Jerusalem

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Given Jerusalem's unique position as the global center of the three largest monotheistic religions, Jerusalem's history stretches back over 3,000 years, to biblical times. Jerusalem is a symbolic and tangible focal point in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, earning its place in the urban studies and planning literature as a self-explanatory category related to an ethnonationally divided and contested city (Shlay and Rosen 2015).

Competing religious and political narratives have affected Jerusalem's development, and Israeli national principles have played a significant role in planning the contemporary city (Rokem 2013). This brief entry focuses on Jerusalem's modern planning during the past century – the planning that has led to its contemporary urban reality.

Jerusalem has always been a city of migration – as well as one of pilgrimage. Since the late nineteenth century, Jerusalem has been at the epicenter of the Jewish people's modern-day struggle to build its homeland. In particular since that time, waves of Jewish migration, especially from Europe and from the Arab world, have served to transform the city's character and to make it become a bustling metropolis. Since the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948, Jerusalem has been the nation's capital. Despite its administrative as well as symbolic importance, while it is the largest, it is also the poorest city in the country. According to the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, at the end of 2013 the population of Jerusalem numbered 816,000. The Jewish population totaled 515,000 (63%), while the Arab (Muslim and Christian) and "other" (non-Jewish) population totaled 301,000 (37%).

In ethnonationally contested cities such as Jerusalem, urban planning policy can take a major role in reinforcing spatial and social divisions. The dominant Israeli urban planning policy has been to "reunify" East and West Jerusalem, while the Palestinian population sees such integration as an illegal "annexation." Urban planning has had a substantial effect on material and psychological conditions related to intergroup Israeli–Palestinian volatility (Bollens 1998). The Israeli management of the city has also meant that economic development and services are geared toward the needs and aspirations of the city's Jewish population. To aid comprehension of the complexities of Jerusalem's spatial and social fabric, the following sections will briefly outline its twentieth-century history.

URBAN PLANNING IN JERUSALEM: BRIEF TWENTIETH-CENTURY OVERVIEW

The mid-World War I Accords of 1917 led to a radical alteration of the city's position: from a remote provincial town at the edge of the Ottoman Empire, it became the capital of the British Mandate in Palestine. During the Mandate period (1920–1948), Jerusalem was physically divided into two separate parts: the east (Jordanian side) and the west (Israeli side).

The British Mandate planning policy was to strengthen the position of the Old City with its religious sites, while developing new neighborhoods around the historic center. British architecture and planning left the city

a long-standing legacy. Alongside several important buildings, some of the most gifted planners of the time influenced the city's long-term development, especially through the Ashbee and Geddes Scheme (1922), the Holliday Scheme (1934), and the Kendall Scheme (1944).

The Mandate ended with the 1948 War ("Nakba [the catastrophe]" by its Palestinian name and "War of Independence" by its Israeli name, but here simply "1948 War"), which physically divided Jerusalem between two new states: Jordan in the east and Israel to the west, separated by the Green Line militarized border running through the historical heart of the city (see Figure 1). The divided city was to become a fixed reality in the minds of the city's inhabitants on both sides of the armistice line (Schweid 1986, 109). The 1950 and 1959 Jerusalem masterplans reflect the planners' expectation that the city would remain divided, with a focus on "local municipal issues" rather than on larger schemes for growth, for example (Schweid 1986, 112). During the subsequent 19 years the two sides of the city developed individually as entirely separate entities on either side of the Green Line. In parallel, the Jordanians concentrated mainly on expanding their suburbs beyond the Old City walls (Sharon 1973, 132).

The 1967 Six Days War between Israel and its Arab neighbors ended with a significant turning point in Israel's geopolitical existence: the conquering (also termed "occupation" and "annexation," depending on the political narrative) of the Golan Heights, the Gaza strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem itself. This culminated in Jerusalem being declared Israel's united capital soon after the end of the war.

URBAN PLANNING IN JERUSALEM SINCE 1967

Within days of Jerusalem's being declared the Israeli capital, the Jerusalem municipality started integrating services and infrastructure in order to connect the two sides of the city. In the early 1970s Mayor Teddy Kollek, who would become the central figure in Jerusalem for the next quarter-century, established an international panel of planning experts to take part in the building of "reunified Jerusalem" (Wasserstein 2001, 217).

