Palestinian City and Civic Culture: Civic Siege and Absence of City

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Absract: This article is tackling an important issues in the Palestinian context, regarding to the significance of the city as incubator of civic culture and its style of life. For achieving the object of this paper, the researcher relies on historical, sociological and political experiences that the Palestinian Society has been undergoing over a period of 62 years, focusing on spatial demolition policies that adopted by Israeli Occupation, starting with the Judization of the Palestinian cities such as Jerusalem and Hebron, which aiming for emptying them of its Palestinian residents. This colonialist politics was expressed by policies of: siege, curfew all year long, confiscation of some Palestinian houses, schools and lands, closure of the central market adjacent to the Abraham Mosque, state of isolating of the cities, deprivation of Palestinians of their minimum civil, political, cultural and national rights. At the same time coincide with obstruction the Palestinian from having any development and expansion of central cities. And so prevented Palestinians from undergoing a state of cultural and social integration. the result of this policies is creating state of localism loyalties, conservative and traditional trends within Palestinian cities that contradicted with civic model. The extremely model of this polices applied on Hebron city that is experiencing state of conflict on identity of the city between the Israelis and Palestinian.

Key words: Civic culture · City · Spatial demolition · Public sphere

INTRODUCTION

Before tackling the address of this article, it is worth noting in this regard that it is pointless to study the civic culture and its features in isolation from the political, historical, cultural and economic conditions that the Palestinian society has been undergoing over a period of last century until this present moment. The ethnic cleansing in (1948) had devastating effects on the Palestinian society and its cultural, social and economic characteristics. The Palestinian society as shall be explained later on did not only lose its land and wealth, but it also lost the most important civilized and civic cities and concentrations along with their institutions and their elite. Historically, these constituted the most important centers which attracted the investments of the early Palestinian Bourgeois and the excessive numbers of labor that exceeded the requirements of agricultural produce in the Palestinian villages; on the other hand, it influenced all the aspect of the everyday lives of the Palestinians in

the presence of the occupation and the way they adapted and dealt with it.

This lead to the rise of the Israeli state at the expense of the occupation of the Palestinian coastal cities (Jaffa, Haifa, Acre, Lod, Ramallah) which were the most developed economically, socially, culturally and politically. This has also resulted in the partition of the city of Jerusalem into two halves. The social and economical formation of the Palestinian society was shattered into pieces. This coincided with a cease in the growth of mountainous cities (inland cities) and a recession in the agricultural work, marginalization of the West Bank cities following annexation to Jordan and Gaza Strip to the Egyptian regime. The displacement movement to the West Bank and Gaza Strip in (1948) lead to challenges and problems that surfaced before the residential clusters and cities which absorbed about (70%) of the refugees; the manifestations were: demographic it is represented in the refugee camps which emerged as slums near the Palestinian cities and town, economic; it is

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represented in the size of unemployment and social which is expressed in terms of a cultural and value perspective of the Palestinian refugees who were originally from the Palestinian villages; most refugees from the coastal cities went to Syria and Lebanon.

Some inland cities like Nablus and Hebron were marginally vibrant in the period from (1948-1967) as a result of the existence of the middle class sector. A sector of the new middle class from the coastal cities came to inland cities like Ramallah, Bethlehem and Jerusalem; they brought with them new civic behaviors and professional skills which contributed to the reinforcement of the civic features of some cities; however, the entire attention of the Jordanian government focused on the transformation of Amman city into a political, administrative and commercial metropolis; this was at the expense of the Palestinian cities which were excluded from this policy.

The Palestinian society was exposed to a stage of disintegration and fragmentation for the second time following the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the year (1967). This lead to a new wave of immigration towards the eastern bank (Jordan) and other Arab states; this immigration has inflicted damage on all social categories; it deprived the society of significant professional and economic potentials. In addition, the occupation imposed a military policy on the residential clusters both civilized and rural in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; this was manifested in the following practices: siege policies, isolated and separated between Gaza strip and west Bank, cutting off roads between cities, villages and camps especially with the start of the First Intifada in (1987), confiscation of Palestinian territory and building of Israeli settlements on their confiscated lands. This has practically stopped Palestinian cities from carrying out any expansions and it also annexed the Palestinian market and infrastructure making it fully dependent on the Israeli market.

