al-Aqsa.
3. **Removing earth and trash from the eastern part of Al-Aqsa** and also banning Awqaf from sifting it in cooperation with Jordanian and Palestinian archaeologists. At the same time, Israeli Authorities removed tons of earth from the archaeological sites of the Umayyad palaces and at Bab al-Asbat pathway and threw the earth in unknown destination. IOA announces very frequently that there is an Israeli unilateral sifting of the earth that has been taken out of the Marwani Mosque during the end of 1990s. For the purpose of marketing an exclusivist narrative, IAA keeps making statements that they “found remains of the second temple.” The Jerusalem Awqaf Authority reaffirms that this is faking the history of thousands of broken pieces of Islamic Era pottery.
4. **Renovating Bab Al-Rahmah** / the Golden Gate of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif.
5. **Installing prayer call speakers** in the northern and western part of Al-Aqsa Mosque.
6. Completing the proper restoration of the **eastern wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque** / Al-Haram Al-Sharif.
7. Stone-covering of **part of the roof of Al-Jame’ Al-Aqsa**.
8. Renovating the stone **columns at the Marwani Mosque**.
9. Installing **window grid** in the southern wall of al-Marwani Mosque.
10. Conducting an urgent **study of the status of conservation of the Marwani Mosque**. On September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016, a group of Israeli archaeologists and police intruded the Marwani Mosque in order to reaffirm their obstruction of the abovementioned four projects.
11. **Tiling of courtyards**, especially in the Eastern part of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif.
12. Renovating the **cracks on the outside walls of the Ghadiriyah School** in the northern part of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif.
13. **Covering the electrical generators** with protective sealing.
14. **Renovating the health care and emergency rooms** at Bab Al-Qattaneen and the Omar Mosque inside Al-Aqsa.

15. **Planting new trees in place of the old ones** which fell down in the winters of 2012-2015. Any employee, who plant new tree in place of the uprooted one, is usually arrested.
16. Renovating tiles of the **outside walls of the Dome** of the Rock.
17. Tiling of the **sidewalks around the electric generators area in the eastern part of the Plaza of the Dome** of the Rock.
18. Renovating historic **windows at the western side of Al-Jame' Al-Aqsa** / The Qibli Mosque.
19. **Entry of electric car**, and firefighting truck, and motorcycle.



*Figure 32: Obstructed restoration of the Marwani Mosque*

Ban of renovating the Mamluk Ghadiriyah and Al-Karimiyah historic schools in Al-Aqsa



*Figure 33: IOA obstructed necessary renovation of a crack in the wall of the Ghadiriyah School*

**10- Closure of Bab al-Rahmah (the Golden Gate):** The IOA continues to force the closure of the building of Bab Al-Rahmah and to ban its by J-Awqaf, lectures and to obstruct its renovation under an invalid excuse that the site was used by an Islamist group, called “heritage committee” in 2003. In 2017 the Israeli police renewed the closure of Bab Al-Arahmah for the fourteenth year, falsely accusing Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf of supporting “terror group” inside the Holy Site, although Israel knows for sure the Israeli Islamist group has been evacuated from the site and all Al-Aqsa since 2003. The prevention by IOA of the Awqaf’s renovation works at Bab Al-Rahmah threatens its structural integrity, especially because the building has been suffering water leaks in its roof during the last four years. Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf addressed protest notes to the Israeli police and the Jordanian Foreign Ministry posted protest notes to Israeli Foreign Ministry reaffirming that this closure is rejected and the IOA does not have any right to ban worship or renovation of an undividable part of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif.

On February 14<sup>th</sup> 2019 and due to the continued Israeli ignorance of the abovementioned Jordanian and JJA’s protest notes, the Jerusalem Awqaf Council, accompanied by Jordanian experts, visited Bab Al-Rahmah to check the water leaks and the urgent need for renovating the building. It was the time of afternoon prayer. Since the site is part of Al-Aqsa, the group conducted the prayer in the building. In a



never-understandable aggression, the Israeli police reacted by closing off the upper grid gate with Israeli police's own chain/lock. Muslims understood this Israeli escalation, as a confiscation of inseparable part of Al-Aqsa, as also stated by UNESCO resolutions. Jerusalemites then decided to practice their visitation and worship right in the site by challenging the IOA's orders. Jordan and Israel engaged in negotiations, which could not solve the problem yet. The IOA court renewed the order of the closure of Bab Al-Rahmah on February 17<sup>th</sup> 2019. Jordanian officials and JJA rejected the order and announced their non-recognition of the Israeli law/courts in reference to the fact that the Mosque has never been and can never be under non-Muslim sovereignty or legislation. They also reaffirmed the international UN and UNESCO resolutions, which state that all Israeli post-1967 legislations and actions are null and void and must be rescinded.



*Figure 34: Bab Al-Rahmah (the Golden Gate) suffering closure and water leaks*

**11- Closure and Confiscation of Matharat Bab Al-Ghawanmeh:** In May 2016, Israeli Antiquities Authority (IAA) filed a lawsuit against al-Awqaf; demanding that it must halt the restoration works at the Mat-hara (toilets and prayer purification place) located 5 meters outside the Ghawanmeh Gate. In June 2016, the Israeli occupation municipality asked the police to confiscate the keys of the Mat-harah and to lock the site. They passed

a note to the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf that they should change the function of the project. Although Jerusalem Awqaf, under pressure and fear of losing the Waqf site, accepted the idea of changing the Mat-harah into a library for kids and women of Jerusalem, the Israeli police and municipality continued to close off the place and confiscate its keys until today, March 2019.



*Figure 35: Mat-harat Bab AL-Ghawanmeh locked by the Israeli municipality*

**12- Converting Ribat al-Kurd into mini-wailing wall:** The IOA continues to confiscate the Islamic Waqf of Ribat al-Kurd (historically known as Hosh Ashihabi located at the western wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque) next to Bab Al-Hadid (the Iron Gate). Since 2011, the IOA converted the site into a Jewish prayer place called “mini wailing wall.” The IOA continues to ban both the Shihabi Family and the Jerusalem Awqaf from practicing its legal and historic right to maintain the site, which is an integrative part of the Western Wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif and it is a Waqf property. Jordan has requested the IOA to stop changing the historic shape, function and identity of the site. JJA protested the IOA’s tiling of its ground with new stones replacing the authentic stones that were in very good condition and shape when removed.

**13 - Damages to the structure and furniture of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif:** The worst police and security forces' attack against Al-Aqsa was conducted during the period of July 14<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> 2017. The IOA took use of a violence security incident, as an opportunity to evacuate the mosque for 14 days for first time since 1967 and to intrude not only into all Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif's rooms, mosques, cisterns and offices but also into all computers and cupboards. After July 28<sup>th</sup>, the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf formed scientific official committees to investigate the damages and they found out the following:

**A- The Dome of the Rock:**

- 1- The prayer carpet was removed and many distortions and damages were observed.
- 2- The electricity holes/sockets/conduits and cables were distorted.
- 3- Tiles of the ground of the cave under the Holy Rock were broken and removed.
- 4- Small destructions and drilling were observed in the Holy Rock.
- 5- Parts of the Holy Rock were dissolved and their color was changed into flash white due to the use of unknown chemical material.
- 6- Many small holes were drilled in the Holy Rock and some of the holes were filled with screws for unknown purposes.

**B- Inside The Qibli Mosque / Al-Jame' Al-Aqsa:**

- 1- Many distortions and damages were observed in the historic wooden painting inside Maqam Al-Arba'een.
- 2- Many screws were installed in the wooden calligraphic paintings for unknown purposes.
- 3- One of the marble tiles below the wooden painting of Maqam Al-Arba'een was broken.
- 4- The lower part of the calligraphic painting of Maqam Al-Arba'een was broken.
- 5- A mosaic wooden beam in Mihrab Zakariya was broken.
- 6- Many parts of the wooden beams in the middle of the Qibli Mosque were distorted and many damages were observed.
- 7- Pieces of the copper neck decorating the lower parts of Qibli Mosque's dome were distorted and broken.
- 8- Breaking the marble and making a hole in the southern wall.
- 9- Breaking the Western door of the Qibli Mosque.
- 10- Breaking the stone cover of the drainage canal and distorting parts of it.
- 11- Breaking most of the stone covers of the electric system in the ground of the Qibli and Omer mosques.
- 12- Breaking and moving some of the stones in the main walls of the Qibli Mosque.
- 13- Breaking a marble corner in one of the major columns of the Qibli Mosque.

### **C- The Old Aqsa/Lower Aqsa**

- 1- Inside the main cistern of the Lower Aqsa, the investigation committee found out that the bleaching of the cistern's wall was removed at many places and many damages were made to some stones in the cistern.
- 2- Distortion and damages to the bleaching and earth in the ground of the Lower Aqsa.
- 3- Many stones were removed from the walls of the Lower Aqsa, including the Khantaniyah School. Some of these stones were returned into their places improperly.
- 4- Breaking a large piece of the old column at the entrance of the Khantaniya School. The broken piece of stone is taken away from the site.

### **D- The Marwani Mosque:**

- 1- The Israeli police broke and opened all holes/sockets/conduits of electricity and distorted boxes of maintenance and renovation tools.
- 2- Some tiles of the roof of the Marwani Mosque were moved out and returned in their place improperly.
- 3- Digging was conducted next to the Mahed Essa (Jesus Nativity place) inside the Marwani Mosque.
- 4- Marble tiles of the Mahed's platform were moved out of their places, some were broken.
- 5- All locks were broken.

### **E- Bab Al-Rahmah (the Golden Gate):**

- 1- The investigation committee revealed a removal of historic stones and conducting of an excavation in the upper part (in the window) of Bab Al-Rahmah.
- 2- Drilling a hole (10cm wide) penetrated the wall of Bab Al-Rahmah towards outside Al-Aqsa.
- 3- Stones in the second window of Bab al-Rahmah were broken.
- 4- A stone corner in the upper part of the southern wall of Bab Al-Rahmah was broken and a piece of lead was planted in the place.
- 5- The two locks of cisterns of Bab Al-Rahmah were broken; one of the two cisterns was filled with both water and earth.

### **F- Sulayman Chair:**

- 1- Breaking stones and removing bleaching of the major column of the building.

### **G- Al-Buraq Mosque:**

- 1- All carpets of the mosque were taken off.

### **H- Al-Aqsa Mosque Plazas:**

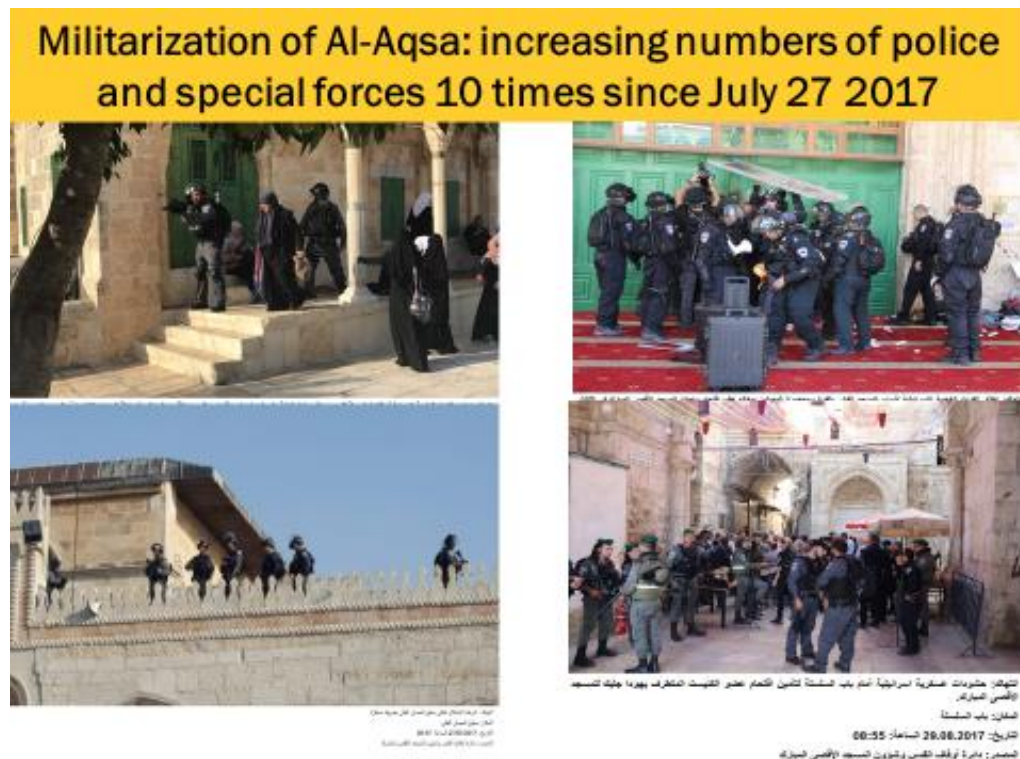
- 1- Many tiles and historic stones were taken off their places.
- 2- Taking off a large stone from the wall of Al-Karak platform.
- 3- Making a hole in one of the stone tiles in front of the Islamic Museum.
- 4- Making many holes of different sizes and depths in the walls of the Plaza of the Dome of the Rock.
- 5- Taking off the large red stone in front of the southern gate of the Dome of the Rock.

## **I- Office of the Restoration Committee:**

- 1- All furniture was moved from its place.
- 2- The door of the lower room was crushed and opened.
- 3- Some stones and rocks in the lower room were broken; broken pieces disappeared; earth proves conducting slight excavation.
- 4- Bleaching was removed and earth was tunneled beneath the walls of the lower room.

## **J- Electric and voice system:**

- 1- Opening all electricity cupboards by breaking more than 40 locks and distorting many cables causing the cut off electricity from the Dome of the Rock and other places.
- 2- Opening all computers of the Electricity Department and highly possible taking copies of the computers' data.
- 3- The police confiscated 25 wireless communication mobiles for two weeks, returned 23 of them and confiscated two devices.



*Figure 36: July 2017 14DAYS of complete evacuation and military occupation of Al-Aqsa*





Figure 37: July2017 – 14DAYS ban of Muslims’ access to Al-Aqsa; street alternative



Figure 38: July2017 electronic gates contest; Muslims refused exaggerated security measures

Damages by the IOA's security forces against the doors and windows of the Qibli Mosque / Al-Jame' Al-Aqsa during military incursions 2017



*Figure 39: July2017 massive damages to historic properties of Al-Aqsa*

Qibli, Burhan Eddeen Manbar, Imar Office



*Figure 40: July2017 destruction of historic marble and gates in Al-Aqsa*



**14- Israeli Official and Knesset Members' incitement against Al-Aqsa Mosque / AL-Haram Al-Sharif:** After many years the Israeli restraint of politicians' incursions into al-Aqsa, PM allowed these incursions in 2018. The visits were very inciting for return of violence waves to al-Aqsa. MK Yehuda Glick and Minister Uri Areil recorded the highest number of such provocative incursions.



*Figure 41: Israeli officials' incursions and extreme incitement against Muslims at Al-Aqsa*

Left: The police enables Jewish rituals next to Bab Al-Rahmah  
 Right: Police escorting MK Yehuda Glick's provocative political incursion



*Figure 42: Extreme Knesset members lead the politicized incursions into Al-Aqsa*

Israeli media instruments continue to be used, as incitement tools for the agenda of Israeli extremists, whose posters and publications bluntly call for destruction of Al-Aqsa Mosque. For example, on 25 January 2018, extremist Jews made a call for massive incursions. Minister of Education Naftali Bennet made an inciting statement saying: it is time for Jews to pray inside Al-Haram Al-Sharif. The call incited the police to kick the Jerusalem Awqaf and Al-Aqsa Guards from the mosque in order not to disturb Jewish extremist incursions. In an escalation move, the extremists (25 Jan 2018) presented a petition to the Israeli court requesting financial compensation to be paid to them by the Awqaf because the later does not allow them pray freely inside the mosque.

**On** 6 Feb 2018, Minister of Agriculture Uri Areil made a provocative statement (Haaretz) calling for building a Jewish shrine in place of Al-Aqsa and one sovereign state between Jordan River and the Mediterranean, which is Israel. On 11 February 2018 MK Yehuda Glick informed the Israel TV Ch10 that Former Minister Avi Dechter and Israeli Police Chief Commissioner asked him to bring more Jewish intruders in AL-Aqsa Mosque. Extremist Minister Meri Regev made another inciting statement (18 Feb 2018) and call extremist Jews to raise the Israeli flag in the Holy Site. While the Likud Party also incited to raise Israel flag over the mosque, extremist Jews have created an email address [wafgout@gmail.com](mailto:wafgout@gmail.com)

threatening all Awqaf employees and Aqsa guards to be outlawed and exiled from al-Aqsa. On 9 April 2018, extremist Jew named Abraham Borg made a strong call for not only ending up the role of Awqaf authorities in Al-Aqsa but also to undermining the role of Jordan and the Hashemite Custodianship at the Holy Site. In July 2018 all these incitement announcements were supported by Israeli PM's decision to lift the ban on politicization visits by Israeli MKs and officials.

July 2018, After Israeli PM permitted politicians to intrude Al-Aqsa; Left: MK Sharen Heskeli; Right: Minister Uri Areil



الانتهاك: في انتهاك حرمة المسجد الأقصى المبارك، اقتحم المسجد اليوم برفقة مجموعات المتطرفين اليهود كل من وزير الزراعة في حكومة الاحتلال عضو الكنيست (أوري أرييل)، وعضوة الكنيست من حزب الليكود (شارن هسكلي)، وذلك نتيجة لقرار رئيس الوزراء الإسرائيلي بالسماح لأعضاء الكنيست والوزراء بتجديد اقتحام المسجد الأقصى المبارك، حيث اقتحما المسجد وسط حماية مجموعة من القوات الخاصة المدججين بالسلاح والشرطة.

Figure 43: Far right wing Minister Uri Areil and MK Heskeli compete in extremism

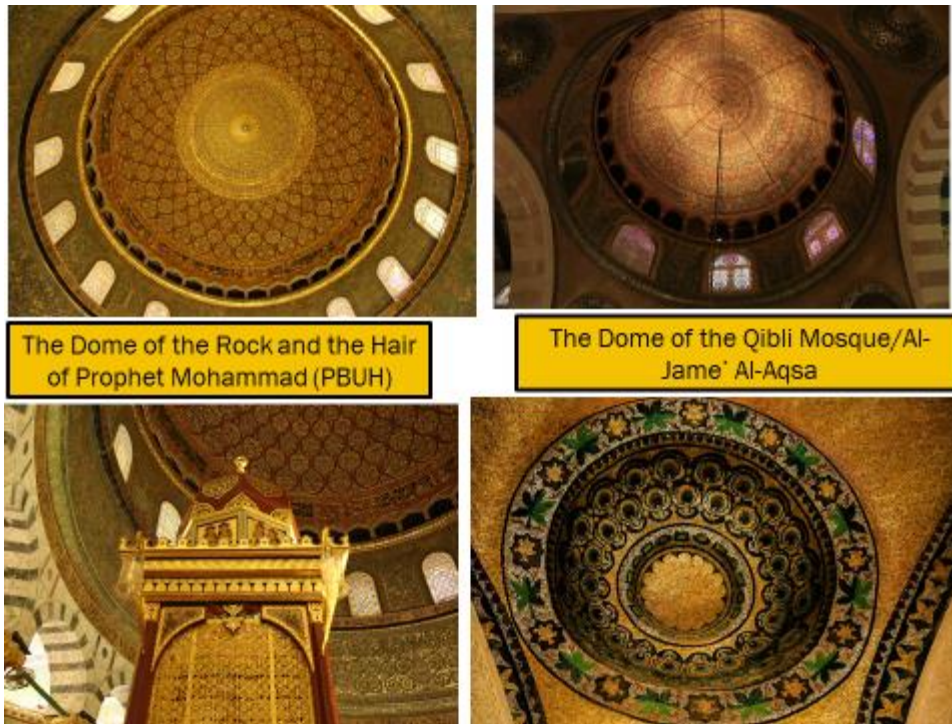
#### **D-- HASHEMITE RESTORATION PROJECTS AT AL-AQSA MOSQUE / AL-HARAM AL-SHARIF**

In spite of so many challenges and IOA's obstruction of more than 25 major renovation projects and the IOA's violations of the sanctity of Al-Aqsa Mosque, the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf takes of every possible opportunity to conduct its planned projects in order to preserve the mosque and not to surrender to the pressure and obstruction. Most important duties that have been conducted are related either to salvage renovations of urgent needs and the routine works, such as the building capacity of the employees, supporting educational requirements at the Shari'yah schools, maintaining the Islamic Museum of Al-Aqsa and continuing the renovations and cleaning of the mosaic in the Dome of the Rock and the Qibli Mosque. Among the major achievements during the last year 2016-2019 are :

- 1- In November 2016, the Jordanian Awqaf Ministry and the Hashemite Fund for the Restoration of Al-Aqsa Mosque announced the finishing of the eight years project (2008-2016) of renovating of the Dome of the Rock's mosaic and stucco decorations; and finishing the two years project (2014-2016) of renovation of the inside mosaic of the Dome of the Qibli Mosque / Al-Jame' Al-Aqsa. The announcement and final report were carried out under the patronage of Engineer Ra'ef Najem, representing the board of the Hashemite Fund for the Restoration of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Vice Chair of the President of the Hashemite Restoration Committee. The ceremony was attended by Jerusalem Awqaf Secretary General Engineer Abdallah Abbadi and Director of the Hashemite Fund Dr. Wasfi Kailani, among many Jerusalemite Awqaf's Directorate and Council figures. The project included the historic renovation of the mosaics in the major eight hallways of the Dome of the Rock. Experts stated that this kind of renovation was the first of its kind since about 400 years ago.
- 2- The Hashemite Fund for the Restoration of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock continued extensive cooperation with UNESCO and Norway in order to finalize the plan for the fourth phase of the development of Al-Aqsa Mosque Manuscripts Centre. The new phase, supposed to be UNESCO exit from the project, will hopefully launch in autumn 2019.
- 3- Six employees of the Hashemite Restoration Department engaged in a field course for mosaic renovation.
- 4- Renovating the wooden decorations of the neck of the Dome of the Rock from inside was accomplished. The project took 12 months February 2017-February 2018.
- 5- Goldening and highlighting the colors of the marble strip of the neck of the Dome of the Rock.



