

Ottoman Jerusalem:

The Growth of the City outside the Walls¹

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Introuduction

The traditional view of Jerusalem at the time of the British occupation of the city in 1917 describes a stagnant and underdeveloped city, both as an economic center and in terms of standards of living.² Essential in the construction of this narrative are the manuscripts written by British administrators and European Christian travelers to the Holy Land who not only brought their own values and standards of upper middle class life in Europe to their perceptions of Palestine, but also their religious-political programs, in an era of colonialism, charitable endeavors, and eugenics.³ Equally part of this narrative are the works of many Zionist scholars, both past and present, who have often chosen to focus on the ‘backwardness’ of Jerusalem, with a specific agenda to emphasize not the unique nature of the city and its development, but what Zionist enterprise brought to the city.⁴ This is not to deny that Jerusalem was a city valued primarily for its religious significance rather than for its commercial or agricultural productivity; however, to portray it as only gaining significance and stature under Zionist efforts and the British Mandate Administration is to unnecessarily limit a potentially rich discussion on Ottoman Palestine in general and Jerusalem in particular, and to ignore the background for the changes that did occur in the first half of the twentieth century.

A clarification of the terms to be used in this chapter is required. The ‘New City’ refers to the parts of Jerusalem that were built outside the walled city (the Old City). The terms ‘Jewish’, ‘Christian’, and ‘Muslim’ will be used throughout, not because these religious terms necessarily designate appropriate divisions and alliances, but because both Ottoman and British statistics were kept in such a manner. As terms such as ‘Arab’ and ‘Jew’ follow the popular paradigms of this subject,

they exclude a significant section of the Jerusalemite population—Armenian, Greek, and Ethiopian, among others—who may have lived in the city for generations and who certainly saw themselves as Jerusalemites. A large portion of these people would have called themselves Palestinians, and although this term could be used to describe the Arab and non-Jewish population according to their political sentiments and national affiliations, it does also describe the Jewish citizens of Palestine until 1948. As Jerusalem was part of the larger arena in which the struggle over the land was between Arabs and Jews, these terms will be used throughout, and ‘Arab’ will designate the Arab Palestinian Muslim and Christians and other ethnic groups who were evicted from the Jewish state when it was founded in 1948.

This chapter will address the growth of Jerusalem outside the walls of the Old City, which began in the mid-nineteenth century. As the century drew to a close, the crowded living conditions of the Old City, the economic and demographic growth in Palestine, and the security ensured by a greater Ottoman administrative and military presence made the idea of living outside the walls a conceivable and possible option for more and more people. Another factor in the growth of the city involved Christian public endowment (*waqf*) land and the active role of foreign and local churches, which allowed many Christian Palestinians to build homes or rent church property in the western suburbs. By critically examining the paradigms for growth set up in Zionist and Israeli discussions of the rise of the New City, I hope to provoke a more attentive look at a variety of sources and to question some of the trends followed by scholarship that deals with the growth of Jerusalem.

Late Nineteenth Century Ottoman Jerusalem: A Changing City

Jerusalem in the 1870s was a city of between 14,000-22,000 people⁵, and was a center of Muslim, Christian, and Jewish religious life, as is well documented elsewhere. During the nineteenth century, European-based religious activity in the Holy Land increased. The Ottoman land reforms of 1839 and 1856 which allowed non-Ottoman citizens to own land, combined with the political drives of European powers for “religious-cultural penetration”, made Jerusalem and all of the Holy Land, as Scholch maintains, “an arena of European rivalries.”⁶ This activity, combined with Ottoman reforms taking place throughout the Empire, fashioned Jerusalem into a much different city at the end of the Ottoman reign—in terms of population, physical layout, buildings, and infrastructure—than it had been a century earlier.

By the end of Ottoman rule in Jerusalem in 1917, major technological advancements had changed life in the city in numerous ways. The railroad

connecting Jerusalem to the nearest port city of Jaffa had been established in 1892. Largely used in the first few years to transport pilgrims and travelers, it soon was exploited for more freight transport.⁷ Road highways suitable for carriages connected Jerusalem to Jaffa, Ramallah, Nablus, and Hebron (via Bethlehem), Jericho, in addition to the nearby village of 'Ayn Karim and the shrine of Nabi Samu'el.⁸ By the turn of the century, gravel-pavements had been laid on the internal city roads in Jerusalem's New City: Nablus road, Mamillah Road, Mahaneh Yisrael neighborhood, Jaffa Road, and the Street of the Prophets.⁹ Telegraph lines connecting Jerusalem with Egypt, Beirut, and Europe were in place by the 1870s.¹⁰ Numerous postal services were available to the residents—Ottoman, Russian, German, Austrian, French, and Italian—but there was no unified service.¹¹ Bertha Spafford, an American resident of Jerusalem, reported that under the Turkish regime they had been allowed to install a telephone in the American Colony. She quotes a writer, the "Religious Rambler", as saying, "The new courthouse in Jerusalem has been connected with the old serai, and the system is to be extended until first all official points and then business houses and residences will be supplied with telephones."¹²