The Israeli government expanded the municipal boundaries of Jerusalem to include 71 km^2 of the West Bank, which were chosen to follow key strategic and political considerations. This approach would allow the city to expand on a metropolitan scale, through the annexation of vast tracts of empty land beyond the narrow (6.5 km^2) limits of the Jordanian municipality of Jerusalem (see Figure 1). Territorial and demographic concerns over the status of Jerusalem remain at the heart of Israeli and Palestinian national politics to this day, and have been paramount in determining planning decisions in what has been described as "the battle over demography" (Fenster 2004, 96).

The underlying principle – to establish a large, unified city with a dominant Jewish majority – continued to guide Israel's planning policy in subsequent years and resulted in a marked gap between the two dominant communities in terms of housing, services provision, and infrastructure investment. No comprehensive plan for the city of Jerusalem has been statutorily approved since 1959, although the latest, "Outline Plan 2000," is currently awaiting determination. Neighborhood design over the years has equally been lacking in an overarching scheme. Going back to the earliest years of building outside of the city walls, one can trace a series of planning ideas in the layout of the city's many neighborhoods: from the courtyard neighborhoods of Mea Shearim (in the 1870s) to the garden suburbs of Beit Hakerem and Rehavia (1920s) to the neighborhood unit style of outer suburbs (in the 1970s).
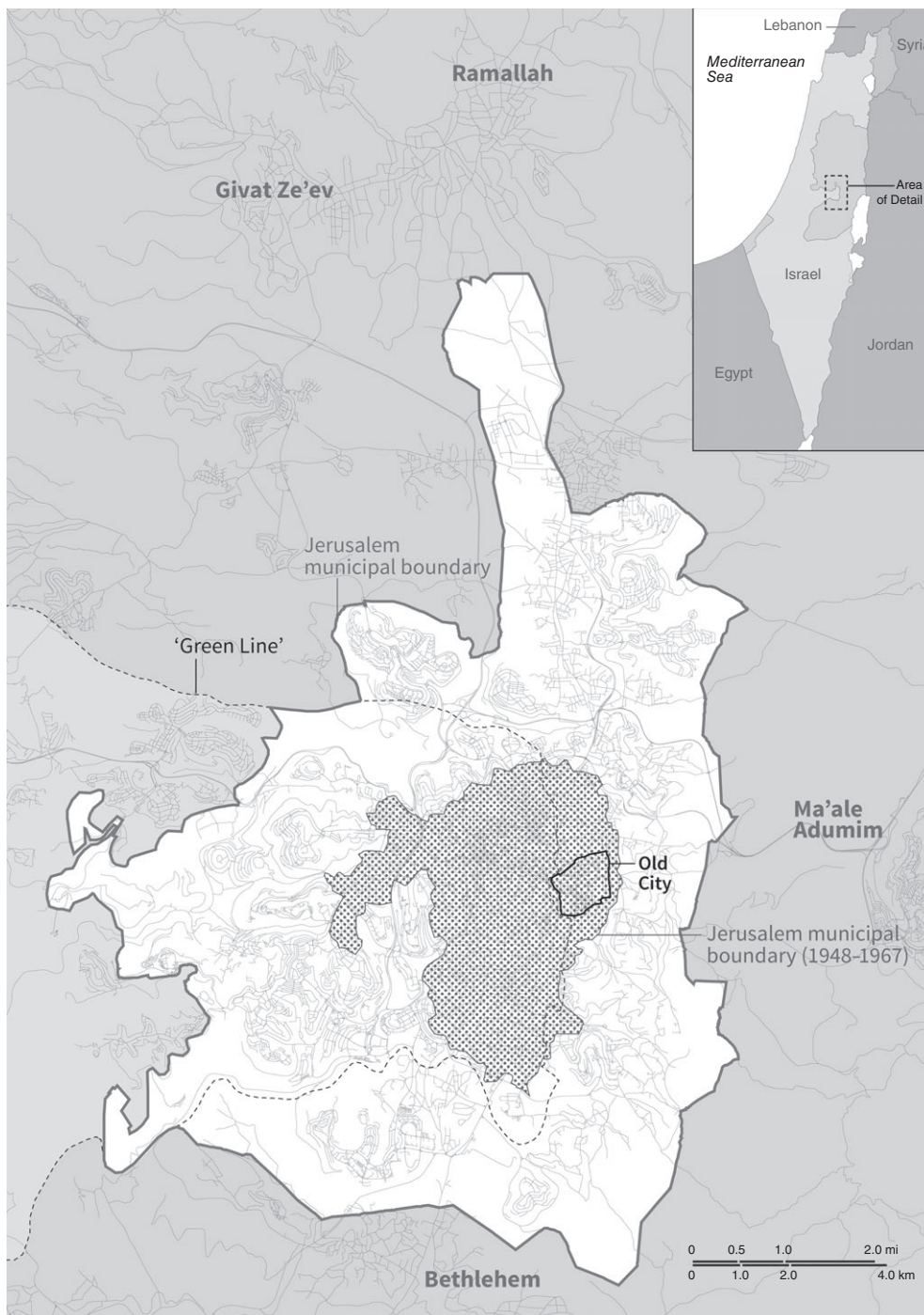
Figure 1   Jerusalem municipal boundary changes before and after 1967