- 6- Cleaning the mosaic of the octagon neck of the Dome of the Rock.
- 7- Renovating and cleaning the marble columns inside the Dome of the Rock.
- 8- Cleaning and renovating the mosaic of the Mihrab of the Qibli Mosque.
- 9- Finishing the two years project of renovating the Dome of the Prophet Mohammad's Hair inside the Dome of the Rock.
- 10- Renovating 4 gates of the Qibli Mosque. These gates were destructed by the Israeli police in the military harsh incurisuns.
- 11- Restoring 4 windows in the upper western wall of the Qibli Mosque.
- 12- Lining the ninth and tenth Ruwaq of the Marwani Mosque.
- 13- Cleaning and showing the old crescents of the Qibli Mosque and that of the Dome of the Rock and installing them in a show place inside Al- Aqsa Museum.
- 14- Lightening the Eastern Wall of Al-Aqsa from outside and the Western Ruwaq from inside.
- 15- Follow up of the renovation of the Waqf properties in Salhuddeen and Sultan Sulayman Streets in cooperation with the UNDP and the Islamic Development Bank.
- 16- Administration of the Zakat Committee and Khaski Sultan Takiya ; both help hundreds of poor families in Jerusalem.
- 17- Supervision and maintenance of the structural situation of about 478 True Waqf buildings in the Old City of Jerusalem and helping the maitenance of hundreds of Family and Church Waqf properties.
- 18- Renovating and cleaning of all items of the Islamic Musuem of Al-Aqsa Mosque and renewing the description of all signs of the elements in the show boxes.
- 19- Maintaining three Shar'iyah schools in Al-Aqsa ; 56 employees and teachers work at these schools, which host 342 students.
- 20- Renovating *Sabil* Qaitbai (Qaitbai Fountain) in 2018.
- 21- Renovating *Sabil* Qasim Basha (Qasim Basha Fountain) in 2018.
- 22- Renovating Bab Al-Silsileh Mutawada' (place of ablution) in 2018>
- 23- Renovating the outside ladder of the Dome of the Rock, 2018.



*Figure 44: Finishing the Hashemite restoration of the mosaic of the Dome of the Rock and the Dome of Al-Jame' Al-Aqsa / the Qibli Mosque, November 2016*

## E- ISRAELI VIOLATIONS AGAINST THE *STATUS QUO* IN THE SURROUNDINGS OF AL-AQSA MOSQUE / AL-HARAM AL-SHARIF

**1- Excavations and digging threats around Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif:** The IOA has recently escalated illegal archeological digging, excavations, demolitions and tunneling projects adjacent to the walls of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif. The excavations that are capable of breaching the walls of al-Aqsa are increasing, especially from the western side (under the Muslim Quarter) and southern side of the Umayyad palaces. More detailed explanations will be highlighted in Chapter 2 on the excavations and tunneling in the Old City.

The worst threat of these excavations is the exclusivist documentation and description, which serve an extreme Judaization narrative of the historic Islamic remains and findings. Although Israel continues to deny any breach of the walls of Al-Aqsa, the covert excavations and tunneling increase the concerns of Muslims and all interested observers regarding the nature and extensions of these projects, especially that most of the tunneling projects were revealed by coincidence and leaks of secret intensive excavations.

In addition to the 13 points, where the IAA and settlers breached the wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif during the period between 1967 and 2012, the recent years 2008-2018 recorded so many excavations and tunneling knocking the western wall of Al-Aqsa. The extremist company of El'ad has conducted most of these excavations, with a focus on the underground works going on in the area between Silwan south towards the north edge of Western Wall of Al-Aqsa.

## 13 points: IAA / settlers breached the wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque between 1967 and 2012

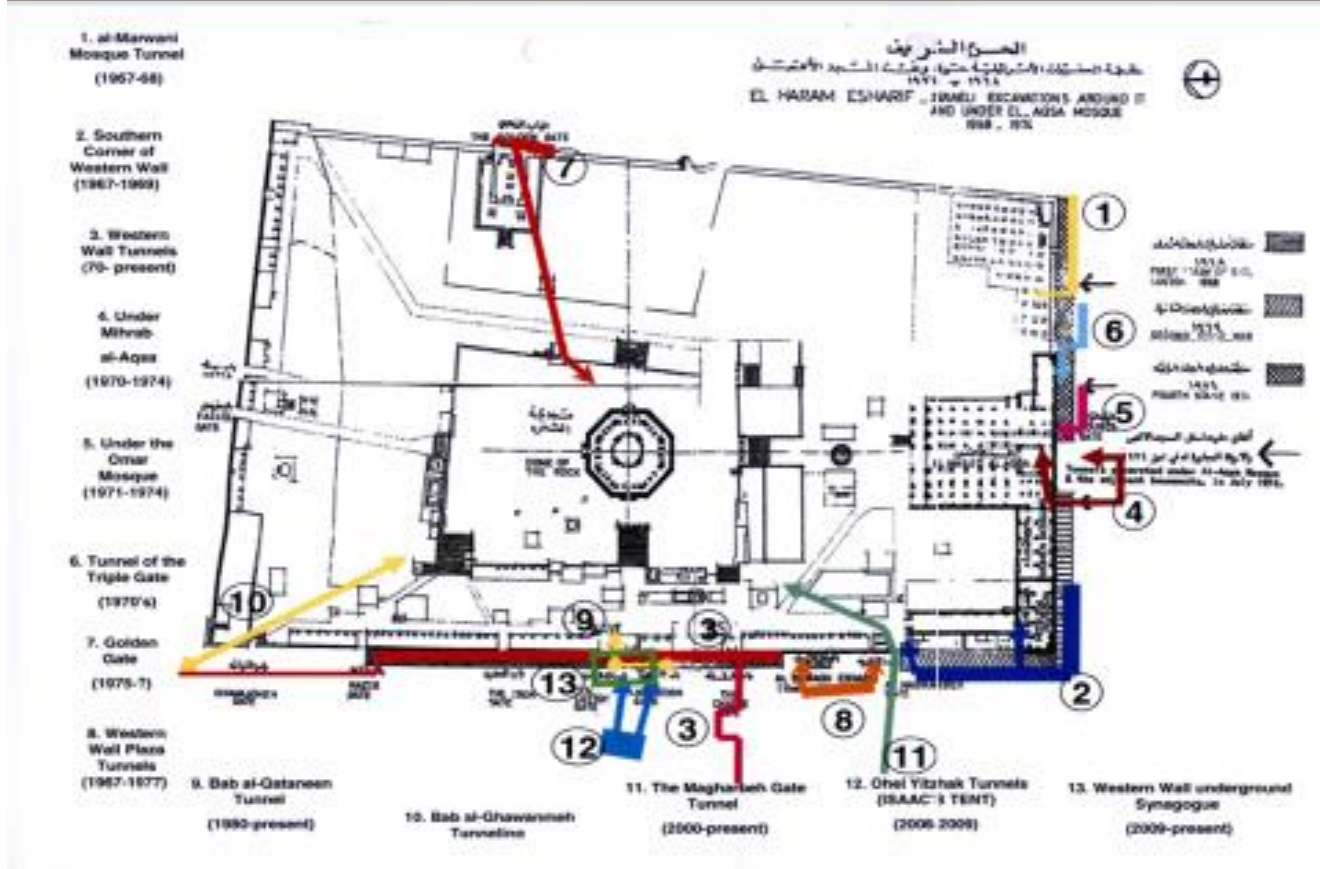


Figure 45: 13 points where the IAA and settlers breached the wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif during the period between 1967 and 2012



**2 - Al-Aqsa Magharbeh Gate Pathway (MGP):** Since 2004, The IOA has been excavating and thoroughly removing remains of the MGP for the purpose of expanding spaces of Jewish prayer place “the Western Wall Plaza” on the account of Islamic historic layers at the site.

Details of the Israeli violations against the MGP and Western Wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif are included in Chapter 2.

**3- Judaization of the names of pathways leading to Al-Aqsa and many streets and sites in and around the Old City of Jerusalem:** Judaization of authentic names of streets, squares, buildings and historic remains over and below the ground of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif has been escalating during the recent years. The most recent provocative escalation is the 2017 phenomenon of Jewish extremist tour leaders carrying imagined “Second Temple” maps and explaining the mosques’ parts to their fellows via loudspeakers. Many Aqsa guards who protested the violation were taken out of the mosque and exiled from Al-Aqsa by the police. IOA forced a Judaized name on signs at Al-Aqsa Gates of al-Asbat, al-Magharbeh, Al-Silsilah, al-Hadid and al-Majlis. The flagrant aggressive policy of Judiazation is manifested by the signs below which completely ignore mentioning the fact that Al-Haram Al-Sharif is Al-Aqsa Mosque. The aim of enforced alteration of Jewish names on historic places, such as calling the Umayyad Palaces, as Ophel plaza or ritual baths of the Jewish prayer place is to strengthen the claim that “Jerusalem is first and foremost a Jewish city”. Muslims never tolerate this claim. Among the Judaized names are also the following:

- 1- Aqabat Al-Khaldiyeh: HaKhashmon'im
- 2- Al-Wad Street: Hagai
- 3- Al-Midan: Mizgav Ladakh
- 4- Aqabat Ghnaim: Shoni Halshot
- 5- Omer Bin Al-Khattab Street: Batai Makhaseh
- 6- Daraj Al-Tabouneh: Plugat Hakotel
- 7- Souq AL-Husur: Khabad
- 8- Khan Azzait Street: Bait Khabad

- 9- Bab Al-Asbat: Sha'ar Ha'ryout
- 10- Bab Al-Sahirah: Sha'ar Haprakhim
- 11- Aqbat AL-Takiyyeh: Ma'lout HaMadrashah
- 12- Bab Al-Magharbeh: Sha'ar HaAshfout (Dunk Gate)
- 13- Hosh Al-Shihabi: HaKotel HaKatan



Figure 46: 2014-2017 enforcing Jewish names on Al-Aqsa gates and pathways

#### 4- Confiscated Tankaziyyah School / the Islamic Shari'yah Court converted into police station:

The IOA converted the main hall of the Islamic Tankaziyyah School into a police station. Part of it was converted into a Jewish synagogue in 2013-2014. Tankaziyyah School has been confiscated from Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif and occupied by the Israeli police since 1967. Jerusalem Awqaf has been denied access to the school and its gates from inside Al-Aqsa have been closed off long time ago. During the years 2015-2016, Jerusalem Awqaf recorded the sounds of many excavations and drilling in different parts inside the school. The IOA plan to build the tallest synagogue over the Tankaziyyah school is considered one of the most flagrant violations, which will change the skyline and shape of the Western Wall of Al-Aqsa. In addition, it will look as one of the most odd constructions to the authentic character of Jerusalem. Ottoman documents, back to 1553 record that the Tankaziyyah School / the Court building is an integrative part of Al-Aqsa Mosque and it was built with its borders. In 2017-2018, Awqaf

employees and guards could have access to the Tankaziyah School for first time since 1967 but ironically as detainees arrested and guided to the place to be investigated by the police.

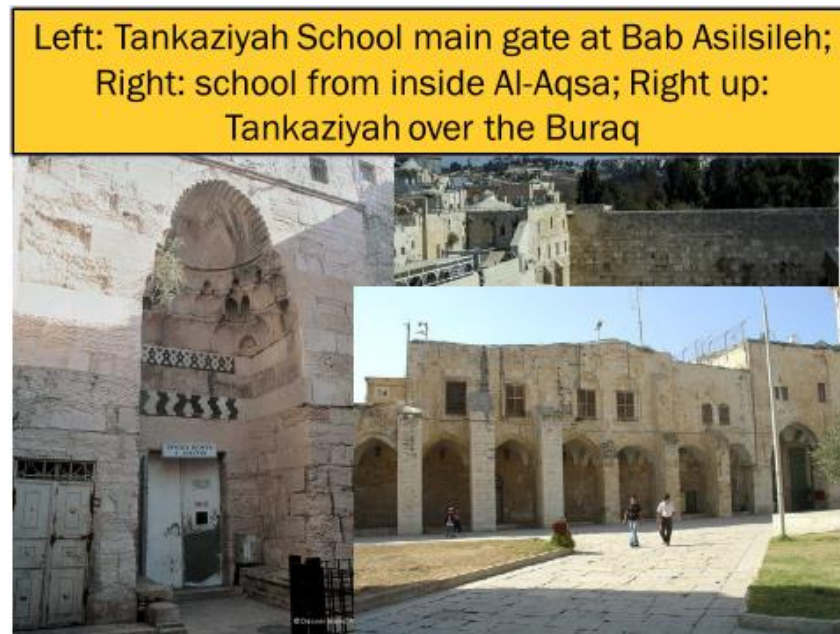


Figure 47: Tankaziyyah School in history and change of its function

**5- Expansion of Jewish Cemetery and confiscating parts of Bab Al-Rahmah Cemetery:** The IOA continued to tolerate extremists' different forms of aggressions against Waqf properties, especially in the area east to Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif in Ras El-Amoud, Mount of Olives, Wadi Al-Rababah and Sloudhah in Silwan. Among these forms of aggressions were the expansion of the Jewish cemetery of Ras Al-Amoud and Mount of Olives on parts of the Waqf land. Jerusalem Awqaf recognizes the endowment of the Jewish cemetery but they reject its illegal expansion beyond its original size, especially in the area down to the cemetery of Bab Al-Rahmah. The IOA has also confiscated and fenced three parts of the Muslim Cemetery of Bab Al-Rahmah: part of Al-Husseini family Waqf property, part of Al-Ansari family Waqf property and in a third part, which is a true public Waqf. In 2017, the IOA announced new plans of developing parts of the cemetery into public parks. In spite of the many protests by Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf's Islamic Cemeteries Committee against these aggressions, the violation is still standing.



Figure 48: Expansion of Jewish Cemetery on Islamic Waqf land 2013-2019

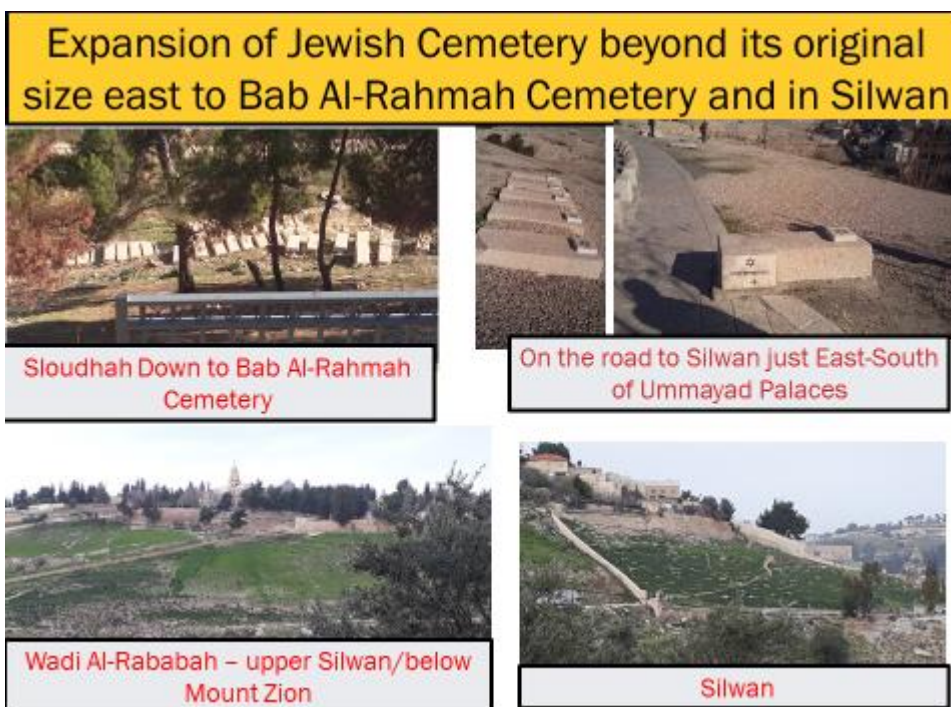


Figure 49: Expansion of Jewish Cemetery beyond its original size



**6- Banning Muslims from burying their deaths in the Cemetery of Bab Al-Rahmah – a Muslim Cemetery since more than 1400 years:** Since the beginning of 2016, the IOA has been making restrictions and banning Muslims from burying their deaths in their historic Waqf property of the Cemetery of Bab Al-Rahmah. According to Municipality reports, the IOA's plan is to convert the cemetery and its surroundings into public parks of more than 1100 dunams in first step to allocate the land for the expanded Jewish cemetery, which will occupy more than 2800 dunams of the land of the Mount of Olives, Ras El-Amoud and Silwan. Jewish Cemetery's land is a small Waqf property, which has been massively expanded by confiscating many neighboring properties after 1967.

- In 2018, the IOA built up a metal wall fencing the cemetery of Bab Al-Rahmah in order to confiscate the land and ban Muslims from burying their deaths in their historic cemetery. In many cases, the IAA damaged many pre-prepared Muslim graves and the worst aggression was pouring liquid concrete in order to fill the graves with cement and ban future burials. NOTE: Jerusalemites, since centuries ago, used to bury their deaths in small family cemeteries and every 15 years they bury deceased family members in the same graves next to their former relatives.
- In 2017 and 2018, many IOA's official provocative announcements and visits were made in a plan to build up walls that restrict the burial area in Bab Al-Rahmah for the purpose of developing part of it into public parks and to establish the foundations for the cable car project.
- In a very insulting action, the IOA has planted many signs inside the cemetery asking Muslims "not to bury their deaths and not to throw garbage in the cemetery." There were also incidents where the police interfered to take diseased bodies out of the graves in order to implement the ban.
- On May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the IOA launched a severe aggression against the funeral and body of a Jerusalemite woman, when the body was laid down in her family's grave. A policewoman attempted to take the body out of the grave and later on the police thrown tens of sound and gas grenades against those who participated in the funeral.
- In September and May 2016, the IOA attacked people of Silwan when they attempted burying their deaths in the southern part of Al-Rahmah Cemetery.
- In September 2016, the IOA damaged 3 graves in the southern part of the cemetery and 7 graves in the north-eastern part of the cemetery.
- On September 11, the IOA also cemented/blocked two graves of Jerusalemite families.