In 1863 a special *firman* created a municipal council (*majlis baladi*).¹³ One of its activities included installing a sewage system in the 1870s. In the 1890s, regular garbage collection was introduced, kerosene lamps were put up to light the city, and during certain times of the year the streets were sprinkled with water to keep down the dust. A city park was opened to the public in the New City on Jaffa Street in 1892 in front of the Russian compound where a military band performed on Fridays and Sundays.¹⁴ Just before World War I, trees were planted along some streets, and plans were being discussed to bring tram lines and a telephone system to the city.¹⁵ In 1914, a concession was granted by the Jerusalem municipality to provide electricity to the city.¹⁶ Other changes brought about by the municipality included the introduction of a city police force in 1886, a fire department by the mid-1890s, and a municipal hospital in 1891 which had 32 beds and was open to all, treating nearby villagers three times a week free of charge.¹⁷ According to Scholch, the municipality began to issue building permits, and a register of these was kept from the late 19th century onwards.¹⁸ And in 1907, a law was passed requiring a permit to build or enlarge homes or to add additional stories.¹⁹

Printing presses first came into use in the city in the 1840s. In this period there were presses in the Latin (Franciscan) Monastery, the Armenian Monastery, the Greek Orthodox community, and the Jewish community. Religious texts and commentaries were their first publications, however, the owners eventually expanded their printing work.²⁰ Between 1876 and 1916, a number of Arabic newspapers and periodicals were published, including the government newspaper

al-Quds al-Sharif, and *Bakourat Jabal Sahyoun*, a publication of the teachers and students of Bishop Gobat's school.²¹ In 1908, twelve new publications appeared in Jerusalem. The famous Palestinian newspapers, *Filistin* and *al-Karmel* published in Jaffa and Haifa respectively, also appeared during this period.²²

Important to the intellectual life of the city were the numerous educators who dedicated themselves to their work and ideals. One of the most respected men, famous in Palestinian history as having had great impact on teaching methodology and the teaching of Arabic, was Nakhleh Zurayq. Born in Beirut in 1861, he came to Jerusalem in 1889 to teach at the request of English missionaries. In addition to being part of the revival of the Arabic language, he was part of a literary circle where the men of letters from Jerusalem would meet, such as Salim al-Huseini, a former mayor of Jerusalem, Musa 'Aql, and Faidi al-'Alami.²³ In 1898, a number of Jerusalem intellectuals, Zurayq among them, founded the more formal *Jama'iyat al-Adab al-Zahira* [*The Zahira Literary Society*]. The president was Dawoud al-Saidawi, and the members included 'Isa al-'Isa, Faraj Farajallah, Aftem Mushabbek, Shibli al-Jamal, Jamil al-Khalidi, and Khalil al-Sakakini.²⁴

Education in Ottoman Jerusalem

The nineteenth century witnessed enormous expansion in educational opportunities for the elite, including girls. While some Ottoman reform of education was in the works, “the object of which was to create military and civilian cadres for state service”²⁵, foreign missionary projects founded many different types of schools. These schools played a major role throughout the Levant in the education of Christians, in particular, as it wasn't until the latter part of the century that the Ottoman authorities allowed Muslim students to join. The exposure to European educational systems, languages, and points of view had an impact on the lives of Jerusalemites both socially and politically. While this influence manifested itself in different ways, including styles of dress, taste in music, literature, and field of study, among other things, it also succeeded in “instilling in them [both Christian and Muslim students] an increased consciousness of an Arab cultural identity.”²⁶ In addition, the missionary schools had varying educational goals and “socio-political orientations” which resulted in increased educational opportunities for the poor and for girls (beyond *kuttab* education).²⁷

A publication on education in greater Syria from 1882 showed that there were a total of 3,854 students in school in Jerusalem (2,768 boys and 1,086 girls) and 235 teachers.²⁸ The number of girls in Christian schools (Evangelical, Greek Orthodox, Latin, Greek Catholic, and Armenian) were slightly more than the number of boys (926 girls to 861 boys). While the majority of these students were Christians,

four of the Evangelical schools (two for boys and two for girls) totaling 138 students exclusively taught Jews. In addition, there were 1,707 students in Jewish schools, 160 of which were girls. In the eight Muslim schools, all of which were for boys, there were 360 students. In 1891, “the Government opened a general [secondary] school (Rushdiya) [sic] in our city, where all the children of the city, regardless of their religion, could attend classes in Arabic, Turkish, French, and the basic sciences.”²⁹ It was also recorded that a Muslim school for girls had been established.³⁰

Table 1 Number of students in Jerusalem schools in 1882 by type of school and by gender of students

	Girls	Boys	Total
Christian schools	926	861	1,787
Christian schools for Jewish students	N/A	N/A	138
Jewish schools	160	1,547	1,707
Muslim schools	0	360	360
Total Number of Students	1,086	2,768	3,992

Students who wanted to continue their studies had a number of options, including teacher-training colleges in Jerusalem and the surrounding area.³¹ Others, both young men and women, went abroad to finish their studies, most often to colleges in Lebanon, Egypt, or Istanbul. Al-Azhar University, located in Cairo, provided Muslim religious training to numerous men who returned to become *imams* and religious scholars in Jerusalem and the rest of Palestine. Malakeh and Margaret Gazmararian attended nursing school in Beirut and later worked for the Ottoman government in Syria³² as did 'Izzat Tannous who went to medical school in Beirut.³³ These colleges provided an exciting intellectual environment and allowed for much discussion on current affairs—Arab nationalism, secularism, Darwinism, Islamic reform, Arab Christians and their relations to foreign churches—and the students returned home well-versed in these ideas and debates.³⁴

The educational and intellectual opportunities offered by the growth in the number of schools were numerous and far-reaching. First, they created a significant increase in the number of educated persons in Jerusalem (and also parts of the Levant). Second, many of the students were educated in other languages in addition to Arabic or Turkish (Greek, Russian, French, English, and German). This knowledge not only provided students with new perspectives, but also enabled them to find work, among other places, within the foreign diplomatic and religious

missions and organizations as teachers, administrators, guides, secretaries, and translators. Third, this educated cadre had increased opportunities in Ottoman government service, a group that was later mobilized by the British Mandate administration. Fourth, these new educational systems allowed this particular group access to resources outside their local and family support structures—specifically the sponsoring churches or charitable societies—and with opportunities to continue their studies.