The "dispersed" model has led to some significant planning challenges, the original heart of West Jerusalem losing some of its commercial viability, as growth has shifted to the more peripheral neighborhoods. One of the most recent changes to the city's infrastructure is the security barrier (also known as "separation wall") running along the eastern edges of the city. The official intention of the barrier is to prevent suicide bombers from entering the city from the West Bank, but the barrier itself has had a significant impact on the city's geographic continuity – to the detriment of the functional integration of the Palestinian neighborhoods, which have become physically separated from Jerusalem's economic heartland. The Camp David peace talks of early 2000 recognized that, in a "final status solution," a compromise would need to be made over Israel's control of Jerusalem. Since the failure of the Camp David talks and the outbreak of the second Intifada (i.e., Palestinian civilian uprising) later that year, in 2000 (the first Intifada was in 1987), the status quo of holding Jerusalem as a "united" city under Israeli sovereignty has been maintained despite international opposition.

The past decade has seen several major new transport links providing faster connections through the city to its outlying neighborhoods; thus "Road No. 1," built along the ancient route to Jerusalem from neighboring cities, runs north–south, following the alignment of the former 1948–1967 Green Line. While the road tends to mark the division of the city between east and west, the Jerusalem light rail (completed in 2011) is another major piece of public transport infrastructure potentially connecting the two populations. The ramifications of the light rail's role to serve as a bridge between the two populations is yet to be fully understood. While it may have provided increased accessibility between Palestinian and Jewish-Israeli communities, and for both groups to the heart of the city, whether this infrastructure will foster copresence or will become a source of continued friction, depends on future political conditions and remains to be seen.

A CONCLUDING COMMENT

Any review of a city's planning history is bound to be partial. Centuries of sporadic violent conflict have left scars on the ground that a history of the past century of modern planning can only begin to capture. While, as far as the relation between planning and politics is concerned, Jerusalem represents an exceptional case study (Rokem and Allegra 2016), it is equally a city that functions relatively well on an everyday basis. One of the lessons from urban planning and policy in Jerusalem is its impact on community segregation, especially in the absence of national policy solutions (Bollens 2000). This everyday reality is relevant to other contested cities, demonstrating the importance of understanding the relation between planning, conflict, and urban space.

Jerusalem is a city that demands a long historical perspective. Any such view reveals that along with its periods of violence and turmoil were times of prosperity and living Jewish and Arab lives in common (Klein 2014). Nevertheless, current trends suggest that it is likely that, if the status quo remains, Jerusalem will continue to fragment along the ethnoreligious lines etched in its ancient pathways. Existing imbalances of political power are likely to intensify with the trajectories of the Jewish ultraorthodox population on the one hand and Palestinian population on the other. Under current circumstances the city's history of deprivation is likely to prevail. Nevertheless, it is hoped that, given the abiding international interest in the city, a shift in local political motivations will allow it to move on to new, more positive tracks, which build on its long history of coexistence.

SEE ALSO: Border Cities; Divided Cities; Spatial Segregation; Urban Planning; Urban Warfare

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