- On July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the IOA also damaged some graves and installed a fixed police patrol in the cemetery.
- On November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the IOA destructed 8 graves and damaged their signs.
- On the 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2016, the police banned the burial of Khadijeh Abu Douleh in the cemetery of Bab Al-Rahmah and arrested the body for hours under the condition that her family should find Abu Douleh another burial place.
- The police patrol bans Muslims not only to bury their death but also to visit the graves of their diseased relatives.
- On January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017, a Jordanian delegation to Jerusalem was threatened of being arrested and taken to police station twice because the delegation was taking photos of the damaged and cemented graves.
- In a historic unimagined violation against the cemetery, the IOA planted under earthed censors, which send alarming gestures if Muslims start cleaning any of the graves.

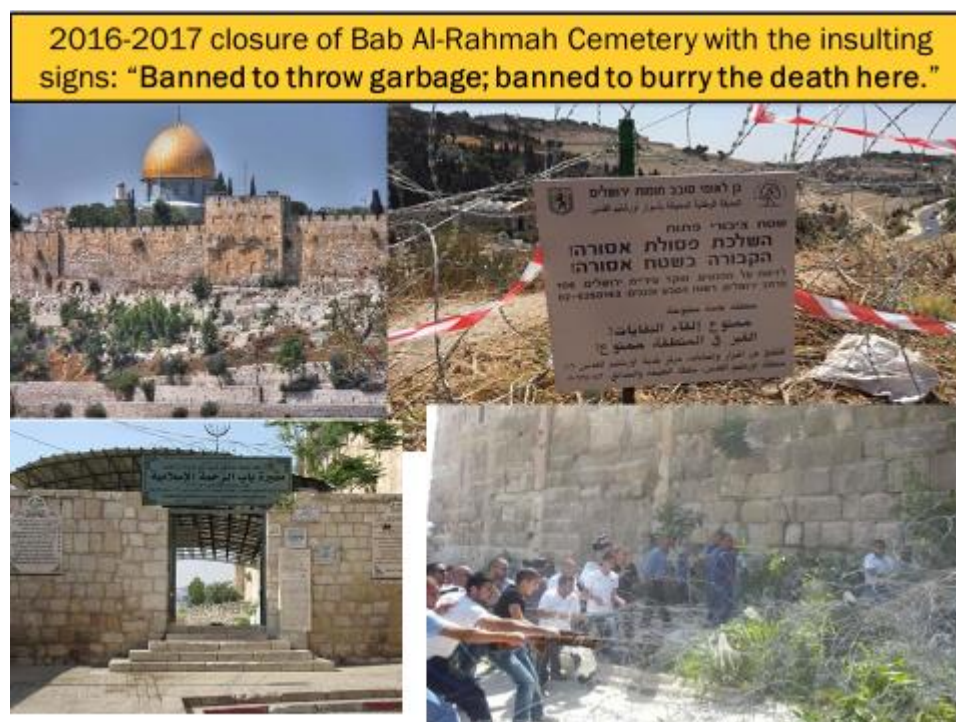


Figure 50: Confiscation, fencing and insulting signs at Bab Al-Rahmah Cemetery

## Sept/Dec 2018, Jewish prayers and desecration of the cemetery of Bab Al-Rahmah



*Figure 51: Desecration of Bab Al-Rahmah cemetery by mobilizing extremists to do prayers over Muslim graves*

## 2019 Fencing of Bab Al-Rahmah Cemetery to stop Muslims burial



*Figure 52: 2019 Israeli Municipality breaching of the Islamic Waqf property, fencing and restricting its borders and damaging some graves*

**7- Changing the authentic shape and function of Bab Al-Asbat Pathway to al-Aqsa (Al-Yusfiyeh Cemetery):** Since July 2017 through beginning of 2019 the IOA started massive excavation works with heavy machines, as part of the municipal plan, to develop the area into wider pathway and public park. The Jerusalem Awqaf, the family Waqf owners and the Jerusalem Cemeteries Committee all protested the project for the following reasons: 1) most of the land is a family Waqf ownership for Jerusalemite families; 2) the eastern part of the pathway is a ‘true waqf’ since it is historically part of the Yusifiyeh Cemetery, where thousands of Shahids and Jerusalemites have been buried; 3) the excavations revealed and damaged so many pottery remains and graves of Muslims; 4) the municipality wants to change the function of the pathway into a public park and a main road that will be connected to another pathway that passes through Bab Al-Rahmah Cemetery until the end of the Eastern Wall of the Old City. The authentic pathway has been used mainly as walkway from the northern corner of the Old City to reach the cemeteries and Bab Al-Asbat. 5) As part of its historic right, Jerusalem Awqaf has proposed a plan to develop the area in an approach that does not undermine the identity of the place and does not violate the sanctity of the cemeteries.

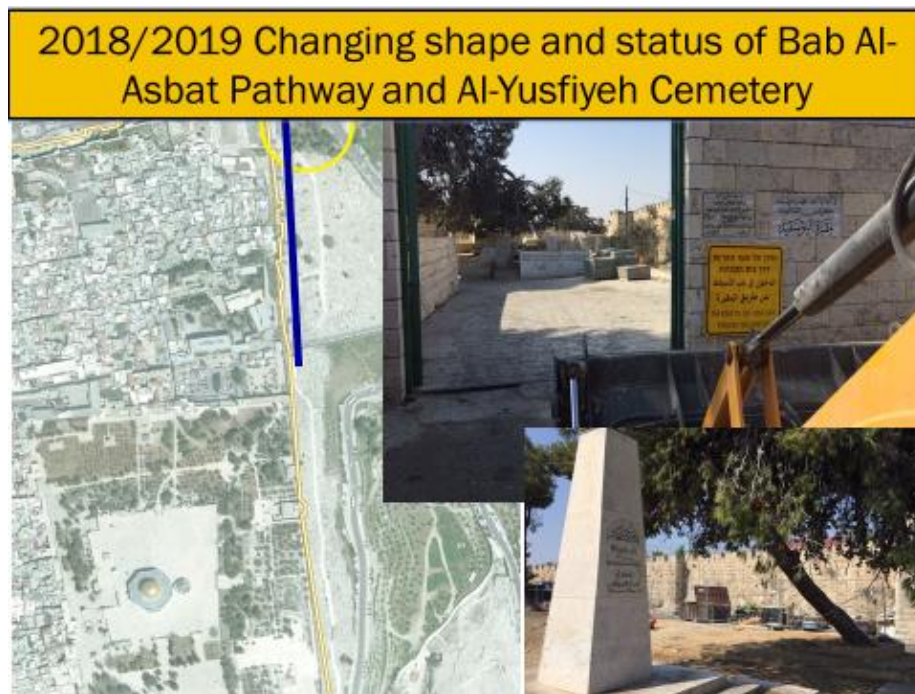


Figure 53: 2018-2019 excavating, confiscating and changing the historic shape of Bab Al-Asbat/Yusfiyeh Cemetery and pathway to Al-Aqsa

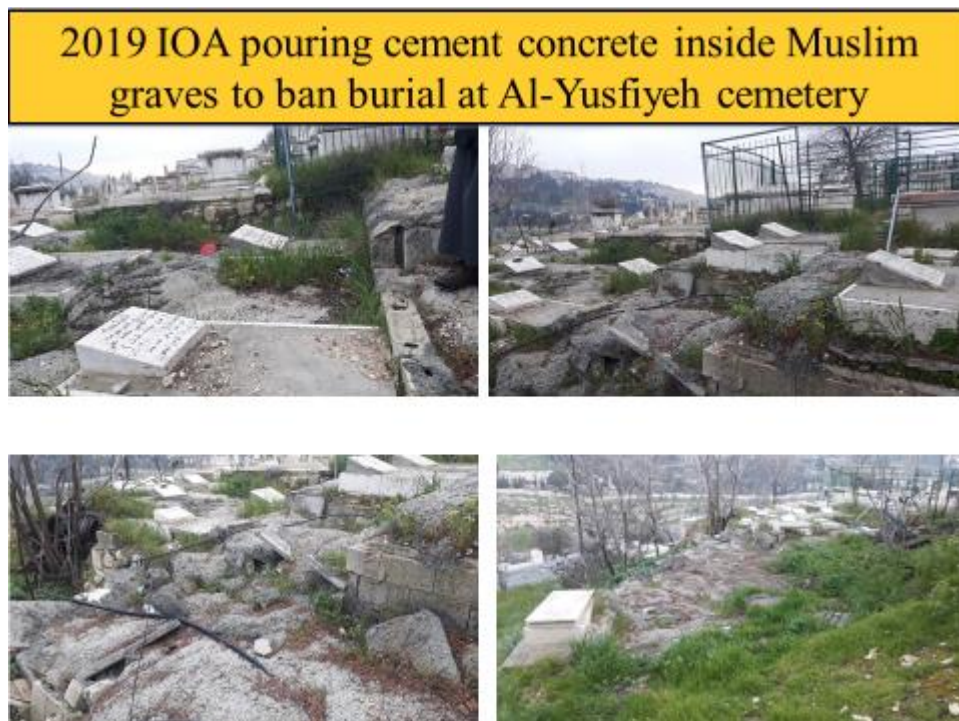




Figure 54: 2018-2019 excavations, tiling projects and cement concrete walls at Al-Yusfiyeh cemetery's pathway to AL-Aqsa



*Figure 55: 2017 beginning of excavating Al-Yusfiyeh Cemetery in spite of the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf protest of changing the area's status quo*



*Figure 56: 2019 Israeli Occupation Authorities' pouring cement concrete inside the graves to ban Muslims' burial at Al-Yusfiyeh Cemetery*



*Figure 57: Bab Al-Rahmah and Al-Yusfiyeh cemeteries hold sacred bodies of Sahbis and Muslim martyrs since 1400 years until today*

**8- IOA increased the number of surveillance cameras over the top roofs of Al-Aqsa Mosque buildings:** In 2017, the IOA installed tens of new cameras over the gates roofs of the Omariyah School, Ghawanmeh Gate, Asbat Gate, Majlis Gate, Silsileh Gate, Ashrafiyah School and many high points inside and outside Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif. Jerusalem Awqaf continues to condemn the violation since it is tightening grip against the Muslims' freedom of worship. The main purpose of the surveillance cameras is to protect Jewish incursions and aggressions against Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif.



2012-2018 continued installing of more than 30 surveillance cameras against Muslims' freedom worship



Figure 58: New surveillance cameras over the gates and walls of Al-Aqsa Mosque



## **CHAPTER 2: TWENTY FOUR EXAMPLES OF AGGRESSIONS AGAINST CHURCHES AND CHRISTIAN HOLY SITES**

Through 2017 and 2018, Jerusalem Churches issued many statements of complain and appeal to world leaders and international forums in order to stop the accelerated IOA's violations against their Christian Holy Sites and properties more than any time before since 1967. The frequent appeals by Jerusalem Council of Churches, composed of the 13 heads of the 13 major Christian denominations in the Holy Land, were addressed to both Israeli leaders and the international community asking them to rescue the Christian community of Jerusalem from severe targeting by settler groups and municipal legal rules, e.g. real-estate, public space, rent, property and taxation, that are dramatically damaging historic Status Quo.

Recent major aggressions against the Christian Holy Sites and Churches included: price tag crimes against the Churches and Christian religious figures and priests, confiscation of Church properties and pressuring the Christian communities to immigrate out of the Holy Land. The worst aggressions were the so-called "price tag" drawings and slogans painted on walls of Churches against Prophet Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary. Although all these violations were conducted by the extreme organizations, such as "Price Tag," "Lahava" and the radical new Jewish settler movement "Hilltop Youth," the police could barely stop these attacks, which are leaving a very bad impact on historic religious and social synthesis in the city.

Due to the continued restrictions and violations against Christian Society in Jerusalem since 1967, the Christian population of Jerusalem decreased more than 90% of their expected normal growth. Palestinian Christians all over the world are about 2.5m; only 45k are still living in the West Bank; 117 inside the Greenline; only 4.5k live in Jerusalem and 733 in Gaza. In a normal population growth, Christian Jerusalemites are supposed to be about quarter million today. The immigration of the Palestinian community was a result of the continued pressure and restrictions against the Christians, especially in the Old City of Jerusalem. Worst recent restrictions were related to high tax imposed on their dwellings and the IOA's interfere in their cultural, religious and educational affairs. The IOA's interfere has been understood as a change of the Status Quo, which conserved an autonomous 'Corpus Separatum' of Jerusalem Churches.

**On September 24, 2017, Haaretz authors Yottam Berger and Nir Hasson reported that over 50 Christian and Muslim sites have been vandalized in Israel and the West Bank since 2009**, but only 9 indictments have been filed and only seven convictions handed down, according to Public Security Ministry data. The wave of vandalism peaked in 2013. That year, 11 investigations were opened and five people were convicted. Nine Christian and Muslim sites were vandalized in 2014 and the same number in 2015. In 2016, only three such attacks were recorded, but there were four in the first half of 2017. From 2009 through 2012, there were 17 such incidents – but there wasn't a single indictment.

According to Haaretz article, the Tag Meir organization, which monitors hate crimes, keeps its own records. It says there were 44 attacks on Christian and Muslim sites between the end of 2009 and the beginning of 2016.

**Below are some examples of the price tag crimes and general policy violations committed against Jerusalem Churches since 1967, with a focus on the recent 8 years incidents:**

- 1- **Coptic Church faced the first price tag after 1967 Occupation of Jerusalem:** in 1967, the Israeli police attacked the Coptic Church, its priests, and they burnt five religious centers and Christian publication houses, who resisted the Occupation of the City. In 1970, the Coptic Church was attacked again by the Israeli police, their Centre of the International Bible was burnt again in 1973.
- 2- **Killing Philiminos:** Israeli settler Raby Asher killed the Greek Orthodox Archimandrite Philiminos at his Church, the Monastery of Saint Jacob's Well, on 29<sup>th</sup> of November 1979.
- 3- **Mother of the Orthodox Father Yukaim** was killed in the Church of Ascendance in 1999. Parts of the Church were demolished by the Jerusalem Municipality in 2000 under the excuse that it was built up without a license.
- 4- **Restricting access to annual Holy Fire:** Since the year 2002 through 2018, the Israeli police has been obstructing access of worshippers, priests, nuns and organizers of the Holy Fire ceremony on Easter Saturday at the Church of Holy Sepulcher.
- 5- **School and Monastery of the Cross Vandalized:** On the 7<sup>th</sup> of February 2012 – In Jerusalem, a Jewish-Arab bilingual school, a symbol of coexistence, in which half the students are Jews and half are Arab, and the 11th-century Monastery of the Cross administered by the Greek Orthodox church

were defaced with graffiti saying "Death to Arabs", "Kahane was right" and "Death to Christians" as well as "price tag".

- 6- **Baptist Narkis Street Church:** On the 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2012 – Vandals smeared "Death to Christianity", "Jesus is dead," and "Mary was a prostitute" on the Jerusalem Baptist Narkis Street Congregation church, and slashed the tires of several cars parked in the compound. The acts were countersigned by price tag graffiti.
- 7- **Illegal entry and locking Greek Orthodox Chapel on Holy Sion Hill:** On the evening of Friday the 25<sup>th</sup> of May and 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2013, students at the Patriarchal-Hieratical School of the Patriarchate on the hill of the Holy Sion realized that unknown people had broken into the lock of the wrought iron door of the chapel-catacomb of the Pentecost, placed religious books and other items inside the chapel and closed it using a door chain and lock of their own. The underground chapel was excavated by the late Timotheos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and in addition to a few other occasions, it is also used on Whit Monday (Monday of the Holy Spirit) of each year for reading out one of the Pentecost-Kneeling Prayers during the litany from St Trinity Church to the grave of prophet-king David and the gallery. On Sunday morning, after the Divine Liturgy, the School Principal, father Photios and the Grand Chancellor Aristarchos, Archbishop of Constanina, arrived at the chapel and, guided by the Israeli Police, tried to remove the chain that had been placed on the door, in order to step inside. At that point, about ten extreme-religious Israelis, probably from the nearby Synagogue of the tomb of prophet-king David, arrived to protest, holding the Bible, reading and praying out loud, denying the Patriarchate's jurisdiction. They even obstructed the police from entering the chapel to remove the items they had left inside. In the meantime, a religious woman, with her head covered, arrived at the scene and after fiercely reprimanding representatives of the Patriarchate and the Police, went on to cut a hole into the chapel's railing fence and, in the presence of the Police, allowed three young men with side curls to step inside. The extremist Jews who had arbitrarily trespassed to the Patriarchate's religious grounds, intended to occupy and appropriate the property. Their belongings were also removed, and the chapel was locked by means of keys kept at the School. Even so, the female protester went on to place a new chain with a lock on the door. Subsequently, the Patriarchate's Legal Service together with the School Principal gave a statement to Jerusalem Police, submitting evidence of the Patriarchate's ownership of the site, with the aim of resolving the problem and reestablishing order.



*Figure 59: Damage, desecration and attempt to confiscate Greek Orthodox Chapel on Mount Zion*

- 8- **Perpetrators trespass on Chapel and School of Sion:** On December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem strongly denounced the trespassing on the fenced Chapel of the Pentecost and the rooting out of saplings planted around the chapel, committed on Sunday the 9<sup>th</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> of December 2013 by unknown fanatical religious elements, inhabiting the area of the Tomb of Prophet David. The chapel of the Pentecost belongs to the Patriarchate and lies to the southeast of the Hieratical School and the cemetery. The Patriarchate filed a complaint against the act with the Israeli Police. **On the morning of Friday the 31<sup>st</sup> of May/13<sup>th</sup> of June 2014**, the Dragoman's Office of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, notified by the Israeli Police, arrived at the chapel/catacomb of the Holy Spirit on St Sion and witnessed the vandalisms caused again by extreme fanatic activists from the area around David's Tomb. The aforementioned activists broke into the heavy iron gate of the chapel, after breaking the chain, and desecrated the chapel with garbage, spreading to the holy Altar in the Eastern niche.





Figure 60: Chapel and School of Sion desecrated by extreme settlers

- 9- **Desecration of Latin Church in Latrun:** On the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 2012, Graffiti reading "Jesus is a monkey" were sprayed on a Christian monastery, and its door was set on fire, at Latrun in a suspected price tag attack for the evacuation of Migron. In late June, 2013, police arrested a Bnei Brak resident on suspicion that he had been involved in the incident. <sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Although the church is not in the vicinity of the Old City of Jerusalem, but this example is brought her to show that these price tag violations extend outside Jerusalem and spark hatred and violence across the country.

Anti-Jesus and pro-settlers graffiti at the entrance of Latrun Trappist Monastrey , Sept 2012



Figure 61: A Catholic monk standing in a doorway of the Latrun Trappist Monastery where vandals spray-painted with anti-Christian and pro-settler graffiti, Sept. 4, 2012.AP

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/541346817686267949/>

<https://www.haaretz.com/church-israelis-don-t-respect-christians-1.5296299>

10- **Church of Dormition at Mount Zion:** On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2012 -The entrance to the [Church of the Dormition](#) on [Mount Zion](#) was sprayed with graffiti that read "Jesus, son of a bitch, price tag."

Anti-Jesus graffiti "Jesus, son of a bitch, price tag," at the entrance of Latron Trappist Monastery , Sept 2012



*Figure 62: A hand-out picture released Tuesday by the Franciscan monastery showing anti-Christian graffiti denigrating Jesus.AP/HO, <https://www.haaretz.com/j-lem-church-marred-with-hate-graffiti-1.5174277>*

- 11- **Graffiti against St. George Romanian Orthodox Church:** On the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2014, graffiti reading 'Price tag, King David is for the Jews, Jesus is garbage' were sprayed on the walls of the St. George Romanian Orthodox Church at Shivtei Israel 46 Street less than 1000 mtrs of distance north to the Old City of Jerusalem, very close to the pre-1967 seam line.