Organized athletics entered the social and educational lives of Jerusalemites and the elite at this time, most likely at the instigation of the European missionary schools. 'Izzat Tannous, a student at the Anglican-run St. George's School from 1905-1911, recalls not only playing football, but mentions summertime cricket matches, basketball and field hockey. Saturday matches were a popular pastime as were the annual field days. "So enthusiastic became the general public for sports that in 1910 the spectators of a football match on St. George's playground numbered about five thousand, a few hundred of whom were veiled women."³⁵ By 1912, the Church Missionary Society School, St. George's, and the YMCA all had football teams that faced the visiting Syrian Protestant College (SPC) varsity team from Beirut. The following year, a combined Jerusalem team traveled to Beirut to play against the SPC.

Economic Activity in the City

Despite the numerous changes and the increasing population from the nineteenth century onward, the economic and industrial growth in Palestine was not focused in Jerusalem; rather, other cities in Palestine were growing in equal if not greater proportion. In his *Urban Profile of the Middle East*, Roberts remarks that, "[I]n many cases the initial development of industry established the growth of settlements which had previously been dominated by political capitals elsewhere. ... [For example] Jaffa in place of Jerusalem..."³⁶ In 1880, the population of Jerusalem was around 35,000 and in 1915 it had more than doubled to 80,000. Jaffa, on the other hand, during the same period had quadrupled its population from 10,000 to 40,000 as had Haifa, from 5,000 to 20,000.³⁷

Scholarship on Jerusalem during the Ottoman period details an active if limited scope of economic activity. The necessary foodstuffs for the population of Jerusalem were grown in the surrounding countryside as well as the more distant areas. Palestine in general, as well as Jerusalem, imported rice from Egypt and Italy, sugar from France, and coffee from South America and Arabia. Bedouin would come to the city to trade grain and animals, and farmers from the nearby villages marketed fruit and vegetables.³⁸ Merchants traveled throughout the Levant obtaining

local or regional products for trade. An American archaeologist in Palestine, Edward Robinson, reported in 1838 that in Jerusalem there were nine soap-making establishments, nine presses for sesame oil, a large tannery, and numerous souvenir-making projects.³⁹ Early in the nineteenth century, around ten dye-houses for cloth marketed blue and white cloth to the Bedouin and rural farmers.⁴⁰ By the 1850s there were twenty flourmills in the city, but as they were converted to steam power and their output increased, many of the smaller mills closed.⁴¹ Prior to World War I, there were macaroni factories in both Jaffa and Jerusalem. Stone, brick and ceramic industries were also part of pre-World War I activities in Jerusalem.⁴²

By the second half of the nineteenth century, Ben-Arieh asserts that commercial prospects were steadily improving.⁴³ According to Scholch, “[t]he economy of the city remained a consumer’s economy, supported by supplies from outside and, in the case of the Christian and Jewish communities, by foreign funds.”⁴⁴ Bertha Spafford, one of the original residents of the American Colony established in 1881, wrote of some fifteen to twenty thousand Russian pilgrims who visited Jerusalem:

They created a demand for all kinds of trinkets, and many kinds of industries in the manufacture of souvenirs gave occupation to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Candle-dippers worked the year round to have a supply equal to the demands of the thousands of Russian, Greek, Armenian, Coptic, and Macedonian pilgrims who attended the annual celebration of the Holy Fire. Then there were the makers of ikons[sic] and mother-of-pearl and olivewood trinkets. Shroud makers made a good living stenciling black skulls and crossbones on white muslin to be worn by the Russian pilgrims ...⁴⁵

In addition, trading markets were associated with the many religious festivities that occurred in Palestine. During the weeklong feast of *Sitna Miriam*, the Greek Orthodox community would camp on the western hillside of the Mount of Olives. Hala Sakakini who visited the festival as a child in the 1930s recalls that “[a]ll kinds of vendors would cluster on the spot and a lively trade would flourish.”⁴⁶ The weeklong *Nabi Musa* festival brought many Muslim pilgrims from around Palestine into Jerusalem during the Easter period for the procession into the Jordan Valley to the tomb of Moses. Not only were the vendors and traders present for the pilgrims throughout the festivities, but there also was the opportunity for the rural pilgrims to come to the urban Jerusalem markets.⁴⁷ Many of these celebrations continued until 1948 when the displacement of the population and the division of the country made it impossible for people to travel to the pilgrimage sites.