The year (1993) constituted a new turning point in the development of the Palestinian society since following the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority [PNA], some Palestinian cities had witnessed a state of stability; governmental institutions, political parties and civil society organizations were active in building and developing the Palestinian society on all social, economic, political and cultural levels. This was on the assumption that this was a historic moment for the Palestinian society towards the establishment of a democratic state on its land. Indeed, few changes in the value and cultural structure of the Palestinian were felt on the ground along with the emergence of some level of civic life in some

Palestinian cities mainly Ramallah and Gaza cities; a segment of the middle class was active and it contributed towards the civilization of the society and defending the liberty life, in addition to the concentration of civil and governmental institutions in it.

The situation however did not last long since in light of the breakdown of the Palestinian Israeli negotiations, the Second Intifada broke out in (2000) when all the manifestations of sovereignty in the Palestinian society were destroyed and ruined; cities were sealed and besieged; they were turned into isolated cantons. This has negatively influenced the achievements of the Palestinian society on the educational, cultural, social and civic aspects that were fulfilled during the stage of political stability.

City and Civic Culture: Theoretical Background: When we discuss civic culture it is imperative to clarify its relationship with the city not as a linguistic derivation from it only since the city is considered the incubator and developer of the civic culture. It is the place where there are the state judicial, legislative and executive institutions, offices and apparatuses, civil society organizations and the headquarters of the political, social and religious leaderships. It is the class division of the social sectors; it is the common culture since it has the universities, cafes, cinemas and theatres. There is social change and social mobility in the city [1]. The class formation depends on the extent of growth of the city especially the middle class which lifts the banner of change, progress and modernity. It is the primary defender of democracy and secularism [2].

In our address of this article, we are dealing with city and civility on the consideration that the latter is the spirit and content of the former. The civic state differs from one city to other since there is not a single model; they are diversified [3] whether this is at the level of one state or when it goes beyond that when it is compared with other states.

Al-Khoury [4] indicates that the word city (Madina) in Arabic is derived from the root (dan) which means a judge or a governor since a city is the place where the rule and the judiciary are taken care of. In contrast, Hourani's study [5] analyzes the emergence and development of cities when the countryside produces a surplus in agricultural produce while the inhabitants of the city become preoccupied in trading with goods and other services needed by the society. Barakat [6] summarizes this by indicating that the city is the place where there are the ruling, professional and intellectual classes along with

lawyers, politicians, business people, industrialists and manufacturers. It has diversity and sub branching in the different neighborhoods; all of this helps to shape a developed civilized culture which constitutes the common culture.

On the other hand, Mercier [7] study addresses the significance of urbanization in the Arab world; the researcher considers the market as a common sphere. It is considered the common place where transactions take place on a rational and neutral basis since there is a common ground for sectarian and religious interaction; it is also a place where the countryside meets with the city; differences based on gender or class are reduced; this operation leads to a state of cultural exchange and friction with the other where all differences melt; Potter, D.(1968:101) was eager to consider the market as " the only secular institution with excellence in the Near East" [8].

In his explanation of the relationship between the city and the Civic Culture, Hanson [9] states that what historically surrounds the civic culture are the folkways, public expectations, distribution of force and responsibility. He depended in this on his analysis of the classification of the civic culture in the center cities. He divided them into three types: First: Exploitative and paternal since the civic culture is the inheritance of an elite centralized hegemony of a small group. There are several models that dominate the society like politics, banks and media. Second: Consumer and services oriented. It is the pluralism in terms of plurality of services and the geographical divisions of the society, religious affiliations and income distribution. It also has pluralism in economic, cultural and political powers. Third: Communitarian institutions which stress common good in its popular discourse. It flourishes through cooperation and consensus and builds influential institutions in the policies and the society towards a fulfillment of the common good like governmental institutions and civil society organizations. These expressions in light of their cultural dimension constitute the common culture and the subculture in their interpretation, practices and formation of the patterns of civic culture in a given society or another.