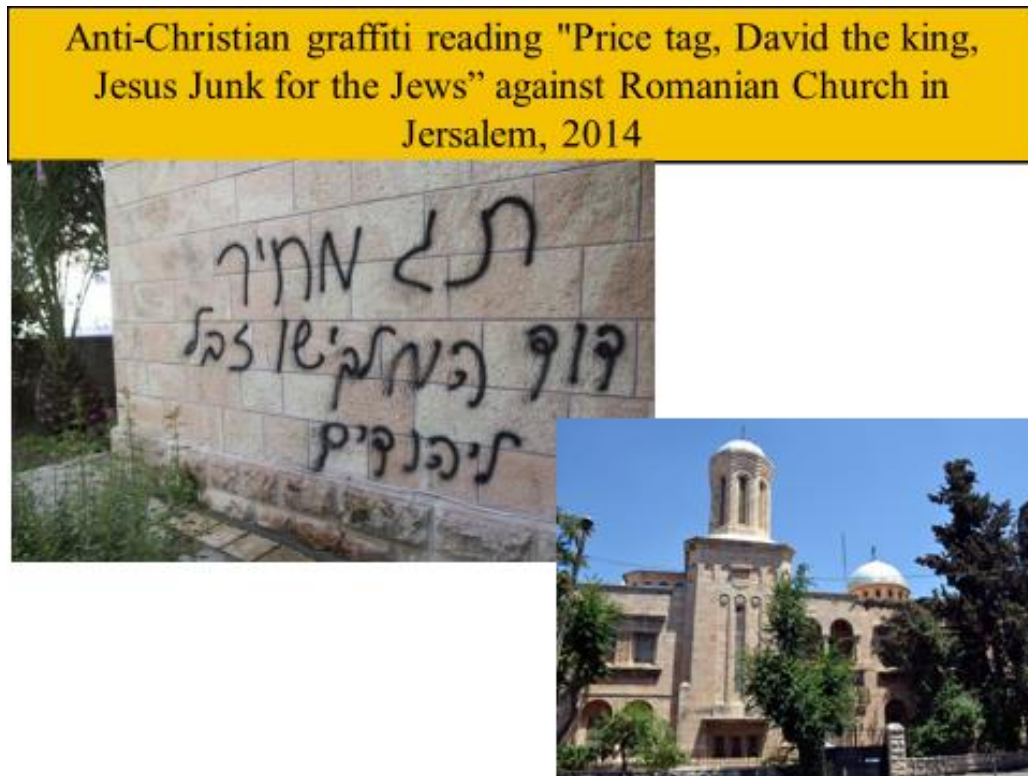


Figure 63: Illustrative photo of anti-Christian graffiti reading "Price tag, David the king, Jesus Junk for the Jews" spray painted on the Romanian Church in Jerusalem on May 9, 2014 (Photo credit: Yonatan Sindel/Flash90) <https://www.timesofisrael.com/church-defaced-in-jerusalem-in-suspected-price-tag-attack/>

**12- Arson attack against the Patriarchal Hieratical School of St Sion:** At 4:00 am of Thursday the 13<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> of February 2015, two unknown masked men deposited burning material in the building of the Patriarchal Hieratical School of St Sion through a bathroom window in the east wing which is adjacent to the Patriarchate's cemetery. The complex, which includes the Church of the Holy Trinity, houses the Hieratical School and the boarding house for high school and lyceum students trained to join the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood. The fire was perceived by the Israeli Police and Fire Department which rushed to extinguish it, thus preventing human losses. Damages were caused to the building, including profane graffiti sprayed on the walls. The same Church was attacked on the 30<sup>th</sup> December 2014 by an extreme settler, who damaged a cross and a statue at the Church.



**Arson attack burning the Patriarchal Hieratical School of St Sion , February 2015**



*Figure 64: deposited burning material in the building of the Patriarchal Hieratical School of St Sion through a bathroom window next to the cemetery*

**13- Extremists Price tags and slogans to vandalize the Benedictine monastery (Dormition Abbey):**

In the morning of 17 January 2016 monks of the Benedictine monastery, located on Mount Zion, woke up on drawings on the walls of their Church by extremists Jews saying “Christians to Hell,” “Death to the heathen Christians the enemies of Israel,” and “May his name be obliterated”. This incident has recently become frequent against the same Church.

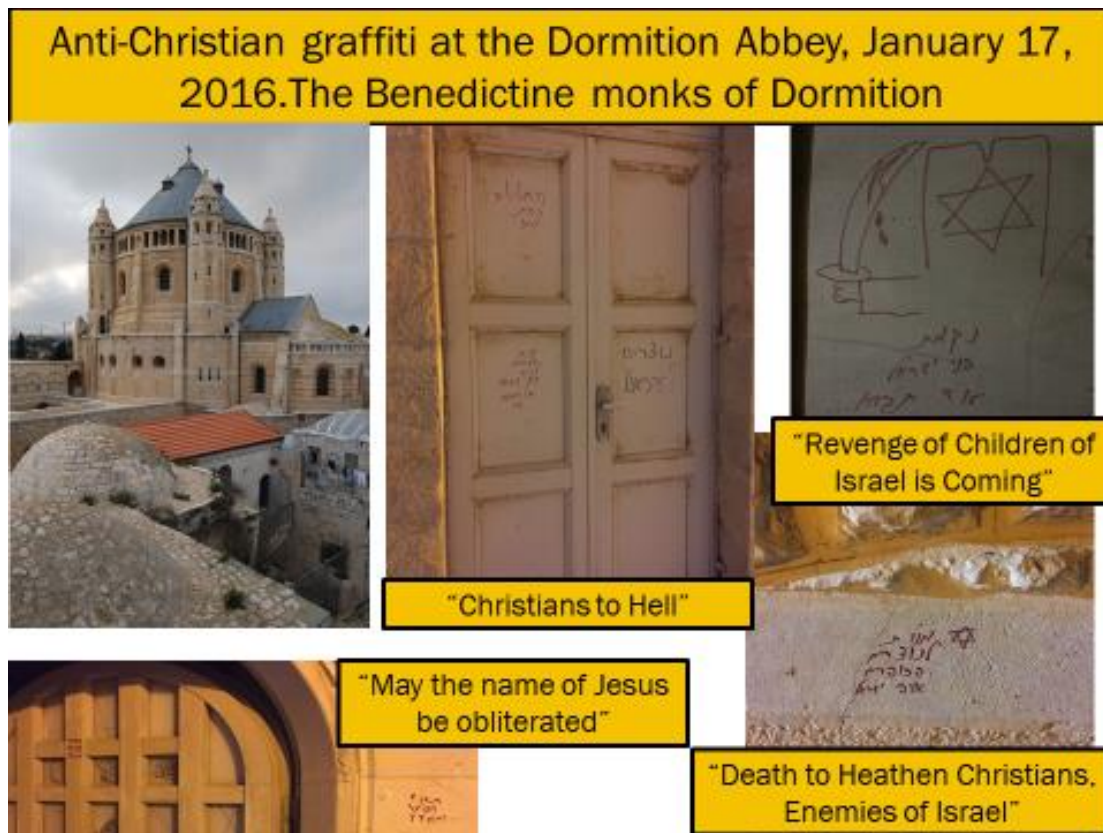


Figure 65: Anti-Christian graffiti reading 'May his name be obliterated' at the Dormition Abbey, January 17, 2016. The Benedictine monks of Dormition

<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-jewish-extremists-vandalize-a-jerusalem-abbey-1.5391716>

**14- Burning the Church of the Dome of Ascension on Mount of Olives:** On March 8<sup>th</sup> 2017, the newly-renovated Dome of Ascension was set to fire and vandalized by unknown extremists. The Church of Ascension was renovated by His Majesty King Abdullah II in January 2017. The police did not reveal the vandals until writing this report.



*Figure 66: Two months after renovation, Dome of Ascension vandalized; on the right Awqaf and Patriarchate of Jerusalem monitor damages of March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017*

**15- Calls for ban of Christmas celebrations in Jerusalem:** In November 2016, head of Lahava extremist organization **called for ban of Christmas celebrations in the city of Jerusalem under the explanation that these celebrations are against “Jewish holiness.”** In another hostile and anti-Jerusalem heritage statement in December 2016, Jerusalem city rabbinate informed hotels that displaying Christmas trees contravenes Jewish law and is prohibited. Reprinted on a website, the rabbinate’s letter also said hotels should not hold New Year’s parties on December 31<sup>st</sup>, since Jews observe a different new year.

**16- Greek Orthodox Seminary set on fire.** On February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015, the seminary was vandalized with anti-Christian and ultra-nationalist Israeli graffiti, including many abusing drawings painted at the walls of the Church.



Figure 67: Up right: an example of the graffiti at Dormition Abbey reads "May His name (Jesus) and memory be erased."

**17- Israeli flag raised above an entry of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher:** On November 1<sup>st</sup> 2016, Arab Knesset members and Christian leaders in Jerusalem asked the Israeli authorities to remove the Israeli flag from top of the eastern entry of the Church of Holy Sepulcher. The statements considered the rising of a political flag over a religious site, as a violation of the status quo and enforcement of Occupation symbol over a worship holy site.



Against Status Quo and Corpus Separtum, Israeli flag raised the eastern entrance to the Church of Holy Sepulcher



*Figure 68: Israeli flag waving over an entry to Church of Holy Sepulcher*

#### **18- Israeli settlers violate Status Quo in the Gethsemane opposite to Church of Resurrection on**

**Mt. Olives:** On the morning of Tuesday, the 26<sup>th</sup> of October and on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2016, St Demetrius feast-day, Israeli settlers, members of the Ateret Cohanim extreme right organization, striving to liberate the Holy Land from non-Jewish elements and, in the same spirit, seizing Patriarchal property opposite the Church of the Resurrection in 1991, namely St John Hostel – in breach of a judicial agreement and deceiving the Israeli Police in Jerusalem, set an iron fence and broke the roof on the Dependency of Gethsemane opposite the Church of the Resurrection in order to gain access inside. Hagiotaphite Fathers, Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitoliass, Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Archimandrite Mathew and others, led by His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, strongly protested to the Israeli Police on the breach of a court to maintain the situation in the hostel, as well as on the violation of the status quo in the Church of the Resurrection, seeing that the aforesaid chapel stands within its area.



*Figure 69: Damage and desecration of the Gethsemane Church, Nov. 2016*

[http://spc.rs/eng/israeli\\_settlers\\_violate\\_status\\_quo\\_church\\_resurrection](http://spc.rs/eng/israeli_settlers_violate_status_quo_church_resurrection)

**19- St. John Hostel Settlers violate pilgrimage Status Quo again and again:** On Sunday, the 31<sup>st</sup> of October/13<sup>th</sup> of November and Monday the 1<sup>st</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> of November 2016, settlers-invaders of St John Hostel, members of the Ateret Cohanim organization, misinterpreting and distorting a temporary agreement signed between the Patriarchate's legal consultants and their own legal consultants, entered a room that does not belong to the hostel they have been occupying, but to the building complex of Gethsemane Dependency, and set to work there by force and arbitrarily, whilst preventing the Patriarchate's workman to work as agreed. Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem went to the site on Monday, accompanied by Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina and Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis, the Greek Consul to Jerusalem and they strongly protested against the Hostel's settlers, whilst also calling on the Israeli Police to stop the violation.



*Figure 70: Settlers frequent aggressions against St. John Hostel in an attempt to confiscate the place*  
<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/st-john-hostel-settlers-violate-pilgrimage-status-again/>

**20- Ignorance and misrepresentation of Nea Maria Church excavations:** There were new violations committed against the Nea Maria Church located in the southern part of the Old City of Jerusalem in 2015 through 2018. The site was excavated by Israeli Occupation Authorities in the 1970s. This magnificent Byzantine church was constructed in the Sixth Century A.D. The location is not open for visitors and is highly neglected due to an Israeli municipality plan to establish a parking lot in its place. The Jewish neighborhood already has its own parking lot (as shown in the picture below) and expanding it, at the expense of huge parts of the Nea Maria Church remains, will only enhance Judaization plans. In 2015, many constructions of culture and sport activities have been imposed on the small area between the Nea Church and the Southern Wall of the Old City of Jerusalem while the historic vaults and arches of the Church continue to be neglected and left without any conservation or even a guard to protect the Old Church invaluable remains. Part of the Church was developed by the municipality and open, as children's playing park.





Figure 71: Nea Maria Church remains south of Jewish Quarter's parking lot

**21- ST. Marry Hospice of the German Knights:** The remains of the Church are located in the middle of the contemporary Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. ST. Marry Hospice of the German Nights Church was built during the Crusader period (12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Century C.E.). The Church is now almost in ruins although its walls are in good shape. The Church has recently suffered a lot of ignorance and attempts of Judaization. Jewish prayer scroll, known as Mezoza, is at the entrance of the Church and many Jewish religious celebrations are organized in the Church and in its eastern plaza. The hanging of the Mezoza at the main gate of the Church means the site is either used by Jews for prayer or resided by Jews, as their home.





*Figure 72: German knights Church, where many religious Jewish celebrations are organized, especially Rosh Khodesh (beginning of the month)*

**22- IOA removal of historical grille of the Church of Holy Sepulcher:** IOA infringed upon the Western Wall of the Church of Holy Sepulcher; the wall is integral part of the Waqf historical building of Al-Khanqah Al-Salahiya. The IAA confiscated the antique metal protection grille located therein, noting that the Israeli Occupation authorities had erected a new unauthentic grille and did not return back the original one until now.

Fake grille replaced the original historic one stolen from the entrance to the upper closed western gate of the Church of Holy Sepulcher



*Figure 73: In 2010 the original iron grille, with historic symbols, was take out by Israeli authorities under the excuse of renovating and returning it, still disappeared in 2019*

**24- Taxation threat to change Status Quo and confiscate Church properties:** Beginning of 2018, Churches and Islamic Awqaf were in panic situation due to Jerusalem's Municipality release (February 4) stating that "The Municipality of Jerusalem began collecting Arnona (municipal tax) from properties belonging to the Churches which are used for commerce and other activities – debts that Israel has banned the municipality to collect since 1967. Anglican Church's bank accounts of a school and a hotel were frozen and reserved by a municipal order. The municipality expected to collect about \$191m from the Churches. **Jerusalem Council of 13 Churches**, headed by Patriarch Theophilos strongly protested the move and, when the municipality escalated the seizure on more Churches' accounts, the Churches were obligated to close off the Holy Sepulcher on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018, for first time since hundreds of years ago. **This threat is flagrant violation of Status Quo for the following reasons:**

- This is serious violation of the status quo, exempting all churches and religious institutions' properties from taxes since 1850. This status quo authorized by Sultan Abdul-Majid was respected by

Berlin Agreement 1855, British Mandate 1920, Jordan government 1948-1967 and the Israeli Occupation until February 2018.

- Once the Churches refuse or are unable to pay the tax, the municipality would help religious-Zionist organizations to either buy real estate of churches or to buy the “right of using it” by paying the tax.
- The rule will change not only Status Quo, but also Holy Sites’ definitions and map by separating places of worship from their endowments, mainly schools, hotels and hospitals.
- Churches say their hotels and schools financial returns have been used to cover the expenses of the Churches’ candles, priests, nuns, orphans, and Jerusalem poor.
- Residents and tenants of Christian and Islamic Waqf houses and commerce stores have already been obligated to pay Arnona Tax since long time ago.

The Church of Holy Sepulcher was reopened on by the Jerusalem Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Armenian Patriarchate and the Franciscan Holy Custody on February 27<sup>th</sup>, when Israel responded to Churches and international pressure by halting the taxation rule. On behalf of the Patriarchs, Jerusalem Council of Churches and the Council of Churches in Jordan, as well as thousands of pilgrims, Patriarch Theophilos III sent a letter of gratitude to HM King Abdullah II, as Custodian of Jerusalem’s Christian Holy Sites, for the support HM has given to them in the tax crisis.

### **CHAPTER 3: ISRAELI VIOLATIONS AGAINST THE HISTORIC CHARACTER OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM AND ITS WALLS**

**2017 through 2019 marks an intensive period of exclusive Judaization of Jerusalem history:** Israeli illegal intrusive tunneling, excavations, projects of Judaization of historic sites in the Old City of Jerusalem and its surroundings have been escalating more than any time before. This chapter updates the violations, some of them mentioned in previous annual reports, and it brings examples of the ongoing Judaization processes, through which many non-Jewish historic sites are either removed and/or converted into Jewish prayer spaces.

During the year 2017-2018, excavations have continued rapidly within the areas at the western and southern walls of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif. News plans started implementation and new developments east and south of Al-Aqsa Mosque have been permitted. The Umayyad palaces south of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif have been awkwardly suffering many eroding under and over ground excavations both at the southern wall of Al-Aqsa and at the entrance of Silwan next to the southern wall of the Old City of Jerusalem. Most works focused on changing function and identity of the historic site of the Umayyad Waqf and archaeological site.

In the so-called Western wall tunnels, hundreds of square meters are under excavations and unearthing. The illegal excavations involve removing large amounts of historic remains (e.g., walls, rooms, graves, Mamluk and Ottoman baths and arches). Few samples of the removed or the preserved remains are logically documented.

One excessive threat is that the Israel Antiquities Authorities (IAA) has been illegitimately self-declared as having jurisdiction to conduct the excavations; and IAA writes an exclusivist Jewish narrative to many sites in the Old City and in its environs. The worst development is the fact that most of the recent excavations have been delegated by the IAA to be the extremist settlers' organizations, such as *Elad* and *Ateret Cohanim*. Due to the Israeli official support, the two extremist organizations have won so many legal and political fights in their realm of controlling more historic sites in the Umayyad places, Western Wall Plaza, the Jewish Quarter, Silwan and in the surrounding area of the Old City, well-known as the Holy Basin.



Our previous Status Reports highlighted the IOA's trend to categorize so many sites in and around the Old City of Jerusalem, as national parks – especially in Silwan, where settlers' projects are culturally and politically indifferent to the dense population and sensitive nature of the Old City and its adjoining Palestinian neighborhoods. The Israeli government's tolerance with settlers' organizations enables the latter to exploit tourism as a tool for reinforcing settlement initiatives in the Old City and its environs, erasing the significant historic layers and Palestinian presence there, and propagating the entire area as Jewish. Their main goal is to impose a religious-nationalistic Jewish character that blurs the authentic nature of the space, primarily in disadvantage of the Muslim identity and presence in the sites.

In 2017, at least 10 touristic settlement sites in the hearts of the Muslim Quarter, Bab Al-Rahmah Cemetery, Bab Al-Asbat pathway to Al-Aqsa, Silwan, Ras al-Amud and At-Tur, Al-Suwanneh, Al-Qa'ah Land and Damascus Gate advanced in the planning and implementation: a plan for a **visitors' center in the cemetery on the Mount of Olives in Ras al Amud**; a plan for a **promenade in the center of At-Tur** that would create a continuum between the settlements of Beit Orot in the heart of Mount Olives; a plan for the **Kedem Compound at the entrance to Silwan** (officially approved), the plan for a **cable car linking to the Kedem Compound**, and a **bridge above the Hinnom Valley** (building permit approved), a plan for excavation and reconstruction of the **pathways in Bab Al-Rahmah and Al-Yusfiyah Cemeteries**; Beith Ha-Libah **multi floors building in Al-Buraq Plaza** (already started) and many other projects to be described in this report below.

The two 2017 significant mega projects officially approved by the Israeli government are the **Kedem Compound** in Silwan, a four-story visitors' center planned and promoted by the Elad settler organization, and **the cable car over the Old City** and the cable car, which will start in West Jerusalem to transport passengers to the Magharbeh Gate and to the mount of Olives in a later phase. **Below are the major ongoing violations of Status Quo against the historic character of the Old City of Jerusalem:**

## A-INTRUSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS, TUNNELING and UNDERGROUND EXCAVATIONS AT THE WESTERN WALL OF AL-AQSA MOSQUE and AL-BURAQ PLAZA

1- **Changing Status Quo from Wailing Wall to Western Wall:** “Al-Aqsa Mosque” and “Al-Haram Al-Sharif” are identical terms and should consistently be referred to jointly as the “Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif”, which denotes the entire 144-dunum compound.\* Sacred to approximately 1.8 billion Muslims worldwide, it is in Islam the site of the Prophet’s night journey, *Isra wa Miraj*. It is the original *Qibla* (i.e, direction for prayer) for Muslims. **The Western Wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif** extends from south to north 491 meters long (see lined in red in the figure below).