Population Growth

Jerusalem had become the largest city in Palestine and the political and cultural center of the country at the end of the Ottoman era, on the eve of World War I.⁴⁸ Much scholarship on the subject reveals the difficulties in trying to establish definitive population estimates for this period. The Ottoman census figures of 1905 reveal a total of 32,400 Ottoman nationals in Jerusalem: 13,400 Jews, 11,000 Muslims, and 8,000 Christians.⁴⁹ However, these numbers do not reflect those with foreign nationality living in the city which more than likely would raise the numbers of Jews and Christians.⁵⁰ Jewish sources for this year contend a much higher number, including one estimating 50,000 Jews in a total population of 75,000.⁵¹ The Ottoman sources for 1914 for the entire *Qada'* of Jerusalem, give the number of Jewish citizens to be 18,190.⁵² The historian Yehoshua Ben-Arieh has examined innumerable sources on the demography of the city at this time and concludes that:

In 1917, Colonel Zaki Bey, head of the Jerusalem Wheat Syndicate, reported to Jamal Pasha that Jerusalem had 31,147 Jews in an overall population of 53,410. These figures were based on birth certificates and police records; their accuracy is proven by the first comprehensive census in Jerusalem, made by the British in 1922. This census showed a general population of 62,000, including 34,300 Jews.⁵³

Statistics that record the residential area of the population in the different parts of the city were not taken at this period. However, it is known that at the beginning of the British Mandate, the area of the New City was four times greater than that of the Old City.⁵⁴ Residents of the New City at the end of Ottoman rule, according to Ben-Arieh's estimates, were as follows: 2,000-2,400 Muslims, around 15% of the estimated 12,000 Muslim Jerusalemites⁵⁵, and 29,000 of the total 45,000 Jews.⁵⁶ Christians constituted 15% of the population in the New City (or approximately 5-6,000 people).⁵⁷ However, the city continued to grow as a residential area for Muslims, Christians and Jews witnessed by the 1922 Census where 30.3% of the Muslims were living outside of the walls.⁵⁸

Building Inside and Outside the City Walls

In the early to mid-nineteenth century, Jerusalem consisted of the walled city, with limited construction outside the walls. Inside the walls it was a medieval Islamic city divided at least partially along ethno-religious lines, although the current modern appellations and division into quarters (Muslim, Christian, Jewish, and

Armenian) did not exist.⁵⁹ Rather, neighbourhoods (*harat*) had formed based on shared features, be they common religion, place of origin, tribe, ethnicity, or group. For example, members of the Bani Zayad tribe formed *Haret Bani Zayad* located in what is now *'Aqbet al-Mawlawiyya*, east of Damascus Gate. Likewise, areas were named according to the profession practiced by the shopkeepers—*Haret al-Jawalda* (Tanners' Quarter)—or a landmark—*Deir al-Rum* (The Greek Orthodox Monastery) or *Khan al-Zeit* (Olive Oil Merchants' Inn).⁶⁰

Located outside the walls were cemeteries, a variety of religious buildings, and walled summer homes, all of which were considered part of Jerusalem rather than the nearby villages. Muslim, Christian, and Jewish cemeteries were located to the east and northwest of the walls. A number of mosques, hospices, *zawayya*⁶¹, schools, khans, and *maqamat* (tombs or shrines) were located outside the walls, but by the mid-nineteenth century many had lost much of their earlier prosperity.⁶² For example, in the thirteenth-century, a khan and *zawiya* were located at the site of the tomb of Sheikh Jarrah; the current mosque on the site was built in 1895/6.⁶³

In the mid-nineteenth century, the heightened European interest in the Holy Land took shape in the form of increased building activity by Christian groups. English and German Protestants, according to Scholch, “were the first foreigners to erect new buildings inside and outside the town, notably Christ Church, the Protestant ‘cathedral’, which was consecrated in 1849.”⁶⁴ The Russians, the German Templers, German Catholics, and Roman Catholics all began erecting churches, hospices, and other buildings both inside and outside the walls. These new European projects had their desired effect and by 1910, the annual number of European pilgrims to Jerusalem had more than doubled from the number forty years prior.⁶⁵ This building activity however also benefited the local population, and by the end of the nineteenth century, the European traveler Vital Cuinet listed 17 hospitals and 54 schools (excluding the Muslim mosque schools) in Jerusalem.⁶⁶ Numerous European educational institutions for local inhabitants were founded in Jerusalem during this period and included both Christian and Jewish schools run by British, German, Austrian, French, and Greek religious groups.

Both before and during this period, local residents had also embarked on significant building projects. These efforts are less well documented; however, they do exist in sources such as travelers' accounts, historical writings, maps, and autobiographies. Most of the writings by Israeli and Zionist scholars have ignored the writings of Arab travelers to Palestine and Arab historians, while relying heavily on the descriptive travel literature of European pilgrims.⁶⁷ One type of building outside the walls, often neglected or underestimated in the scholarly literature, is the numerous summer residences located to the northeast and southwest of the walled city. Some of these buildings were estate-like homes (*qusur*) built by the

wealthy and powerful and surrounded by cultivated land and orchards, often containing mills or presses. The accounts of Arab travelers tell of these large homes in the Baq'a and Mount of Olives area both in Mamluke and Ottoman times.⁶⁸

By the mid and later half of the nineteenth century, spending a summer outside the walls became a common practice of those who could afford to escape the oppressive conditions of a hot Jerusalem summer in the crowded Old City. Villagers and farming families had always gone to live in small houses that they set up near their fields during the planting and harvest seasons. And the elite families continued the practice established in the preceding centuries of living in *qusur* by building second or summer houses outside the walls. The *Bayt al-Mufti* was the summer home of the al-Huseini family, established in the 1860s, later lavishly rebuilt in 1890-5.⁶⁹ But during this period, the practice of establishing summer residences spread beyond the elite and the peasants to more middle class households. This seems to be particularly true of Christian families who had access to Christian *waqf* land and buildings. A number of family histories exemplify this trend. In the 1880s, the Sakakini family who lived in the Christian Quarter in the Old City had built a summer house in Musrara, while their neighbors, the Abdo's, stayed outside the walls during the summer in a house owned by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in a building called *al-Haririyyeh*.⁷⁰ Nicholas Spiridon, a Greek physician, moved with his family from a house in the Old City that was property of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate to one outside the walls in Mamillah in the 1890s, also the property of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate. In 1897 he bought 21 parcels of land from the villagers of al-Malha where he built a 'country' or 'summer' home and planted olives and eucalyptus and dug a well.⁷¹