By the same context, Bronswijk and his colleagues [10]. Emphasize the Civic or Public Space as one of the approaches towards city since it is a significant and basic precondition to the development of the civic culture; along with the development of the city and the city life, the social solidarity decreases, so there would be a need for social networking and the establishment of civic centers and institutions. As for the other aspect that they mention, it states that the growth and development of the civic life constitutes cultural reference making the city culture in control of the countryside in terms of linking the human life with the image, landscape and form of city and with its culture and life styles with what is required with the terms of living inside it. On the other hand, Faricy and Hoyman's study [11] which revolves on one main subject which is-Is the growth of the city the outcome of the creative class or as a result of the political culture network?-they conclude that the political culture network of universities, academicians and holders of university degrees are the ones who pave the way for economic growth since openness and diversity in the local culture help to find opportunities and options towards economic development.

In an address of the state of mobility in the American cities Dagger [12] mentions that the following quotation expresses their life style; " It is Norms to move" which is considered the heart of the American culture where confidence withers away due to the change of the residency in relation to surrounding environment, so social ties are lost and participation in elections decreases. In return, citizenship grows away from association with a place or people; it would be directed towards the country (homeland). This state of mobility develops individualistic and independent propensity.

Using the above mentioned analytical devices in analyzing the Palestinian society, it is difficult for us to clearly understand the Palestinian society or we tend to use "Palestinian clusters" since these tools are not only different in their social and cultural structure, but also they differ in the reality and formation of the economic and class structure and the nature of the political and social elite is totally different from the Palestinian reality. What distinguishes the Palestinian clusters is the absence of geographical continuity; consequently, it results in difficulty in movement, commuting and transportation between Palestinian cities. This reflects the Israeli policy in controlling the movement of Palestinian residents [13].

As a result of the weak economic structure, as a result of the displacement of the Palestinian society following the (1948) war and so the immigration of the Palestinian Bourgeois and Compradors to other states, their growth as a foreign capital in neighboring states like Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Gulf states lead to the backwardness of the Palestinian economy. This was in addition to the state of dependence on the Israeli economy [14]. Furthermore, new Palestinian clusters were established in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; they were called Refugee Camps the

majority of their residents were originally peasants, they flew from their cities and villages as a result of the war and settled near the inland Palestinian cities. This background is incapable of producing state cities since there is not a state in the first place nor there is central city as the case in Europe and America. The outcome of this is the absence of a cultural and civic reference as a main function for the city since in the historical sense no cities with their values, modern and cultural style of life were formed in the Palestinian society.

Historically, the local cultures for the Palestinian cities were developed separately; they were influenced by the historical, vocational, political and social context that the Palestinian cities and villages had undergone and in isolation from one another. This lead to a rise of complicated disputes and conflicts between the local and the national loyalties. This does not mean that there is not a common culture in the Palestinian society which carries within its folds gradual patriarchal and authoritarian values in terms of age, gender and values of obedience [15]. In return for values of giving, belongingness, social solidarity and amicable solution of conflicts [16].

This background produced something that is the opposite to what the west had passed through. The Palestinian clusters were characterized by the hegemony of the rural culture over the Palestinian cities in one way or another; it was influenced by the political and social elite as a reflection of their rural origins peasants and refugees especially after the ethnic cleansing in (1948) [17]. This is not decisive since it varies among Palestinian cities. Also the nature of the existing historical elites which developed within a different historical and social context differed. The common cultural pattern in Nablus and Hebron is controlled by family and affiliation Allegiance until this time. The civic organizations and even the political ones are influenced by its traditional, conservative structure and elite. Ramallah, Bethlehem and Jerusalem are distinguished for having a relatively open cultural pattern since the nature of the political and social elite, as well as the middle class is more crystallized and they reflect in general the civic taste which is closest to the civil way of life. This does not mean that the family influence is absent but it is lesser in favor of the political parties first and the civil society organizations second.