**Al-Buraq Wall** is historically believed to be the place, where the Prophet Muhammed (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) tied the Buraq, the winged riding animal upon which he rode during the Night of Ascension (see lined in green in the figure below). **Al-Buraq Plaza** is part of the Western Wall of Al-Aqsa and it is the Western Wall of Al-Buraq Mosque located inside Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif. **Al-Buraq Plaza** has been known and used for decades, as the “**Wailing Wall**”<sup>4</sup>, defined as the Jewish prayer area, which, according to pre-1967 *Status Quo*, used to be 3 meters wide by 22 meters along part of the Baraq Wall outside al-Aqsa.

After 1967, the Israeli military demolished the houses, mosques and schools of the **Magharbeh Quarter** and started an ongoing violation of the *Status Quo* by expanding the “Wailing Wall” Jewish prayer area into the so-called the “**Western Wall**” Jewish prayer area, **expanded from 3 meters wide by 22 meters long in 1967 to more than 90 meters wide by 70 meters long in 2015 and these extensions enforcing**

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<sup>4</sup> Under the terms of the Status Quo on holy sites, a decree fixed the Ottoman Sultan in 1757 and codified in more detail by a British government Commission in 1922, 1929 and 1933 the Wall is a Muslim Waqf property and the Waqf owns the Buraq Wall and the Buraq Plaza in front of the wall. In these decrees, Jews have the right to stand on the pavement in front of it and pray. The 1920s confrontations led the British Mandate to form a commission in 1930 with the approval of the Council of the League of Nations, to determine the rights and claims of Muslims and Jews in connection with Al-Buraq Wall, referred to by Jews as Wailing Wall. The report concluded: “*To the Moslems belong the sole ownership of, and the sole proprietary, right to, the western wall, seeing that it forms an integral part of Al-Haram Al-Sharif area, which is a Waqf property. To the Moslems there also belongs the ownership of the pavement in front of the wall and of the adjacent so called Magharbeh (Moroccan) Quarter opposite the wall, inasmuch as the last mentioned property was made Waqf under Moslem Shari’ah law.*” See Harman, Graham; *the Mufti and the Wailing Wall, A History of Palestine*, Princeton University Press, 2008. And Kassim, Anis F; *Special Report, the Palestine Yearbook of International Law 1996-1997*, Martinus Nijhoff 1998.

**new Israeli facts on the ground are continuing.** During 2017, the Israeli institutions including the Prime Minister Office, Western Wall Rabbinate, Israel Chief Rabbinate, Elad Extremist NGO, IAA, Reform Jews and Jerusalem Municipality have been in intensive confrontations over the Western Wall area south to the Magharbeh Gate Pathway. The discussions and confrontations have presented the planned divisions, as an intra-Jewish conflict, ignoring that fact that this is a Waqf property and it has been part of Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif for centuries.



*Figure 74: Status Quo Definitions of the Western Wall, Al-Buraq Wall and the Wailing Wall*



Figure 75: Left: western wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif, Al-Buraq Wall and “the Wailing Wall”; Right up: expansion of “the Wailing Wall” from 3x22sqm before 1967 to unlimited plaza



**1930, British Mandate's Commission / Council of the League of Nations on Al-Haram Al-Sharif determined the following:**

**“To the Muslims belong the sole ownership of, and the sole proprietary, right to, the western wall, seeing that it forms an integral part of *Al-Haram Al-Sharif* area, which is a *Waqf* property. To the Muslims there also belongs the ownership of the pavement in front of the wall and of the adjacent so called Magharbeh Quarter opposite the wall, in as much as the last mentioned property was made *Waqf* under Muslim *Shari'ah* law, it being dedicated to charitable purposes.”**

*Figure 76: British Mandate Definition: Western Wall is integral part of Al-Haram Al-Sharif, Muslim Waqf*

## **2- New Construction at the Northern Edge of Al-Buraq Plaza – “Beit Strauss”:**

After the inauguration of the first floor of so called Beit Strauss building on December 25<sup>th</sup> 2016 the Judaization of the building continued in 2017 and the second floor was completed and opened to the public and police services. The lower floor is used, as a passageway to the Western Wall tunnel. Construction and Judaization developments in the third and fourth floors are continuous while unearthing of huge amounts of remains from under the ground has also continued during the year 2016.

Beit Strauss (the ‘Strauss Building’), is a building located on the northern edge of Al-Buraq Plaza, the expanded “Western Wall Plaza”. The IOA’s so-called **Western Wall Heritage Foundation** advanced in implementing its architectural plans to expand the structure, by confiscating 360 square meters from the open plaza. The project blocks the northern edge of the Buraq Plaza by Judaized structures and functions. During 2017 through 2018, intensive work continued to develop and open a large area of toilets over the archaeological remains. Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf has kept an eye and reported on different phases of the project in the previous Jerusalem status reports submitted to UNESCO World Heritage Centre since 2014.

The major violations by Israeli Occupation Authorities and the project organizers of the new construction of Beit Strauss were:

1. The IAA's intention came out to an agreement with the designers that the building would rest on piles of historic remains, avoiding salvage excavations and restricting IAA's role of observation. Awqaf or UNESCO were banned access of oversight of the works.
2. Beit Strauss is a visual pollution and direct threat to the historic complex fabric and the archaeological environment of the area.
3. Beit Strauss is flagrant damage to the historic skyline view of most sensitive part of the Old City.
4. Tons of cubic meters of concrete were poured in deep holes that were used as foundations to the new building over the historic walls and remains.
5. Extensive drilling in the site damaged invaluable walls and rooms beneath the surface.
6. Experts, journalists and domestic people were shocked of eye witnessing and documenting process of bulldozing earth and stones.
7. It is very terrible that the building of two stories kept a few historic vaults and renovated them to be used as toilets at the place where ancient walls of schools of religion stood for centuries.
8. Beit Strauss blocked the walls of the Muslim Quarter. In 2015 through-2017 an extra floor has been built threatening to block the windows of the Arab Sub Laban and Al-Khalidi families and more importantly blocking the south-western facade of the Shar'iyah Court, well known as the Tankaziyah School.
9. Under security excuses, many cameras have been installed to monitor and record movement of members of Sub Laban and Khalidi families inside their living rooms and other parts of their houses.



Figure 77: 2013-2016 demolitions for the construction of Beit Strauss on Muslim Waqf properties

### 3- “Beit Haliba”: changing history and shape of Al-Buraq Plaza

On 13 February 2018, the Israeli authorities settled a crane and other equipment in the location designated for establishing the Judaization project of Beit Haliba. The construction process continued significantly through the end of 2018 beginning of 2019. According to the project approved in 2015 and tabled by the “*Israeli Company for the Reconstruction and Development of the Jewish Quarter*” with full support by the Israeli municipality, the Israeli authorities intend to establish a three storey building on an area of 2825 square meters. The IOA started this multipurpose religious and museum project near the western wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque in 2018.

According to publications on this project, the first 740-square-meter floor of this Talmudic center will include administrative rooms, educational centers, auditorium, VIP lounge and festive hall. The second 765-square-meter room will include a library, religious educational room and room for the guides in addition to an open glassed-balcony on the roof overlooking the Western Wall and al-Aqsa Mosque. The underground 1320-square-meter floor will exhibit remnants of archeological assets found

after years of excavations and the Israeli authorities unilaterally claim they belong to the first and second Temple periods. The project's location is around 100 meters away from the Western Wall to the far northwestern side of it and will be established on an area of 1840 square meters.

In spite of more than a decade of protests of the project at the Israeli courts, "Beit Haliba" has been approved in the middle of the location, where the Magharbeh Quarter was standing for decades. It is the place of the contemporary expanded "Western Wall Plaza", which was known for decades as Al-Buraq Plaza, part of which was the "Wailing Wall". The last few houses of the Magharbeh Quarter were confiscated and demolished in 2003-2004 in order to prepare the space for constructing the planned Beit HaLiba.



*Figure 78: Massive archaeological facts disappeared through Beit HaLiba excavations*

Excavating the area and approving the construction of "Beit Haliba", the IOA is violating and changing the *Status Quo* in blatant violation of international law and UNESCO conventions and decisions of conservation of Jerusalem Heritage by the following violations:



1. Beit Haliba has the same illegal status in international law as Israeli settlements scattered all over the occupied city and West Bank.
2. In 2003-2004, the IOA has confiscated and demolished the last houses of the Magharbeh Quarter, demolished a few days after the June 1967.
3. The Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) has conducted covert excavations at the site between 2005 through 2017. Israeli reports say important findings were exposed in the course of first excavations including large vaulted structures, a Sheikh's tomb, a bakery, shops and other findings from the Ottoman, Mamluk and early Islamic Periods.
4. The IAA has closed off the site in front of observers, the public and Israeli experts for more than 12 years and this closure is continued.
5. The absence of salvage excavations before receiving a construction permit leaves many questions on which remains were removed and or moved from their original place.
6. Observers say the remains at Beit HaLiba were scarce large structures with elaborate façades and vaults built above the eastern Cardo centuries. Some of them survived to their full height. East of the Cardo, part of a large public building was exposed. These were the remains of al-Madrasah al-Afdaliya (later known as Sheikh Eid Mosque), constructed around the 12<sup>th</sup> century.
7. Israeli experts say most of the remains from the Islamic periods were dismantled, and the archaeology was pushed to the ideological restrictions.
8. The underground level will serve various purposes: security checks, elevators, passages for visitors and other unannounced functions at the heart of one of the most sensitive historic sites in Jerusalem.
9. Israeli experts, who protested "Beit HaLiba" say there was no architectural competition, except between ideologists, extreme settler groups and religious foundations. The IOA has been giving an upper hand in planning the area to the Western Wall Heritage Foundation, *Elad* Foundation and *Ateret Cohamin* (all are extreme ideological organizations), whose announced plans are bluntly to improve transportation, parking places and capacity of Jewish visitors to the area.
10. Israeli Antiquities Authority claims it keeps samples of the remains. It is well known that it will be impossible to preserve and to display archaeological remains in the areas planned for new constructions and public serves.
11. Learning from other excavations by Israeli right wing and extremist groups, the major challenge will be the description narrative of the remains and the impracticality to reverse neither the removed remains nor the right history after years of enforcement of a Judaized narrative.



*Figure 79: Continued covert, expanded and illegal excavations at the site of the historic Magharbeh Quarter; up left is example of remains (some removed), up right is Plan of Liba House building*

Beit HaLiba 2019, Construction covering historic remains and changing historic shape of the Buraq Plaza/Magharbeh Quarter



*Figure 80: Beit Haliba 2018/2019 plan implemented*

**4- Systematic Demolition of the Magharbeh Gate Pathway (MGP) 2004-2018:** Demolitions and construction plans at the MGP site have continued since 2007 through 2018 in a persistent change of the historic identity of the site. These violations include the following:

1. The IOA continues to prevent the owner of the MGP, the entrusted Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf, from performing emergency restorations and stabilization measures to the Umayyad, Ottoman and Mamluk remains at the site of the Magharbeh Gate Pathway. The IOA also continues to ban the implementation of the Jordanian MGP design, which was submitted to UNESCO in 2012. Many UNESCO decisions urged Israel to enable Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf to execute its design.
2. 2014 through 2018 has witnessed extensive excavations beneath the MGP remains.



*Figure 81: Systematic demolitions of historic room, walls and continued excavations and constructions at the MGP, 2004 through 2017.*

3. Unlawful secret excavations under tents at the MGP site, especially during the period 2012, as shown in figure 85 above. Under these tents, as in the picture above, historic remains, including entire rooms and parts of the Al-Afdaliyya Mosque were removed.

4. To the south of the MGP, the expansion of the Jewish prayer areas involved many excavations plans leveling historic remains. In July 2018, Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf demanded the Occupation Authorities to stop excavations that might be the direct reason for falling of a 100kg stone from the Western Wall of Al-Aqsa / the Western Wall of the Islamic Museum. In January 2019, Jordanian Foreign Ministry and Awqaf demanded Israel to remove the scaffolds, which the Israeli authorities installed 5meters high and 12 meters long at the Western Wall of the Al-Aqsa / the Museum.

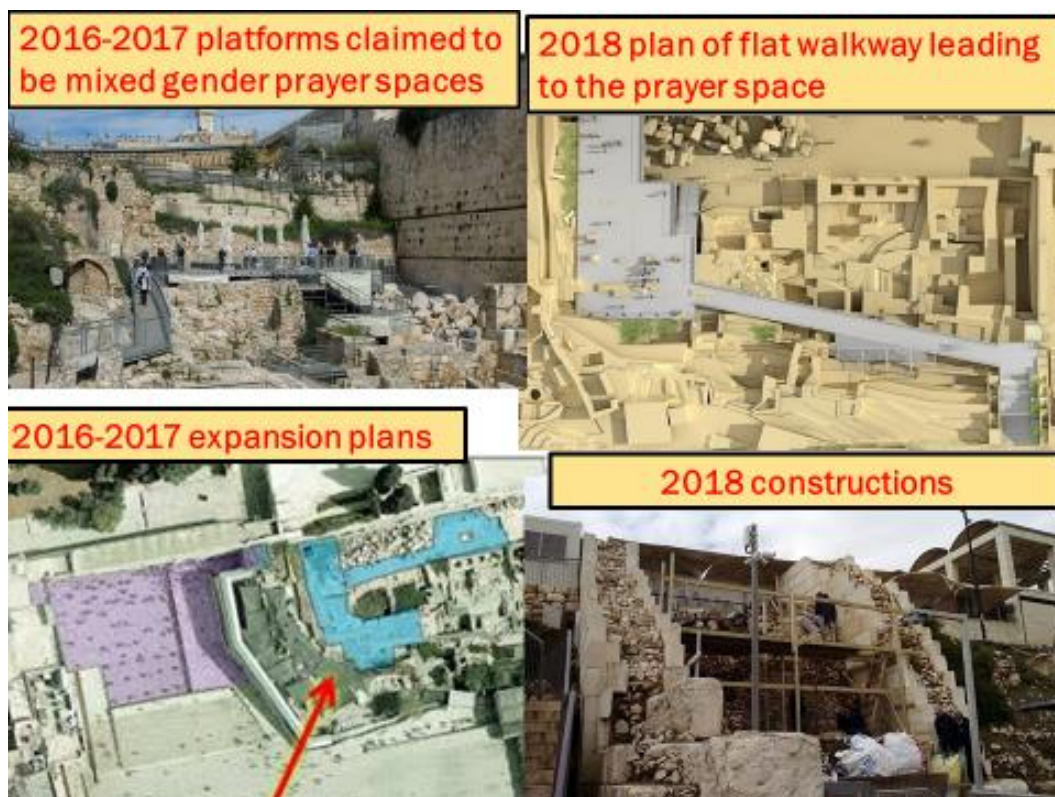
Huge wooden platforms and pathways, under the excuse of the need for separate prayer spaces for Jewish reform and conservatives are still standing until April 2019. In fact, these platforms are part of the plans



to expand the "Western Wall Plaza." In addition to the non-Orthodox platform, known as egalitarian or US Liberal Jews prayer platform built up in 2013, there were two new platforms constructed on the Western Wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque in 2015. The later small was assigned to Orthodox Jews and this proves that the plan is to convert the whole area southern to the MGP into an extension to the "Western Wall Plaza" north of the MGP.

6. The fact that the US conservative Jewish movement welcomed the new construction while the Reform Movement condemned the government for pushing ahead with the construction without consulting any of the other parties involved could prove that the platforms will fall in hands of the conservatives and the extremist Elad Orthodox organization. This is exactly what happened in the deals between the government and Elad organization in 2018.

7. On June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu froze the 2016 compromise while the PM ordered the construction to be expedited of the new plaza.



*Figure 82: construction and plans of new Jewish prayer platforms next to and at the wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque allegedly for US and liberal Jews, 2013 through 2017*

## B- EXCAVATIONS AND JUDAIZATION OF THE UMMAYYAD PALACES

During 2017 through 2018, remains of the Umayyad palaces continue to face intensive excavations and faking of the scientific archaeological narrative of walls, water cisterns and antiquities. The worst development was the normalization of the Judaization of the function of the palaces and the increase of Jewish rituals, celebrations and tolerating extremists to conduct Jewish Passover sacrifice in 2018. One of the flagrant violations recorded was the covering of the remains with either newly created Jewish prayer plazas or hundreds of square meters of wooden and metal pathways of the so claimed “Jewish ritual baths.” The Umayyad palaces represent an example of the flagrant enforced Judaization and faking history of the Jerusalem historic remains.

The Umayyad Palaces located south and West of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif were built in the period, when the current structure of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif was built by the Umayyad Khalifs Abdel Malik Bin Marwan and his son Al-Walid Bin Abdel Al-Malik 662AC (41Hijri) to 750BC (132Hijri). The Umayyads gave high importance to Jerusalem and considered it their spiritual capital since it is one of the third holiest sites in Islam. Archaeological excavations, led by Israeli professors Me’ir Ben-Dov, Dan Bahat and Benjamin Mazar during the 1960s through 1980s have explored foundations of four large palaces. These palaces surround the south and south-western walls of Al-Aqsa Mosque and they were connected by stairs, bridges, pathways and gates to Al-Aqsa Mosque different levels, including the well-known Al-Aqsa Al-Qadim (the Old Aqsa) also known as the Lower Al-Aqsa beneath the current upper Qibli Mosque / Al-Jame’ Al-Aqsa, which was almost double size of the current Qibli Mosque / Al-Jame’ Al-Aqsa (please see the figure below). The Marwani Mosque was also well known as the Old Aqsa before the crusaders. Israeli Professor of Archaeology Meir Ben-Dov, who led and documented most of the excavations at the Umayyad Palaces, has written tens of articles and books, such as “the Discovery of Ancient Jerusalem” describing the structures of the Umayyad Palaces.

Scientific archaeological interpretation and redrawing of the Umayyad Palaces south and west of Al-Aqsa Mosque prove that the underground gates (single, double and dribble in the south and the so called underground Barclay gate of Al-Aqsa in the west) were all gates of Al-Aqsa Mosque used by Umayyad and Muslim worshippers during the first Islamic eras.