Neighbourhoods, Suburbs or Communities: The Growth of the New City

The primary reason cited for the relatively slow initial expansion outside the walls of the city was concern for security. Until the 1870s, the city gates were closed at night and during Muslim Friday prayers.⁷² However, it must also be acknowledged that the city walls of Jerusalem could easily encompass the small population and thus there was little incentive to leave. The issue of security underlies a complicated interaction between the Ottoman military presence, the 'bandits' who attacked or robbed unprotected people, and the local leaders.⁷³ When Jerusalem became a *mutasarrif* in 1858⁷⁴, the increased Ottoman administrative presence, including military, would have at least made the city seem safer and better protected. Prior to this, however, the families living in Nabi Dawoud, adjoining the walls of the Old City, and the nearby villages—al-Tur, Silwan, 'Izariya, Abu Tor, among

others—were not walled.⁷⁵ Thus, it was possible to live outside the walls, and be protected from attacks and raids. However, such arrangements may not have been possible for Jewish immigrants who spoke little Arabic and had no relations with local shaykhs and leaders. Zionist and Israeli accounts, which emphasize the increased security of the second half of the nineteenth century as the key reason for the growth outside the walls, reveal their singular perspective on relations and events of the time.

With increased population growth and Jewish immigration, the factors pushing people to build outside the walled Old City increased. Among the primary motives to leave the city were the overcrowding and sanitation problems. The availability of water in the Old City was a problem, particularly during the hot summer months. Outside the walls, people could dig large cisterns under their homes to store the winter rainwater that drained off of their roofs, thereby alleviating some of the need to go long distances for water supplies and to ration water in the summer.

The vast majority of studies on the growth of the New City focus on the appearance of planned neighbourhoods.⁷⁶ These neighbourhoods were set up by Jewish building societies or philanthropical endeavors and kept rules, regulations and detailed records which make understanding this particular aspect of building growth in the New City a reasonably ordered endeavor.⁷⁷ However, the paradigm set up by the emphasis on neighbourhoods is problematic, for it focuses exclusively on the one community that built organized neighbourhoods and treats the other methods of building homes and communities as aberrant. Thus, only organized neighbourhoods have made it into the history books. Strict documentation of Arab building projects of the sort available for Jewish building projects is largely absent in this initial period. Arab building practices were signaled by different kinds of building: either individual or family initiatives or Christian *waqf*. Arab expansion outside the walls was essentially a private enterprise based on land availability and family capital without the formal, regulatory processes undertaken in the establishment of the Jewish neighbourhoods. Some Muslim families who bought land and lived outside the walls created family *waqfs* to retain the land within the family. Little research has been published on this subject, and thus family archives, the Islamic court records, and Christian *waqf* documents promise to reveal more on the building and land allocation practices of the Arab, Armenian, and Greek Jerusalemites. Memoirs, diaries, and oral accounts also provide us with insight into the process of building and land acquisition outside the walls.

Other evidence for the history of building in Jerusalem is equally problematic. Many of the maps from this period were made by foreigners, and thus Christian religious and missionary activities figure prominently into the maps of Jerusalem. The Jewish and Christian land purchases and buildings were well-documented in

the property records of the church, Jewish institutions, and the Ottoman government records, and also were marked as important steps in their expansion in the Holy Land in the memory and records of each particular community. Thus, these sources tend to overlook local building activity. The following section will attempt to address the difficulties inherent in the historical material used by scholars in interpreting the expansion of the New City and in documenting the locally sponsored building starts.

Histories of Jerusalem acknowledge that the first neighborhood to be built as such outside the Old City walls was *Mishkenot Sha'ananim*, the Jewish housing project of Moses Montefiori, which began in 1855, with twenty homes finished around 1860.⁷⁸ A number of private homes and missionary projects had also been erected, including the Russian Compound (completed in 1860), Bishop Gobat's school on Mt. Zion, the Schneller Orphanage, and British Consul Finn's summerhouse in Talbiya. Wilson's map of 1864 also marks a 'Greek Settlement' in Talbiya, shops outside Jaffa Gate, an Armenian cafe, and a Turkish guardhouse.⁷⁹

From the descriptions and the compiled historical record repeatedly cited in both academic writings and more popular accounts of the history of the city, it would appear that the Arab, Greek, and Armenian inhabitants of the city did not consider living outside the walls during this early period. While there is truth to the assertion that there were no organized Arab, Greek, or Armenian building projects during the initial expansion, the focus on well-documented cases leaves out an important aspect in the growth of the city. Private Arab and other efforts to build year-round residences on private land outside the city are largely undocumented, or at least no serious study of them has been done.⁸⁰ Nor does the discourse on expansion outside the walls consider the Arab summer homes part of the residential landscape. In addition, the relationship of the Greek Orthodox Church and its practice of leasing (not necessarily for payment) land to its laity for building outside the city must be examined. Thus, buildings were attributed on maps and in records as Greek Orthodox church property, although they may have been residential buildings of Greek or Arab members of the church.

We do know, however, that there were Jewish and Arab residents outside the walls because the Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly reported in 1881, that of 2,500 residents living outside the walls, 1,510 of them were Jews. A letter written by a member of the American Colony in 1883 is also revealing regarding the building activity of this period:

The activity of rebuilding is by no means confined to the Jews. Catholics, Greeks, Mohammedans, and Protestants are all taking part in it. There are at the present time more than one hundred

buildings going up, all of stone, and most of them carefully cut stone. The new method is to use iron girders to support the ceiling. This is then covered with French tiles instead of the older and more picturesque dome roof.⁸¹

Furthermore, the building patterns of the Arab Christian and Muslim inhabitants of the city do not lend themselves to the easy categorization of 'neighbourhoods', unlike the early Jewish housing projects. In some cases, a single or extended family bought land and began building together in an area with space for later generations to continue to add homes in the area. Al-Nammriyya and al-Wa'riya are two areas in the Baq'a area of the New City which take their name from members of the Nammari and Wa'ri families who moved out of the Old City and set up family *waqfs* during Ottoman times. In other cases, an Arab family was more likely to build an independently designed house on a plot of land which they owned, a practice given witness to in family histories and easily observed from the building styles of the later Arab neighbourhoods of Talbiya and Qatamon. Alternatively, church property that stayed in the name of the church but was rented or leased in exchange for payment or services provided a number of Christians with homes outside the Old City. In addition to the varying patterns of building, the character of the building and the money invested in it differed greatly. David Yellin describes building in 1900:

The total number of new homeowners amounts to 111. Of these, 56 are Jews, 27 Christians and 27 Muslims; and [one must also count] the municipality, which has put up a building with the revenue collected from all the city's residents.

This precise number is not very large at all, and indeed it is a faithful reflection of this stagnant period in the building of Jerusalem ... if we see that in this year 54 gentiles have built houses in Jerusalem, we know that 54 large buildings have been added; whereas, of the 56 Jews, few have built new houses, most of them being simply former home-owners, each of whom has made some small addition to his old home...

The 27 Christian houses are worth (at least) 756,500 piasters. The 56 Jewish houses are worth 263,000 piasters. The 27 Muslim houses are worth 242,000 piasters. The municipality building is worth 9,000. ...

The value of each of the Muslim houses comes, on the average, ...

to 1.5 times the value of each Jewish house, and the value of each Christian house—to twice the latter. ...

Among the Christians, the proportion of wealthy builders is 54 percent; among the Muslim-33 percent; and among the Jews, only 12 percent. Besides, the costliest of the Jewish houses reaches a value of 20,000, while the costliest of the Muslim and Christian houses come to much more.⁸²

This trend in building investment and styles characterizes Arab building practices throughout the Ottoman and British Mandate periods. In the eyes of the Arab Jerusalemites, the New City changed from a place signifying distance from familial ties and isolation, to a place with a healthy environment and relative safety. It also became a site on which to express upper and middle class values and wealth in elaborate architectural designs and gardens, in ways they were unable to do in the crowded Old City. The New City was not only for the exceptionally wealthy, however, and family histories also reveal that wealthier Arabs began building homes and commercial buildings and renting them out. Thus, it became possible for many people, Jews and Arabs, to leave the Old City, and rent in these areas, even though they lacked the capital required for purchasing land and building a house. The extensive properties of the Greek Orthodox and Armenian churches provided similar opportunities for their members.

The following instances provide examples of the unevenness of information regarding building expansion. In the 1870s *Kneset Yisrael Association* established the *Even Yisrael Society* and bought a plot of land planning to build 53 homes. The Society's Book of Regulations reports on the details of the lottery to distribute the homes, the founders of the neighbourhoods, the cost of the land, and the method of purchase.⁸³ In contrast, searching for information about Arab, Armenian, and Greek residential expansion outside the Old City is less rewarding. It is recorded in a family history that a newly married Armenian couple in 1858 began living outside the city in the Mamillah quarter in a house the groom had inherited from his father. After the wife died in 1884, the husband petitioned the Armenian patriarch to be given rooms in the Armenian Quarter, as he wrote, "It is impossible for me to live outside the Old City and leave my children in the hands of Turks and troops and other strange people."⁸⁴ It is doubtful that the young couple would have ventured outside the walls to live alone and there would most likely have been at least some other homes in the area. But there are no residences marked in this area on a map from this period. Similarly, Bertha Spafford Vester tells of an incident from the late 1870s or early 1880s, when a young man from an Arab Roman Catholic family

from *Haret al-Sa'adiyah* (inside of *Bab al-Zahira* ['Herod's Gate']) was building a home for himself at the end of Jaffa Road, opposite the British Consulate.⁸⁵ Before the wedding, he died and the house was left unfinished. Vester mentions this incident because the house stood empty for years, and she recalls her mother telling her the story. Because of the tragic incident surrounding the house, its history is recorded in her memoirs. But relying on such sources for information reveals the precarious position of reading the historical record. How many other houses were built by Jerusalemites but were never documented or described? Family papers, municipality records and Muslim and Christian *waqf* documents will be key in unearthing the history of Arab building in the New City.