## Israeli experts prove history of surroundings of Al-Aqsa was Umayyad Emirate palaces area

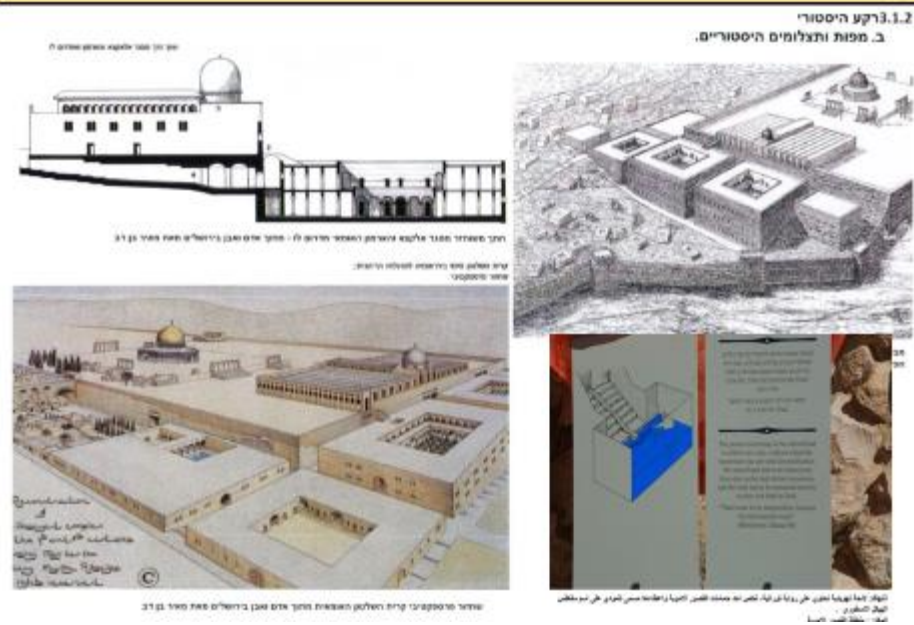


Figure 83: Umayyad Palaces and Al-Aqsa Mosque in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Centuries AC

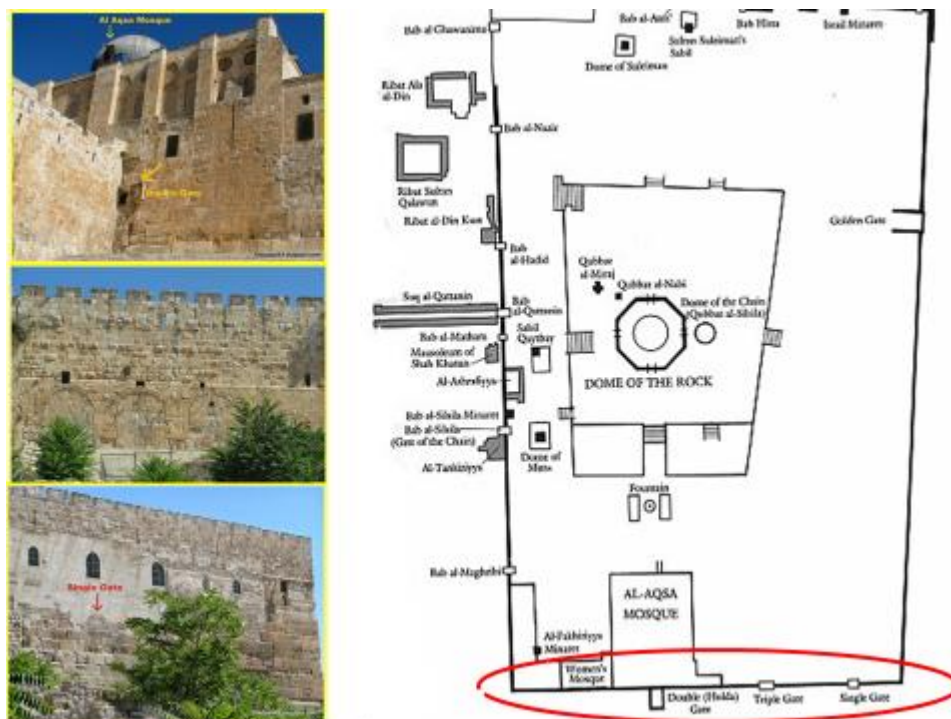


Figure 84: Left to right: Double, Triple and Single Gates of Al-Aqsa Mosque southern wall





Figure 85: Judaization activities of the Umayyad Palaces



Figure 86: Judaization rituals at footsteps of Al-Aqsa at the Umayyad Palaces





Figure 87: examples of illegal and damaging excavations and tunneling at the Umayyad Palaces for imposing Jewish narrative on findings

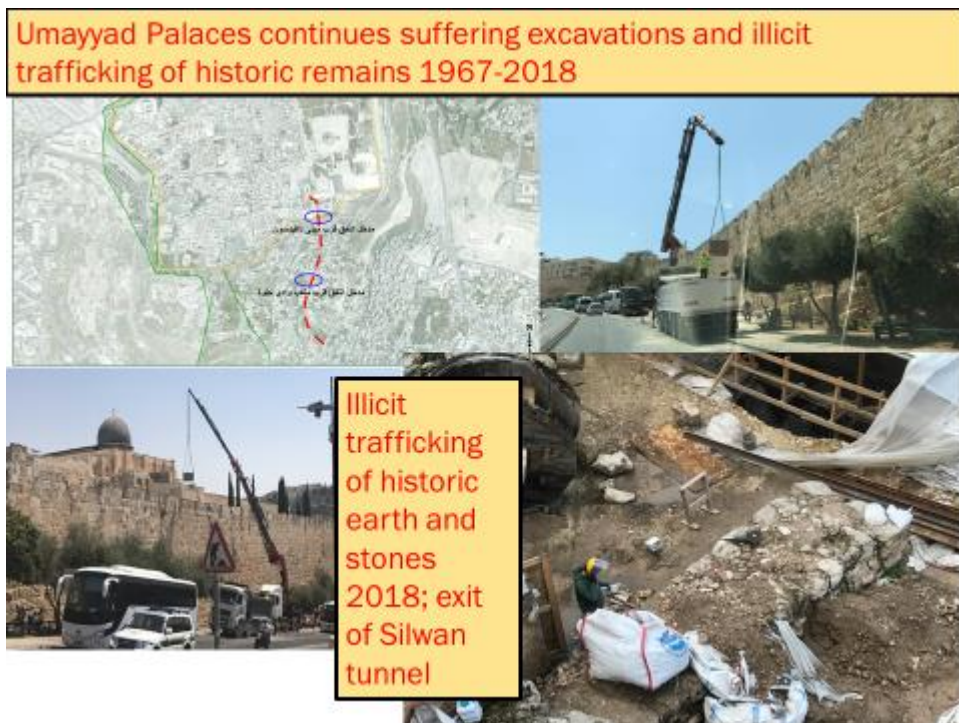


Figure 88: Continued illicit trafficking of archaeological remains



*Figure 89: 2017 has witnessed illicit trafficking of huge amounts of historic remains from the Umayyad palaces.*

Until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Israeli Occupation Authorities and excavators in the area respected, to certain extent, the remains of the Umayyad period and the scientific narrative of it.

Since the year 2000, a move of Judaization by many Israeli official actors and illegal developers of the area have been changing the *Status Quo* and narrative of the Umayyad Palaces by carrying out the following violations:

1. On March 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018 the IOA enabled extremist groups to conduct the role playing of Jewish Passover sacrifice at the Umayyad Palaces. This violation is allowed at the Wall of al-Aqsa for first time since 1967.
2. In November 2018, the Israeli government approved extremist Jewish organization of Elad's control over the rest of the Umayyad palaces both south and south east of the walls of al-Aqsa Mosque. This

control empowers extremists' Judaization narrative over the Old City historic sites in addition to Elad's running tourist and archaeological sites in Silwan, south **of the Old City** walls.

At a government meeting on Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup> 2018, the government approved the agreement to hand to the Elad Foundation operational responsibilities for the Davidson Center archaeological site, located at the foot of Al-Aqsa Mosque/Haram a-Sharif, [https://alt-arch.org/en/elad-davidson\\_en/](https://alt-arch.org/en/elad-davidson_en/). The arrangement strengthens Elad's hold on central antiquity sites in the area between the neighborhood of Silwan and al-Haram el-Sharif. These moves started with the flagrant violations against the Umayyad Palaces in 2013, when the Municipal East Jerusalem Development Company and the Jewish Quarter Development and Reconstruction Company agreed that the extreme settlers *Elad* Foundation would receive extensive rights to the Davidson Centre and thus to almost half of the Umayyad Palaces. *Elad* is now the official most effective manager of the site.

3. During July and August 2017, the El'ad company has transferred huge amounts of earth from the exit of the newly excavated Silwan-Aqsa tunnel. The exit point is located inside the southern corner of the Umayyad Palaces, a few meters east of the Silwan Gate to the Old City.
4. During May and June 2017, the IOA enabled extremist companies to construct a very large platform for Jewish private and ritual celebrations, to thousands of participants were invited in a flagrant desecration and change of the function of the site. The platform was rebuilt and used for national and religious mobilizations several times.
5. On 7<sup>th</sup> of February 2017, the Israeli Occupation Authorities inaugurated the so called "pathway to Jewish ritual baths" in the Eastern side of the Umayyad palaces. The Inauguration by the Jerusalem municipality in cooperation with the so called Jerusalem development project No. 5800 and the Israeli Antiquities authority, was officially protested by the Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2017 and the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf made a media protest on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2017.
6. During January 2017, observers recorded massive amounts of earth and remains evacuated from the Western corner next to the Jerusalem Wall inside the Umayyad palaces. Most of the earth came out of excavating the new Silwan-Western Wall tunnel. The process of earth evacuation from the same earea continued intensively in 2018 through the first half of 2019. Jerusalem Muslim Awqaf never has access and it never knows the nature of excavations running there.



2017 – Eastern Umayyad Palaces officially opened as Jewish ritual baths and prayer platforms



*Figure 90: Judaization of the Umayyad Palaces by enforcing Jewish narrative, descriptions and practice of Jewish prayer at the wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque*

7. Davidson Centre developed at the entrance of the Umayyad Palaces into an extreme Judaization narrative museum, which educated many Israeli students and tourist guides how to show the possibility of demolition of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif and to rebuild Jewish shrine in its places. This move has created a phenomenon of many museums of “Jewish Temple” in the place of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif. *Elad* is running extensive efforts to falsely describe all Umayyad and Roman remains as Jewish remains.
8. *Elad* is converting tens of historic areas into practical Jewish prayer and Jewish celebration spaces, platforms or ritual baths.
9. Linking the Western Wall tunnels with Silwan tunnels already controlled by extreme settlers will encourage *Elad* to accelerate their announced threats to breach in underground parts of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif and to Judaize them.



10. In all excavations managed by *Elad*, Roman periods are predominantly emphasized and displayed as Jewish remains, while the majority of other remains are ignored or removed.

## C- TUNNELING AND EXCAVATIONS UNDER THE MUSLIM QUARTER

**1- Damascus Gate Security Towers:** Since the beginning of 2018, the IOA Israel started the construction of three security towers at the Damascus Gate: two concrete big structures at the main entrances leading from Sultan Suleiman street down into the esplanade of Bab Al-Amoud, and a metal tower was constructed two meters from the wooden gate of the Old City. Jordan and Palestine protested the structures because they change the historic status quo and view of the Damascus Gate in centuries. In addition to the abovementioned towers, Israel has dramatically made many security points at Bab Al-Amoud esplanade and it has created many security police rooms over the stairs of the gate, beneath its bridge and on top of the gate towers.



*Figure 91: Damascus Gate 2018 security towers changing façade of most visible part of the Jerusalem Old City Wall*

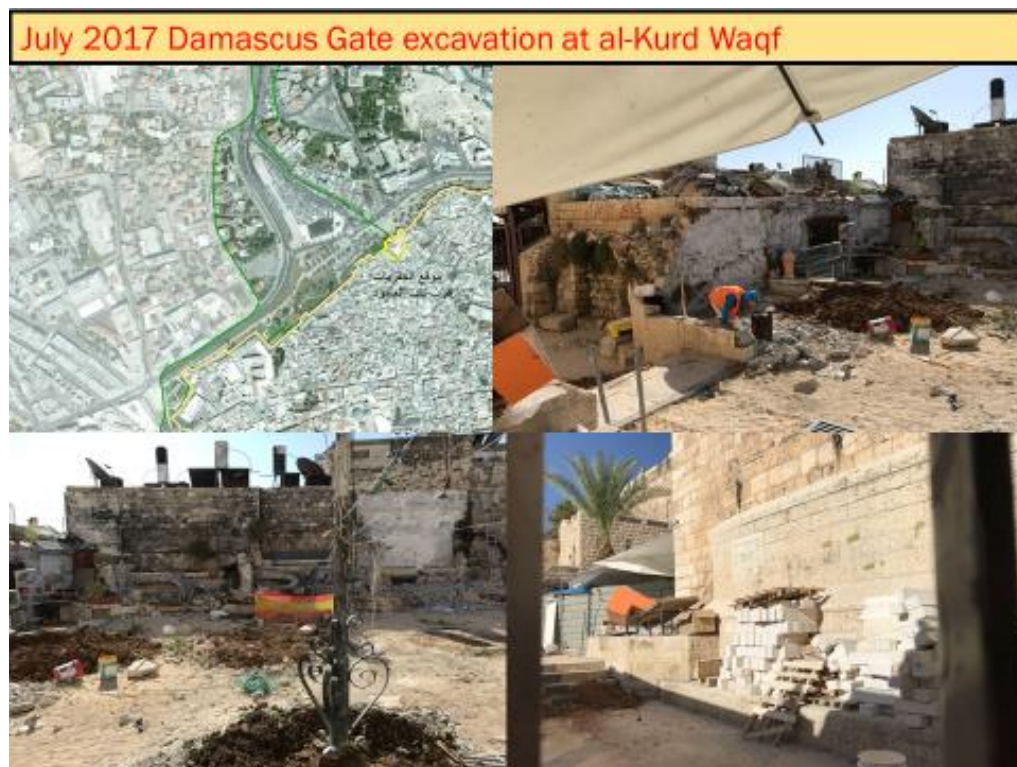


Figure 92: Damascus Gate Judaized and militarized to ban continuity of its authentic Arab character



Figure 93: Damascus Gate esplanades changed into municipal parks with intensive security presence and surveillance cameras

- 2- **Damascus Gate excavations / al-Kurd Waqf:** In June and July 2017, the IOA started extensive works and excavations in the area of Bab Al-Amoud / Damascus Gate inside the Old City of Jerusalem. The excavation purposes are not known. The excavators did not ask for permission from the owners neither from the Waqf authorities. The municipality confiscated the site from al-Kurd family beginning of the 1980s.



*Figure 94: Excavating Al-Kurd Waqf at the Damascus Gate is leading to its confiscation*

- 3- **Sulyman Cave / The Kittan Cave excavations:** Covert and overt excavations and extensive works have been taking place inside the cave since 2008. With an opening access from outside between the Damascus and al-Sahira gates of the Old City, this cave extends beneath the Sa'diyah neighborhood of the Muslim Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. The purpose of the excavations and digging is likely to connect the Kittan Cave and tunnel to the Western Wall tunneling network. The real purposes of the continued tunneling and digging are clearly to impose many Judaization narratives on the parts of the cave. This unilateral Judaization narrative has already been marketed to thousands of tourists since 2012.



The Kittan Cave served as a quarry for hundreds of years during the Ottoman time. The following violations have been carried out by the IAA and other IOAs in the Kittan cave:

1. Massive amounts of concrete have been poured to establish a new exit gate, which had been dug up in the northern wall of the Old City near the Sahira Gate in 2013 through 2014.
2. An exclusivist narrative has been imposed on the location in order to undermine the historic significance of the location as the cave from which the building stones of the Ottoman Wall of the Old City were extracted, a project commissioned by the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Great.
3. A Jewish name has been imposed on the cave and it is now being referred to as “Zedekiah’s Cave” in an attempt to advocate a claim that this is the cave from which the stones of Jewish worship places.
4. In November 2016, reports recorded that the Israeli Occupation Municipality changed the historic name of Al-Asbat Gate to call it the Herod’s Gate. This move was part of the Israeli policy of changing historic names of many other streets.

### 2008-2018 continued tunneling and excavations at Sulayman cave



Figure 95: Sulayman cave is one of major Judaized underground excavations in Old City of Jerusalem

### 3- Judaization of Hammam Tankaz/Khan Tankaz– the Mamluk Bathhouse and Caravansary - “Ohel Yitzhak”

Hammam Tankaz, according to Waqfiyat Tankaz, endowment document preserved among Waqf documents of the Islamic Shar’iyah Court, is a Mumluk Hammam (bathhouse) that was established and constructed by the Mamluk Amir Tankaz Al-Nasiri in 1337 AC / 737Hijri. Amir Tankaz is one of the Amirs of Sultan Al-Naser Muhammad Bin Qalawoon. Hammam Tankaz is divided into two parts, the northern side is well known as **Hammam El-‘Ein**, of which the Waqf authority delegated its administration and renovation to the Department of Archaeology of Al-Quds University and the southern side is **Hammam El-Daraj**, the subject matter of this section, which has been under extensive covert excavations by Israeli Occupation organizations since 2003.

The IOA transformed a Mamluk Hall located 20 meters away from al-Aqsa and near the Qattaneen market into an exhibition hall dedicated to showing a presentation under the title “A Journey to Jerusalem” that

exhibits the connection between the Jewish people and the City of Jerusalem. Observers report that archeological activities are not subject to professional supervision; they are in service of the agenda of settlers' organizations like Elad to take over the activities; the presentation distorts the history of Jerusalem and gives a exclusivist historical narrative.

First Israeli covert excavations at the site of the Mamluk Hammam El-Daraj started in 2001, when a plan of the so-called "Ohel Yitzhak" synagogue was approved to be constructed by the extreme settler Organization of Ateret Cohanim.



*Figure 96: Hamam Tankaz excavated and Judaized.*

**The excavations at the Waqf of Hammam Tankaz violate the international law and all conventions of heritage conservation not only because it has been conducted covertly for the last 12 years but also due to the following violations:**

1. "Ohel Yitzhak" project was transferred by the Occupation settlement donor, the Moskowitz family, to the Western Wall Heritage Foundation. The transfer took place even though the area is not owned by the Western Wall Heritage Foundation. It is well documented as Waqf property of Hammam Tankaz. It

is an ownership of the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf and any transaction related to Hamman Tankez should be managed and permitted by the JJA.

2. Roman Theater discovered: In October 2017, Israeli archaeologists announced the discovery of a Roman Theater in the extended excavations of the Western Wall tunnels west of Hammam Tankaz just below the so-called Wilson arch, which is part of the Buraq Wall. The discovery, although clearly announced as Roman remains, was claimed by many Israeli officials, archaeologists and media articles, as Jewish remains. Rabbi Shmuel Rabinovitch, rabbi of the Western Wall and the holy places said: “Time after time the amazing archaeological findings allow our generation to actually touch the ancient history of our people and Jewish heritage and its deep **connection** to Jerusalem.”

3. Visitors to the site observe that there are many passageways, education centers, prayer rooms and museums accommodating visitors and school children of mainly extremist Jewish organizations. The Hammam visitors are provided with many displays and manipulated information that link tour to Jewish religious history and to the Western Wall tunnels. The later are knocking Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif Western Wall tunnels.

2. The significant archaeological finding is the Mamluk caravansary (the main hall), which has been occupied by table with Torah scroll and other Jewish prayer tools to teach and practice Jewish prayer. This means that the main hall has been converted into a Jewish synagogue, as announced by the Ateret Kohanim settlers although the IAA claim that these are only education tools. From time to time, extreme settlers celebrate the announcement of converting newly excavated spaces into new Jewish synagogues under different names. Visiting the site many times among Jewish Children and visitors, experts reported that the main hall and many other rooms are all focusing solely on Jewish prayer without any correlation to the archaeological finding and the Muslim history of the site.





*Figure 97: Hamam Tankaz (left) connected to the so-called “secret passage” (right), where the Dome of the Rock is shown to be destructed and to be replaced by a model of Jewish Temple; every tourist is informed this was the past and must be the future*



*Figure 98: Roman theatre discovery raises many questions about Israeli exclusivist excavations*

3. The IAA has several times banned the renovation works at Hammam El ‘Ein by Al-Quds University Department of Archaeology in cooperation with the Jerusalem Awqaf (the owner of the property) and with a donation by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). In 2018, parts of Hammam El ‘Ein were renovated and inaugurated by the JJA and Al-Quds University.

4. The work on the ground indicates that the will of the donors supersedes the will to preserve past heritage. Professor Haim Barbé, an Israeli French archaeology expert said that he was shocked to discover the destruction of part of the façade of the building next to the monumental entrance, as well as the destruction of one of the heating pools, all in order to install an elevator and access route to the site.

5. The IAA contradicts its own procedural guidelines and ethical rules of archaeology. Visitors to the site observed massive amounts of concrete, which were poured in and over historic stone remains for the purpose of carrying up the columns of the newly constructed “Ohel Yitzhak” synagogue.

6. The excavations at the site have been conducted with no time and no space limits. Thus, in contrast to professional archaeological work under an excavation permit, the managers of the site and excavations have no legal obligation to excavate using scientific measures. They do not document the findings thoroughly and they hardly publish the findings in an appropriate academic journal.

7. The worst aggression was the beginning, in 2017, to guide top level political leaders to Hamam Tankaz and the Western Wall tunnel in a clear move to politicize archaeological exclusivist Jewish narrative, claiming the Al-Aqsa was a Jewish place, which should be destructed and rebuilt, as Jewish structure.