The End of Ottoman Rule over Jerusalem

World War I imposed extreme hardships on the population of Jerusalem, as well as all over the Levant. Conscription, famines, illnesses, and shortages of supplies plagued the country and brought normal functioning of the city to a standstill. With the uncertainty of the future as well as the growing sentiments of dissatisfaction with the Ottoman authority which had begun earlier in the century, the general mood of the population and economic condition of the empire discouraged the growth and investments in building and expansion which characterized the later half of the nineteenth century. Thus, the British occupation of the city in 1917 came to be seen in comparative light as providing stability and services for the residents. These moves gave people confidence in the future, resulting in a second period of growth in building homes and businesses outside the walls.

The basis of the communities in the New City—German Colony, Greek Colony, Qatamon, Talbiya, Baq'a and others—grew out of the late Ottoman period and the changes made to Ottoman land laws and administration. The increased Ottoman presence and the sense of security, as well as the economic growth of the city provided a variety of pull factors to encourage the Jerusalem population to begin building outside the walled city. The crowded existence within the walls as well as the desire to express wealth and status in architectural adornment pushed wealthy Muslim and Christian families into the New City. The Christian churches, in particular the Greek Orthodox and Armenian Churches, provided their clergy and lay members with opportunities to live in church property outside the walls, thereby contributing to a large Christian presence in parts of the city. At the same time that building projects and architectural styles were changing the face of the city, the social fabric of Jerusalem was also being transformed. The new schools that were founded by Christian missionaries, the Ottoman authorities, and local Arab educators

provided important opportunities for people to change their lives through becoming literate and acquiring skills that prepared them for different ways of life and economic opportunities, such as administrative jobs and increasing contact with tourists. While many of these transformations came to a standstill during the years of World War I, they resumed with vigor under the British Mandate period in Palestine.

Endnotes

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² Ben-Arieh, *New City*, p. 355; Schmelz, *Notes* p. 62 and *Modern Jerusalem*, pp. 9-22.

³ See, for example, Fawcett, Andrews, Duff, and many others.

⁴ See, for example, Kark's *Jerusalem Neighbourhoods*, Ben-Arieh, Schmelz, Albert Hyamson's *Palestine Old and New*, and *A Companion Volume to the Atlas of Jerusalem*, among others.

⁵ Ben-Arieh maintains that there were 6,000 Muslims, 4,000 Christians, and 11,000 Jews. Ottoman statistics only register 3,780 Jews. There were, of course, Jews who were not Ottoman citizens (and so would not have been counted), but the non-citizen count for the entire *Qada'* of Jerusalem was 5,500. Even if it is assumed that all non-citizens were Jews, which they certainly weren't, then the Jewish population, according to Ottoman registers, would only figure to be 9,280. (Scholch, pp. 231-232).

⁶ Scholch, p. 230.

⁷ Ben-Arieh, *New City*, pp. 368-9.

⁸ Ben-Arieh, *New City*, p. 374 citing the newspaper *Hashkafah*, 16 Heshvan 5665 (1904/5), Vol. VI, No. 11, p. 2; Scholch, p. 237. However, 'Izzat Tannous in his history of Palestine recalls traveling on donkeyback between Nablus and Jerusalem as late as 1908, saying that "there were no paved roads for vehicles." (Tannous, p. 10). Whether this means that they couldn't travel even by carriage is unclear.

⁹ Ben-Arieh, *New City*, p. 372 citing David Yellin, *Writings*, I, pp. 9-10 (1896) [Hebrew].

¹⁰ Ben-Arieh, *New City*, pp. 375-77. Scholch lists 1865 as the date Jerusalem was connected with Jaffa which had been connected in 1864. Scholch, pp. 236-7.

¹¹ Lieber, p. 36.

¹² Vester, p. 210.

¹³ Halabi, p. 7; Scholch, p. 239.

- ¹⁴ Scholch, p. 240; Ben-Arieh, p. 124.
- ¹⁵ Scholch, p. 240.
- ¹⁶ Department of Overseas Trade (1935), p. 63.
- ¹⁷ Scholch, p. 240; Ben-Arieh, p. 124.
- ¹⁸ Scholch, p. 240. See also Ben-Arieh, p. 124 citing Luncz, *Almanac*, VII, p. 171-2; Luncz, *Jerusalem Yearbook*, V, 1901, p. 283; X, 1905, p. 166.
- ¹⁹ Ben-Arieh, p. 125.
- ²⁰ Ben-Arieh, p. 138.
- ²¹ Khouri, pp. 3-5.
- ²² Khouri, pp. 3-27.
- ²³ Khalil Sakakini, p. 48.
- ²⁴ Yaghi, p. 99.
- ²⁵ Tarif Khalidi, p. 61.
- ²⁶ Tarif Khalidi, p. 62.
- ²⁷ Tarif Khalidi, p. 62.
- ²⁸ Graham-Brown, p. 15, citing 'Education in Syria' by Shahin Makarius, 1883.
- ²⁹ Kark and Landman, p. 134 quoting Luncz from the *Jerusalem Yearbook*, IV, 1892, pp. 222-3.
- ³⁰ Ben-Arieh, p. 138.
- ³¹ Ben-Arieh, p. 138; Hala Sakakini, p. 24.
- ³² Rose, pp. 43-67.
- ³³ Tannous, pp. 27-48.
- ³⁴ Tarif Khalidi, p. 63.
- ³⁵ Tannous, pp. 12-15. Tannous credits St. George's with introducing "technique" to football in Palestine, and initiating "a revolution in sports which spread to all other towns in Palestine".
- ³⁶ Roberts, p. 44.
- ³⁷ Smith, p. 27 quoting Ruppin, *Syrien als Wirtschaftsgebiet*, p. 86.
- ³⁸ See Vester, p. 156 for an account of such things.
- ³⁹ Robinson, Edward. *Biblical Researchers in Palestine, Mount Sinai and Arabia Petraea*. London, 1841, II, pp. 83 ff as cited in Lieber, p. 34.
- ⁴⁰ Ben-Arieh, p. 40.
- ⁴¹ Ben-Arieh, p. 41.
- ⁴² Himadeh, pp. 216-220
- ⁴³ Ben-Arieh, p. 350.
- ⁴⁴ Scholch, p. 236.
- ⁴⁵ Vester, p. 92.
- ⁴⁶ Hala Sakakini, p. 48.
- ⁴⁷ Veicmanas, p. 377; see also Asali.
- ⁴⁸ Scholch, p. 233.
- ⁴⁹ See McCarthy for his comprehensive work on Ottoman population statistics in Palestine.
- ⁵⁰ Schmelz, *Modern Jerusalem*, p. 17, points this out as regards the Jews with foreign citizenship