**The JJA has requested the Israeli Occupation Authorities to stop all illegal excavations at Hamam El-Daraj and to return the management of the site to its owner, who is the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf Department, as soon as possible.**

Israeli Cabinet's meeting at Western Wall tunnel of Al-Aqsa on May 28 2017 was beginning of politicization war against authentic history of Al-Aqsa



Figure 99: Israeli government place of meeting at Western wall tunnel became later on, an attempt of official Judaization of Al-Aqsa

Israeli PM Netanyahu guides U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo visit the Western Wall Tunnels, March 21, 2019



Figure 100: Israeli politicization of Jewish religious narratives against history of Al-Aqsa Mosque and its surroundings





*Figure 101: Politicization of Judaized history of Al-Aqsa Mosque threatens peace and heritage of Jerusalem*



*Figure 102: Mamluk hall near Hamam Tankaz in the Western Wall tunnel converted into a Jewish synagogue to market for the Judaized narrative of Arab-Islamic remains*



Big size imagined image claiming Al-Aqsa "Jewish Temple"



*Figure 103: Israeli authorities do not save any effort to Judaize the Western Wall of Al-Aqsa.*

## D- TUNNELING AND EXCAVATIONS SOUTH OF AL-AQSA / SILWAN

Israeli Occupations Authorities continue every possible effort to empower settlers' takeover of Silwan, especially the closest lands to the Walls of the Old City of Jerusalem. Among the recent violations against Silwan land are the following:

**1. “Kedem Centre” and “Urban Parks” Law:** On July 14 2017, the IOA announced the approval of plans for the construction of Kedem Center due to be built at the entrance to Silwan, across the road from the Old City walls. With that, the prolonged legal and planning struggle against the Kedem Center has come to a failure end. Construction now depends on the government's decision and the funds raised by the Elad Foundation – the developer of the project.

The announcement in the press stated that the center will be part of the “Jerusalem Walls” National Park at the northern entrance to Silwan. The building will compromise up to seven stories. As mentioned, the center will include over 15,000 square meters of commercial and tourist spaces as well as a parking lot, and two national projects – the “Bible Center” and a cable car station.

**2. “Urban Parks”:** On Wednesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the Knesset Internal Affairs Committee discussed an amendment to the Nature and Parks Law (1997). The amendment, which passed in the Knesset in a preliminary vote, proposes defining a new type of national park, called an “urban park”, for sites with residents living in them, in which residents will be allowed to submit building plans for housing purposes. Residents who live in the vicinity of a park pay the price of restriction on building and development. The amendment shows that it is intended to help the settlers in Silwan living in the “Jerusalem Walls National Park”. The Elad Foundation has been populating Silwan with settlers since the beginning of the 1990s. Silwan is one of the only neighborhoods declared as a national park in Jerusalem. The settlers in Silwan are the only Jewish residents who live within a national park. The amendment proposed by the Elad Foundation with MK Nurit Koren from Likud was intended to allow settlers in Silwan to build housing while at the same time continuing the enforcement of Parks policies against the Palestinians. Today, every time the Palestinian residents in Silwan build a fence, enlarge an opening or plant a tree in their garden, the INPA can, by law, enforce the regulations by destroying the construction, and imposing fines, among other measures. More than 110 Arab Jerusalemites living in the area have already received orders of demolishing their houses, which are facing the risk of evacuation at any moment.

**3. Silwan-Western Wall Tunnel:** The Israeli Antiquities Authority, since 2007, has been excavating a tunnel from the Silwan pool/ al-Hamra pool towards the north. In 2012, the tunnel reached the area of the Umayyad Palaces inside the Old City and new tunneling exits have, in 2014, been opened adjacent to the Western Wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif, exactly south of the Maghrabeh Gate Pathway. On December 28, 2016, the IOA opened a new tunnel in Wadi Hilweh in Silwan while many houses were suffering cracks due to the continued digging. The new tunnel has been unearthed and dug covertly and reports say it goes up from Wadi Hilweh to an exit at the Umayyad palaces / south-western edge of Al-Aqsa.



*Figure 104: Israeli Minister of Culture and Jerusalem Mayor inaugurating Silwan - Umayyad Palaces' tunnel in 2017*



*Figure 105: Silwan tunnel aims at evacuating Silwan people and Judaization of Al-Aqsa*

**The Silwan Tunneling towards the Old City of Jerusalem has been accompanied with the following violations:**

1. The ongoing covert tunneling from Silwan towards the Old City is threat of not only to impose exclusivist Jewish narrative on the tunneled area, but more significantly it is a threat of breaching the western and the southern walls of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif. It is an aggression against the Holiness of the Mosque and it is a serious risk of weakening its walls. This tunneling would disrupt *Status Quo* and security of the Old City of Jerusalem.
2. The Israeli extremist *Elad* Foundation has been conducting a project that promotes and emphasizes a relationship between Upper Silwan, which *Elad* claims it is “City of David” and the so-called “the Ophel” esplanade, which is at the core of the site of the Umayyad Palaces. The project marks exclusivist Judaization narrative due to ideological aspiration to bolster a particular historical narrative and not according to the importance of the archaeological layers and findings.



3. In June 2011, the Umayyad Palaces site of the so-called “Ophel halls” south of Al-Aqsa was opened to the public. No scientific archaeological analysis is presented to prove that the remains dated to the 8th and 7th centuries BCE or, as claimed by the ideological explanations, that these remains refer to the “Kingdom of Judea”.

4. The discovered antiquities in the area of “Kedem Centre” have faced two outcomes: either they were removed as it happened with the majority of the archaeological remains at the site or they were ultimately covered up by new constructions. Roman, Byzantine, Umayyad and Abbasid historic remains have been uncovered and most of these remains have been completely removed without any proper documentation.

5. In December 2016, the Israeli Occupation municipality decided to enforce new six Jewish names on Batn El-Hawa neighborhood in Silwan. Shkhunat Hataymanim replaced Batn El-Hawa, Derekh Hagan replaced the garden road, Maalout Hashiloukh replaced Silwan Spring Road, Kerem Hazaytim replaced the Olives Garden and Derekh Kedem replaced the Abariq Road. City of David replaced Wadi Hilweh long time ago.

6. The interests of the original domestic community of Silwan village are completely ignored. The placement of the building at the northern entrance to Silwan will cut off the Palestinian residents’ direct connection to the Old City and to the Palestinian neighborhoods to the north and east of the village.



*Figure 106: Silwan excavations – over the ground: Arabs should leave; under the ground: layers of Roman, Byzantine and Islamic history were removed in the excavations of “Kedem Centre” (right)*

## E- JUDAIZATION PROJECTS IN AND AROUND THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM AND ITS WALLS

### **1. Israeli touristic official map and Judaizing Muslim and Christian names of streets / sites:**

2017 EU Commission report on Jerusalem highlighted that many East Jerusalem sites have been used “as a political tool to modify the historical narrative and to support, legitimize and expand settlements”. The report identified settler-run excavation sites in the heart of majority-Arab districts, a proposed cable car project with stops on confiscated land and the designation of built-up urban areas as national parks. “East Jerusalem is the only place where Israeli national parks are declared on populated neighborhoods,” the report said. “Israeli settlers’ tourism has been turning the World Heritage site of Jerusalem into a commercial theme park while local Palestinian residents are absent from the narrative being promoted to the visitors,” the report said.

**2.** In June 2016, the Israeli Ministry of Tourism published an official touristic map, which erases important Muslim and Christian holy sites in the Old City, completely erases entire neighborhoods around the historic basin, supplanting them not only with Hebrew names but with the names of settlements. Many Jewish sites, much less important than the erased ones, are marked in bold red letters, on the Israeli tourism ministry's official Old City map, which is distributed free of charge at official tourist information centers in Jerusalem. But Al-Aqsa Mosque/ al-Haram al-Sharif, 14-hectare and one of the Islam's three holiest sites, is only referred to by a Judaized name. Moreover, dozens of sites of questionable historical importance, many of them extremists’ Jewish settlement outposts in the Muslim and Christian quarters of the Old City, are highlighted by the mapmakers in an "Old City Legend" numbered guide. Among 57 numbered sites, almost half are buildings occupied by Jews in the Muslim quarter of the city, many unknown to licensed tour guides. While buildings like Beit Wittenberg, Beit Danon and Beit Eliyahu feature among the list of 57 sites, there is no room on the list of the numbered sites for the Church of St Anne or the Church of the Redeemer.



*Figure 107: 2016 Israeli Ministry of Tourism Map, which omits most non-Jewish sites and highlight Jewish settlements in dark red, as important historic sites.*

Indeed, the Palestinian neighborhoods outside the Old City walls are absent from the map, apart from Ras al-Amud, while Jewish-only settlements built in those neighborhoods are represented.

The City of David is easily spotted, but the neighborhood of Silwan, with its more than 30k population that surrounds it is not labelled. Palestinian communities, including At-Tur, Wadi al-Joz and Issawiya do not appear, but the settlement of Maale Har Hazeitim is labelled with the Star of David.

The Old City of Jerusalem and its surroundings has witnessed a severe campaign of altering names of streets, especially in Silwan, Assuwaneh, Mount Olives, Ras Al-Amoud, Bab Al-Khalil and other places. For example, the municipality gave the name of “Derekh Ha-Ophel” to the Silwan Street that goes from Silwan to the northern corner of the Old City of Jerusalem; it passes next to the Islamic Cemetery of Bab Al-Rahmah at the Eastern Wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif.

In Sheikh Jarrah, five streets have recently been given Jewish names. Below are a few examples of tens of streets that have been gradually given Jewish names replacing their Arab authentic names, which could be lost and forgotten in the future.



*Figure 108: Enforcing Jewish names on Silwan street*





*Figure 109: Street of Palestine Museum named Amir Drori*



*Figure 110: Street on Mount of Olives named Hanan Porat*

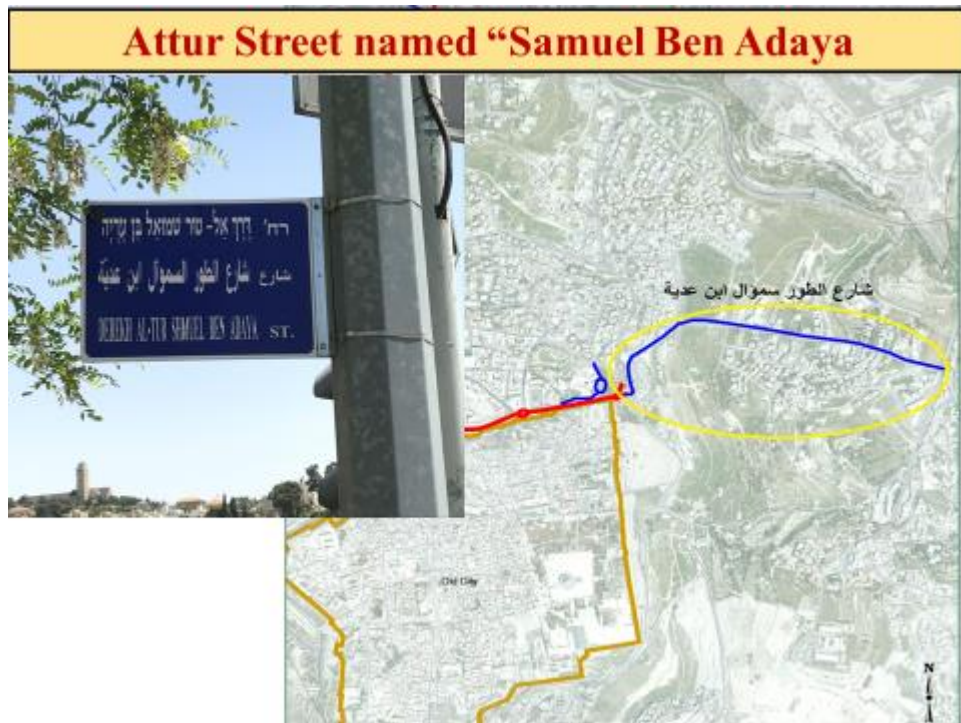


Figure 111: Attur Street named “Samuel Ben Adaya”



Figure 112: Enforced Jewish names on 5 Sheikh Jarrah streets

**3. Israeli Muzzen bill continues threat against Muslim and Christian freedom of worship:**

Beginning of 2018, the Knesset far right wing MKs and Netanyahu revived their threat to resubmit the Muzzen bill for approval. The threat was put on Knesset table in March 2017. The Israeli Knesset approved in a preliminary reading the 2016 bill, proposed by the government of Israel, to silence mosques (Azan) calls for prayers via loudspeakers Jerusalem mosques, including Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif and more than 35 historic mosques in the Old City of Jerusalem are included in the ban. It is very important to recall that Jerusalem Mosques have been using loudspeakers for Azan since the beginning of the 1920s. Israel claims the bill bans use of loudspeakers to call for prayer in all religions, including Church bells during night time 11p.m. to 7a.m.. However, the draft of the bill does not consider the Jewish Shofar, as loudspeaker, so that the ban is only on Mosques and Churches. All Muslim and Church leaders, not only in Jerusalem but all over the world, warned that the move is flagrantly against the conservation of the historic religious harmony and identity of Jerusalem.

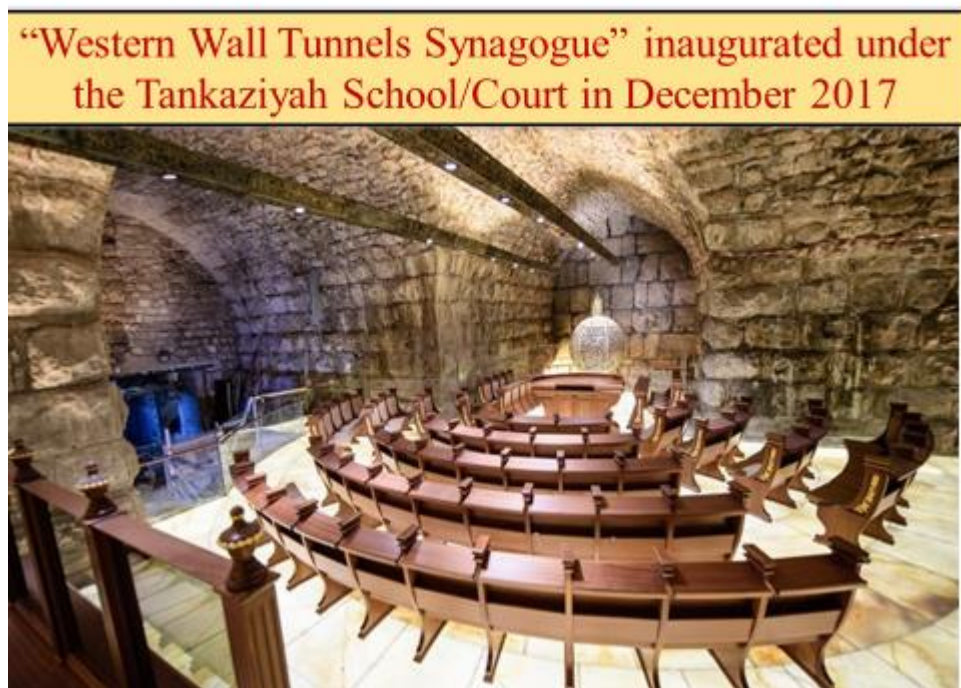
**4. Confiscating Waqf land under the justification of building public parks:** In 2016 through 2018, the Israeli municipality in Jerusalem announced many properties at the footsteps of the Old City of Jerusalem, as “public,” “urban,” natural,” and “biblical parks,” especially in Al-Suwaneh (the Waqf land of Abdul-Muti Al-Ansari) and Bab Al-Rahmah (the Waqf properties of Al-Husseini Family). On January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017 the Jerusalem Awqaf, the Ansari Family and the Hussein family issued a statement rejecting the municipality’s projects stressing that the municipality aims at only confiscating the land, banning Muslims from making use of it and changing its historic nature in service of occupational purposes. In spite of all protests and alternative projects submitted by the Jerusalem Awqaf sub-committees, such as the Muslim Cemeteries’ Committee, Israel razed and reshaped all the pathway connecting the Friday Suq at Sultan Suleiman Street with Bab Al-Asbat of the Old City. The municipal aggression against the Waqf land and the Yusfiyah Cemetery started in the middle of 2017 and it continues through April 2018. The project has removed remains, graves, and many historic remains without any second party observation. Many sources report that a flagrant erasing of historic elements was often recorded.

**5. Converting Muslim Historic Sites into Jewish Synagogues and Jewish Prayer Spaces:** Since 1967, about 100 synagogues/Jewish prayer spaces have been established in the Old City of Jerusalem. Most of them are newly created and enforced in the area surrounding Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif. Tens of Waqf properties and tunnels have been recently confiscated by IOA and converted into Jewish prayer



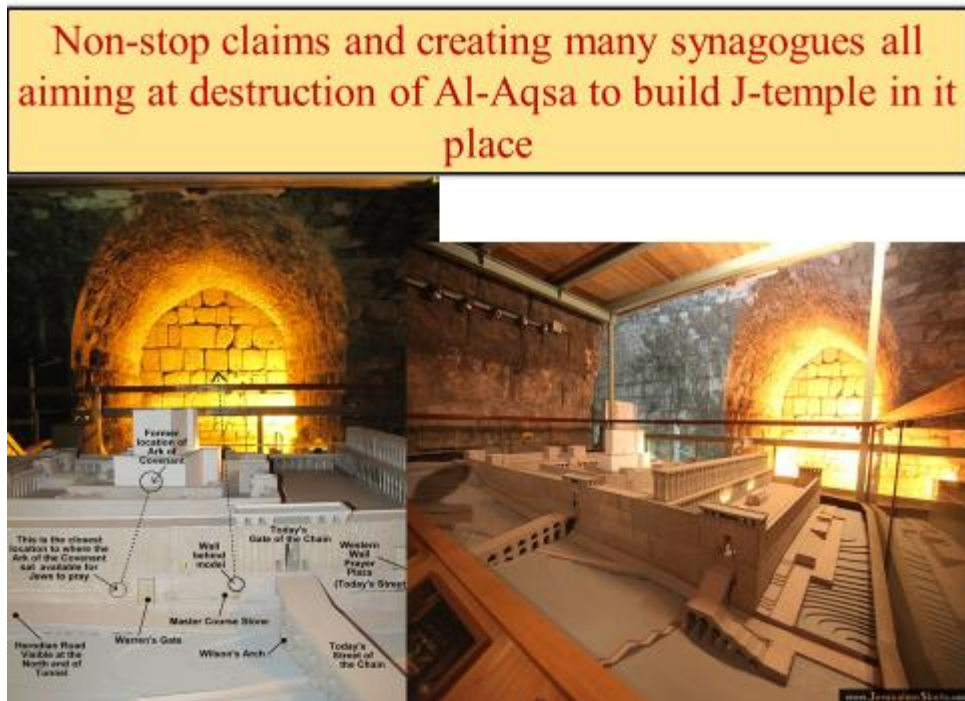
places. Please see related photos under the subtopics of Umayyad Palaces, Hammam Tankaz and Ribat Al-Kurd.

On December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Sheikh Muhammad Hussein, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, condemned the inauguration of a new synagogue in the Western Wall tunnels on December 19<sup>th</sup>. The synagogue is located opposite the Dome of the Rock inside the Western Wall tunnels, almost below Suq al-Qattaneen. The Mufti stated that the synagogue constitutes a "blatant violation and genuine provocation of the feelings of the Palestinians" and "an attempt to wipe out Islamic history and to imprint the false Jewish seal in the region. He said that the attempts to "legitimize the occupation" are baseless and in violation of international law.



*Figure 113: One of tens of synagogues and Jewish prayer spaces created at the Western Wall of Al-Aqsa to claim its Judaization*

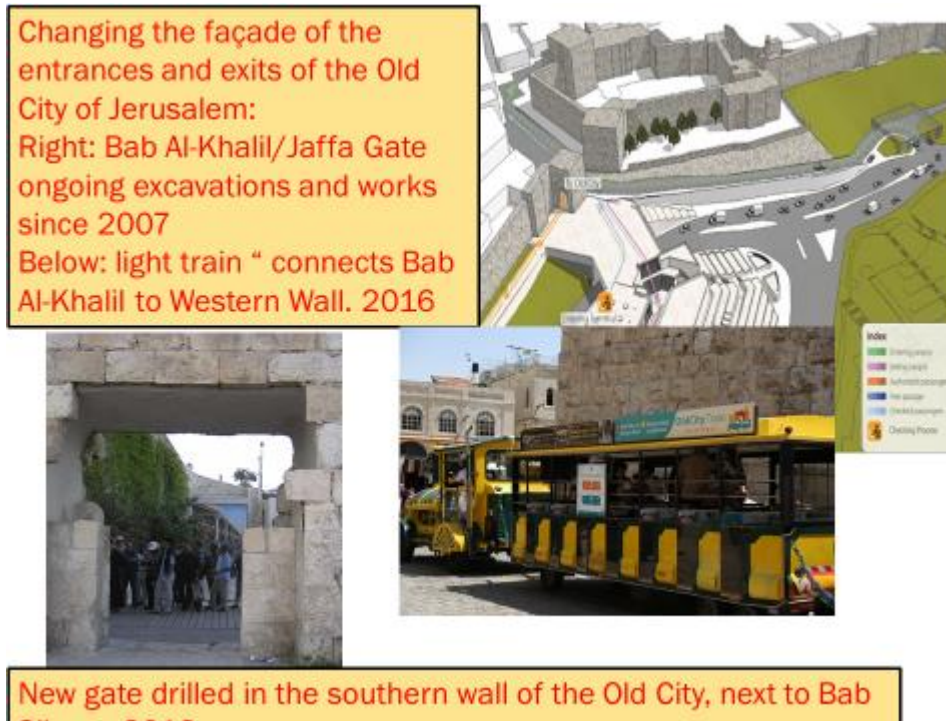




*Figure 114: Synagogues and museums aiming at Judaizing the Wall of Al-Aqsa mosque*

**6. Targeting Bab Al-Khalil / Jaffa Gate and Qishleh excavations:** A visitor, who has been absent from Jerusalem for the last decade would not recognize Jaffa gate from outside due to the so many alterations to its landscape. Many excavations and unilateral works have been going on at the area of the Qishleh building and Bab Al-Khalil / Jaffa Gate. The Qishleh building occupied today by the IOA's police administration was constructed upon orders of Ibrahim Pasha Bin Muhammad Ali during his ruling over the city of Jerusalem (1831 to 1840). The Israeli Antiquities Authority conducted excavations at the building's western courtyard, which is also located north of the Jerusalem Salahuddeen Castle found inside the Old City Walls near al-Khalil Gate. The building is now connected with the Castle through a new gate that was intrusively opened in the wall.

Since 2004, heads of Jerusalem Churches warned many times of the very vicious threat of the support of the Israeli state and courts to the Ateret Cohamin settler organization's confiscation of three Greek Orthodox Patriarchate's properties of the Petra Hotel, Imperial Hotel and al-Mu'zamiyyah residence. The Church leaders kept warning that if these properties are passed to settlers, the Christian Quarter and the Christian community and tourists will lose their major entrance to the Old City and the Christian Quarter will be at risk of a new wave Judaization that may undermine a historic character of the city. It is important to highlight that the three properties are Christian Waqf and their ownership can never be transferred to any purchaser.



*Figure 115: Excavations of Bab Al-Khalil / Jaffa Gate, change of the shape and Status Quo at the eastern wall of Al-Aqsa*

**7. Ribat al-Kurd / Hosh al-Shihabi:** This item has been reported in the previous five Status Reports. The site is now normalized and completely Judaized, ignoring all Jerusalem Awqaf complains and requests that it is part of al-Aqsa and Awqaf has the right to maintain the Waqf property. Due to the intensive security measures, residents of the site almost avoid entering their own *Hosh* / courtyard. This historic site, located near Bab Al Hadid (Iron Gate) of Al-Aqsa Mosque and is part in parcel of the western wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif. This property consists of a small plaza, an alleyway and a number of houses inhabited by members of the Palestinian al-Shihabi Family. The property is an Islamic Waqf and dates back to the Mamluk Period.

The major IOA's violations against Ribat Al-Kurd are:

1. Confiscating the site and converting it into a Jewish prayer place during the period 2006 through 2015.
2. Banning the Awqaf from renovating the site.
3. Enforcing permanent check point and installing surveillance cameras at the entrance of the site.

4. The Israeli municipality carried out restoration works at the site and despite the continuous protests of the JJA.
5. In November 2015, the Israeli Occupation municipality has also fixed a new sign at the location claiming that the property is named the “small wailing wall”, frivolously and in flagrant violation of the *Status Quo* claiming that it is a wall of a Jewish Shrine.
6. Cracks in the property continue to be recorded from time to time due to tunneling taking place underneath it.
7. **The Judaization model of the Ribat Al-Kurd is now implemented on Aqabat Al-Khalidiyah,** being called mini-Jewish Quarter in the Muslim Quarter, similar to the mini-kotel, the Ribat al-Kurd.



*Figure 116: Judaization of Ribat Al-Kurd 2013-2016, an example of confiscation of part of Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif*

8. **Jewish Quarter residential and commercial buildings:** A plan by the Jewish Quarter Development and Reconstruction Company is to develop new construction over the Jewish Quarter Parking Lot at the southeastern section of the Jewish Quarter, above the existing parking lots. The Company is planning urban construction over an 18,000 square meter area that will include a combination of residential and commercial buildings, hotels and other public spaces. The project is in its final planning stages by



architects. The project is planned to be done in cooperation with the Jerusalem Municipality and the Jerusalem Development Authority. In February 2019, The Company for the Reconstruction and Development of the Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem has also announced several projects underway at a total cost of 200 million shekels (\$55 million).

**9. IOA tramway adjacent to the Northern Wall of the Old City of Jerusalem:** In spite of many UNESCO Executive Board and World Heritage Committee resolutions calling on Israel to take the tramway operating since 2011, the tramway dangerously continues passing less than two meters next to the North-Western corner of the Walls of the Old City of Jerusalem. The tramway negatively affects the visual and physical integrity of the Old City since it passes at the location every five minutes and due to the vibrations of the movement of the train.



*Figure 117: Tramway vibrations threaten stability of the Wall of the Old city of Jerusalem*

**10. Plan of high-speed rail-line to include Western Wall station:** Israeli Minister of Transportation announced in November 2016 that Israel is advancing a plan of extending a high-speed rail line from Tel-Aviv to Jerusalem. The line will reach a station to be located under the “Western Wall plaza”, meaning in place where the demolished Maghrebeh Quarter was standing and where so many historic remains are



being removed. The Palestinian Authority condemned the plan in January 2017 and called it “colonial project.” First phase of the Tel-Aviv West Jerusalem railway has been inaugurated in 2018.

**11. Cable Car Project amended and approved:** Plans of the cable car project have been in advanced level to be implemented during 2019. As part of a series of many projects that are being heavily promoted to Judaize the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem and Jerusalem’s Historic Basin, the Israeli cabinet ministers approved, May 28<sup>th</sup> 2017, the plan to build a cable car that would transport tourists from West Jerusalem to Silwan\City of David and the Western Wall area; <https://www.timesofisrael.com/cabinet-approves-building-cable-car-to-western-wall/>. For the first phase of the project, which precedes a building permit, the Ministry of Tourism has allocated around 5 million USD to promote the cable car plans. The cable car will reinforce the site of the “City of David” in the Village of Silwan as a major tourist attraction and bolster the government policy of bringing millions of tourists a year to the Western Wall and the Old City through Silwan.

In August 2016, Netanyahu government decided to start designing the plan to develop the Mount of Olives as a major tourist site to drop cable car tourists there. This was yet another stage in the strategic thrust sponsored by the government of Israel that aspires to transform the Old City and its visual basin into a pseudo-Biblical realm informed by the ideology of the East Jerusalem settlers, and merging with the recent surge in the settlement activity in Silwan.

The cable car project has been opposed by many international missions, experts, the Palestine State and the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf Directorate for the following reasons:

1. It will change the skyline and visual sight view of Jerusalem Old City and its surroundings from the south and the east.
2. The cable car baskets, planned to carry thousands of tourists and visitors to Jerusalem, require planting large number of massive columns over and on the account of very important historic remains.
3. Most of the massive columns will be planted in Waqf properties and the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf demands the IOA to stop aggressions against its land, real estate and properties.
4. The cable car system passes over holy places and cemeteries; the desecration of these holy places is widely protested by the religious people.
5. The Old City of Jerusalem is a World Heritage Site and such major project has to be consulted and approved by UNESCO.

6. Previous Status Reports recounted the plans to construct a cable car over the last two years. The latest 2017 approval was intended to facilitate the original plan by dividing it into phases. The new plan no longer includes a stop at the Mount of Olives; Silwan will be the cable car's last stop. The assumption is that in the future the government will try to realize the original plan and extend the cable car to the Mount of Olives.

The station at Silwan will most probably be built at the Kedem Compound. The cable car and the tunnel routes, continuously under excavation, has put Silwan's residents at risk of evacuation. Part of the plan is to create a busy entry point for tourists above and underneath the village of Silwan.

7. The arrival of hundreds of thousands of tourists via cable cars and tunnels to the Old City will facilitate an unusual form of control over the tourist experience. Tourists will not be travelling within the authentic heterogeneous urban environment but will be ushered into sites which present a "closed" narrative shaped by Israeli religious-nationalist perspective. The tourists will will be exposed to a very tendentious narrative, which conceals periods of history not associated with the Jerusalem authentic history. The presence of the Palestinians will be ignored in between air and underground Judaized narratives.

8. Jordan and State of Palestine has protested the project in principle because it obstructs peace opportunities since the cable car system connects West Jerusalem with Occupied East Jerusalem, recognized by the international community and the UN as the capital of the future Palestine State.



Figure 118: Cable car to threaten sky line threatening the stability of wall of the Old City of Jerusalem

## 12. Converting historical entrances of the Old City gates into security and artificial public parks:

During 2017/2018, the IOA has Converted the Old City Gates into security or artificial parks by cutting off trees, installing surveillance cameras and creating many police platforms. The starting extensive works of the Bab Al-Asbat pathway to Al-Aqsa is still at the beginning of a complete change of the area during the coming two years. Silwan Gate is already in advanced levels of Judaization by opening a new side entry into the wall of the Old City and the massive excavation and building of the Kedem Centre. In 2017, new plans are also heading forward to change the area of Zion Gate. IOA is changing the features of main gates and walls of the Old City of Jerusalem by establishing the so called “Biblical Parks”, such as Damascus Gate, Bab al-Asbat (Lions’ Gate) and Bab al-Sahera (Flowers Gate). Some historical grounds have been covered with earth and concrete, planted with trees and new walking pathways have been created in a way that drastically changes the authentic characteristics of the Holy City.



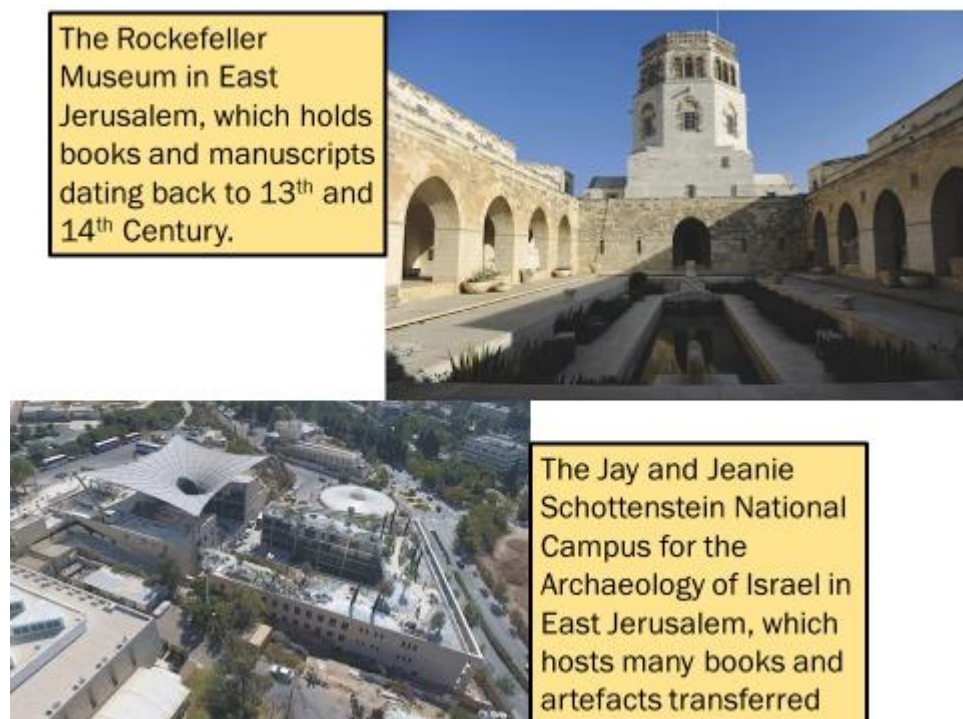
*Figure 119: Plan of the so called Kedem Centre project threaten face of Silwan entrance*

**13. Transfer of the ancient library of the Palestinian Rockefeller Museum to a library in West Jerusalem:** Beginning of 2016, the Israeli Antiquities Authority started to transfer thousands of books and documents from the library of the Rockefeller Museum, located next to northern wall of the Old City of Jerusalem, to a new IAA's library in West Jerusalem. On July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the Israeli High Court of Justice rejected the petition of the NGO of Emek Shaveh to stop this illegal transfer of the books. Emek Shaveh issued a statement condemning the Israeli court ruling that the IAA is responsible for antiquities at the Rockefeller Museum, and has the right to transfer the library from the museum to West Jerusalem. In doing so, the High Court ruled that the archeological artifacts at the Rockefeller Museum, most of which have been there since the British Mandate, are under Israeli possession, and Israel thereby has the right to take them.

The group's spokesman, Yonatan Mizrachi, said in the statement that he High Court treated the artifacts in the museum as part of east Jerusalem – which is annexed to Israel, completely disregarding the fact that part of the artifacts originate from excavations that took place in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. This transfer violates both the Israeli and the international law, which prohibits the transfer of cultural



assets from an occupied territory to the places under sovereignty of the occupying power. The Palestinian Authority condemned the transfer of the library and reported on this violation to UNESCO and the UN. Jordan had protested lending artefacts of the Rockefeller Museum to international museums' exhibitions several times. In 1966, the government of Jordan nationalized the Palestine Archaeological Museum and all its contents, assuming the Museum's debts and financial responsibilities. The Dead Sea Scrolls in the Museum became the property of Jordan.



*Figure 120: Palestine Rockefeller Museum original and newly created site*

**14. Nabi Dawoud Mosque:** Although the Churches in Mount Zion suffered the worst price tag crimes ever in the history of the Occupation, the Occupied Nabi Dawoud Mosque and the Dajani Islamic Cemetery, an Islamic Waqf property located next to the southern wall of the Old City of Jerusalem has been facing waves of aggressions by the Israeli settler extremists during the last four years. Among the recent escalated violations are the following:

1. Most of the Dajani family Waqf houses of the compound are now occupied by very radical Jewish religious-Zionist students and Rabbis of the so called “Diaspora Yeshiva”/school, which was established by Rabbi Mordechai Goldstein, who carried out the massacre of 1994 at the Hebron Ibrahim Al-Khalil

Mosque, when 34 Muslims were massacred while doing their prayer at Fajr time. The Diaspora Yeshiva has been for long time headed by his son Rabbi Yitzhak Goldstein, who passed away in 2018.



*Figure 121: Enforced Judaization of Nabi Dawood Mosque is alarming model that can be used by extreme settlers to Judaize and divide Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif*

2. Extremists continue to demolish and remove Ottoman and Mamluk tiles that decorated the walls of Nabi Dawood Mosque both at the entrance and inside the Tomb.



*Photos 122: few examples of the damage documented before cleaning the evidence of the crime against the historic parts of Nabi Dawood Mosque*

3. Extremists continue to damage and ban the renovation of the graves of the Dajani family members at the site.
4. At the same time, these extremist groups have gradually confiscated parts of the Mosque and converted the confiscated parts into a Jewish synagogue at the first floor of the building.
5. More Ottoman period windows and iron grids are removed and replaced by a new iron grid of David star in order to strengthen the enforced Judaization narrative.





*Figure 123: Installing Jewish symbols and replacing historic Ottoman iron grille with David star are flagrant changes of function and shape of the Nabi Dawood Mosque and the Jesus Last Supper Room*

6. The hall of the mosque is now a hall of a Jewish synagogue and the Mihrab of the Mosque is hidden by religious bookshelves.
7. Israeli experts say that the IAA has excavated the area underground the tomb of Nabi Dawood at the northern edge of the mosque in 2016 and when the IAA did not find any cave or chamber beneath the tomb the IAA decided to close off the excavation. It is important to highlight that the first physical Jewish attachment to Nabi Dawood Tomb in history was in 1950s and most architectural and historic studies say the tomb is an Islamic grave.
8. Due to the above mentioned excavation, it was observed only in 2016 that the Tomb of King David is signed in Arabic, as Tomb of Prophet Dawood.
9. In November 2017, Dajani family gravestones were once again smashed in the Muslim cemetery on Mount Zion, and large amounts of trash were dumped at the complex. These frequent acts were intended to damage relations between religions and to threaten any opportunity of dialogue, such as that has started to take place Mount Zion. In December 2017, an initiative, known as Tag Meir Hebrew University student chapter visited the cemetery and began repairing the damage. The mission was joined by members of the



nearby Greek Orthodox Dormition Abbey, volunteers, and members of the Dajani family, who according to family tradition had preserved Prophet David's tomb for six hundred years. Together, Jews, Christians and Muslims cleaned the cemetery and were able to reconstruct some of the gravestones.

## CHAPTER 4: RECOMMENDATIONS

Jordan and Palestine demand UNESCO to take of all possible measures to pressure Israel to stop its constant attempts to alter the *status quo* of the Old City of Jerusalem and its holy sites, and request that UNESCO takes decisions and practical steps accordingly. Since the Old City of Jerusalem and Its Walls is seriously a World Heritage Site in Danger, spontaneous and routine documentation of the Israeli violations against the city's historical remains and should be one of the top priorities of UNESCO.

Since neither the UN nor the UNESCO are able to force Israel to abide by their resolutions, Jordan and Palestine therefore stress that it is of fundamental significance that UNESCO finds out a creative monitoring mechanism and uses all possible tools to document the IOA's violations against the Old City of Jerusalem and Its Walls. Additional tools to raise international awareness regarding the dangers threatening the world heritage of Jerusalem are also required.

It is illegal and unjust to recognize the brief the reports by the Occupying Power, Israel and its organs, in an equal level and consideration to reports by the parties who represent the history of the abused people and the erased remains. Israel has been changing many facts in its recent reports to UNESCO and the International Community. Jordan and Palestine thank the Israeli institutions, which revealed many violations included in this Status Report.

In spite of the fact that Israeli violations enjoy the support of certain countries, UNESCO should continue to represent justice and preservation of the city's authentic identity; UNESCO and all other international bodies must be aware of the illegality of Israel's attempts to change the *status quo*, *inter alia*, by using international legal language in its reports, briefings and decisions dealing with violations in and around the Old City.

Jordan and Palestine have also call on Israel to comply with the relevant UNESCO decisions, end all excavations and other illegal measures taken against the heritage of the Old City and its Walls. In line with World Heritage Committee and Executive Board decisions, Israel must provide all relevant true information/plans concerning its excavations and other illegal works in the Old City and its Walls.

The UN and its bodies, including UNESCO, should undertake appropriate analytical study on the effects of the violations that have taken place to date and pressure Israel to return to the pre-2000 *status quo* regarding the Waqf's administration of Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif, including maintenance and the regulations both Muslims and non-Muslims' access to the site.

One of the most important issues UNESCO should take into consideration, by monitoring and analyzing the abovementioned violations, is the Israeli continued enforcement of the exclusivist Judaization narrative on hundreds of non-Jewish sites. UNESCO should build up an archive of all authentic names of monuments, streets, schools, historic remains, walls, and holy sites before Israel removes and erases these layers and before the IOA remove some remains, as it happened in the Umayyad Palaces area.

Jordan and Palestine call on Israel to ratify the Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. They also call on Israel, the Occupying Power to adhere to Human Rights Council's resolution HRC/33/L.21, which "calls for enhanced international cooperation in preventing and combating the organized looting, smuggling, theft and illicit trafficking of cultural objects and in restoring the stolen, looted or trafficked cultural property."

While UNESCO does not have the access nor ability to protect the Old City of Jerusalem, Jordan and Palestine are confident of UNESCO's crucial responsibility in documenting most of the irreversible and reversible changes to the heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem.

**Jordan and Palestine request the World Heritage Centre to present this Status Report in its entirety to all members of UNESCO and to upload this report to the website of the World Heritage Centre.**