living in Jerusalem, but neglects to mention foreign Christians as also falling under this category.

⁵¹ Ben-Arieh, *Old City*, p. 354 citing Luncz (see note 32, p. 354).

⁵² Scholch, p. 232.

⁵³ Ben-Arieh, *Old City*, p. 355. According to the Survey of Palestine, the 1922 urban population of Jerusalem totaled 62,578, with Jews numbering 33,971, Muslims 13,413 and Christians numbered 14,699. (*Survey of Palestine*, Vol. I, p. 148).

⁵⁴ Ben-Arieh, *New City*, p. 366, citing Press Travel Handbook, pp. 125-6.

⁵⁵ Ben-Arieh, *New City*, p. 354.

⁵⁶ Ben-Arieh, *New City*, p. 241. Note the discrepancy in the number of Jews with the Ottoman estimates given previously.

⁵⁷ Kark and Landman, p. 131.

⁵⁸ Kark and Landman, p. 131.

⁵⁹ For an in-depth discussion of this issue, see Adar Arnon, "The Quarters of Jerusalem in the Ottoman Period". *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 1. January 1992, pp. 1-65.

⁶⁰ Arnon, pp. 7-12.

⁶¹ *Zawaya* plural, *zawiya* singular: It has had a variety of uses throughout the Islamic Near East and North Africa, but usually housed a *shaykh* and often consisted of the tomb of a saint and a guest house. Religious instruction was always a central part of their role and some *zawaya* were centers of Islamic mysticism (see the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, "zawaya").

⁶² Kark and Landman, p. 114.

⁶³ Kark and Landman, p. 114.

⁶⁴ Scholch, p. 233.

⁶⁵ Scholch, p. 237.

⁶⁶ Scholch, p. 233 in reference to Vital Cuinet, *Syrie, Liban et Palestine. Geographie Administrative, Statistique, Descriptive et Raisonnee*. Paris, 1896-1901, pp. 522, 535, 542, 553 and 563.

⁶⁷ Shimon Landman's work is an exception, and he uses many Arab sources in describing the rise of Muslim building outside the walls of the Old City in the 19th century.

⁶⁸ See, for example, Mujir al-Din's *al-Uns al-Jalil bi-tarikh al-Quds wal-Khalil* (part 2, p. 60 is one instance) from the fifteenth century or *Suwwanih al-Ins bi-rihlati li-wadi al-Quds* by Mustafa As'ad al-Laqimi al-Dumiyati who died in 1764 AD. Landman's work documents the various *qusur* of Sheikh Khalili, al-'Amawi, al-Nathir, al-Khatib, and al-Shihabi families, among others.

⁶⁹ Kark and Landman, p. 118.

⁷⁰ Hala Sakakini, p. 1. The Patriarchate's building is now east of the railway station and has been converted by Israelis into a theatre, called 'the Khan'.

⁷¹ Interview with M. Spiridon, 13 June 1995.

⁷² Scholch, p. 234.

⁷³ See 'Adel Manna' for more on this subject.

⁷⁴ Abu Bakr, p. 47. As a *mutasarrif*, Jerusalem was directly under the control of Istanbul, and no longer was governed via the *wali* of Syria. The *mutasarrif* was rezoned in 1864.

⁷⁵ I am grateful to Su'ad al-'Amiri and Nazmi al-Ju'bi for raising this issue.

⁷⁶ See, for example, Ben Arieh, Kark *Jerusalem Neighbourhoods*, Shapiro, among others.

⁷⁷ See Kark, etc..

⁷⁸ Ben Arie, *New City*, p. 74.

⁷⁹ Ben Arie, *New City*, pp. 79-80 referring to Wilson's map of 1864.

⁸⁰ Kark and Landman are an exception but their work addresses only Muslim buildings in the northeastern part of the New City.

⁸¹ Vester, pp. 86-87. Letter from Aunt Maggie, 17 January 1883.

⁸² Ben Arie, *New City*, p. 455 citing Yellin, *Writings*, I, pp. 386-8, Iyyar 5660 (1899-90).

⁸³ Ben Arie, p. 115.

⁸⁴ Rose, pp. 30-31. The husband worked near Jaffa Gate, a fifteen minute walk from his house. He was given two rooms and a kitchen by the Patriarchate and had to pay three pounds yearly, as he was receiving rent on the house he had left in Mamillah. He remarried two years later.

⁸⁵ The British Consulate was the building with the two stucco lions, later a police station during the British Mandate, and now a bank. Vester, p. 83.

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