As for the universities, they are according to our understanding represent a public space for deliberation of thoughts and values in a rational manner. They are a multilateral liberal framework in which a state of polarization, dialogue and respect of the others view take place. For instance, most of political, cultural and civil

leaders in Bethlehem governorate now graduated from Bethlehem University, which were involve in students movement in the eighteenth and nineteenth [18]. Since four decades, the university in general playing a significant role in providing the Palestinian countryside with educated social and political leaderships; however, the main point here is that the structure of the Palestinian universities is different in terms of academic and administrative cadre. In a quick comparison of the Palestinian universities in West Bank, we notice that the academic cadre in Birzeit University in Ramallah are leftists, pro leftist, or liberal while the majority of the academic cadre in Bethlehem University are liberals even the most religious ones. As for Hebron and Nablus, they are closer to conservatives or religious; it is worth mentioning that Hebron University was first established on the grounds in (1971) that it would be an institute for the study of Islamic Sharia.

Regarding the new middle class in the Palestinian cities, it grows in isolation of its awareness of its role in the society since its address and practices play a significant role in pushing the wheel of progress and the rationalization of authority. In spite of the fact that the origins of the national movement leaders are from the middle class [19], the role of this class subsided following the Oslo Agreement in favor of the leaderships and the elite of the Palestinian National Authority [PNA]. New study by Hilal [20] regarding the Palestinian middle class after the establishment of PNA, concludes that there is a state of confusion and chaos in the identity of the middle class in its discourse and approach toward the building of a civil and political society ranging from secularism and liberal democracy in return for the middle class with a religious approach that is located somewhere between extremism and flexibility; this class did not realize itself and the significance of its role in the society with the exception of the middle class in Ramallah city since this modern class is the most salient and active in the city which is considered the smallest city of the Palestinian clusters.

Palestinian City: Between the past and the Present:
The main characteristic in addressing the Arab cities is the existence of patterns and divisions: civil vs. rural, open cities vs. closed cities, modern cities vs. traditional cities, slums vs. rich neighborhoods; this was reflected on the city itself. Some cities if not all were characterized of having a dual city old city and new city. This adds to the difference and significance in terms of the social and cultural aspects as it is related to the way and style of life.

In addition, states are characterized by the dominance of one or two central cities [21]. This dominance is not due to large population, but it is due to the city monopoly of cultural, political and economic services and activities [22].

The old neighborhoods or the old city in Palestine are distinguished for having neighborhoods that were historically formed on the basis of profession, family, sectarianism or religion and this is linked with family production [23]. For instance, Bethlehem is divided into nine main neighborhoods, eight are inhabited by Palestinian Christians while the ninth neighborhood is inhabited by Palestinian Muslims. While Hebron has eight quarters to family names or to handicraft. It seems that these neighborhoods were living in isolation from other neighborhoods or quarters in relation to social organization and all the services needed by the neighborhood inhabitants. On the other hand, Tamari [24] refers these divisions especially those regarding the neighborhoods which are linked with religion to British Mandate in Palestine since Jerusalem city was not known previously by the Jewish, Christian or Muslim quarters.

Tamari addresses Palestinian cities in pre British Mandate era under two basic terms: Culture of mountainous (inland) cities which is the culture of the Palestinian countryside as opposed to Culture of the coastal cities; the latter are the trade outlet for the local economies and the geographical internal areas. This has lead to the rise of a traders class and middle class as a result of the economic composition open to the world through marine trade. The resulting economic composition has brought about with it new culture and values linked with the class dimension of the classes that play a main role in it especially in Jaffa and Acre cities [25]. The inland cities like Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Hebron remained as important cities for tourism especially for pilgrims coming from Europe via Jaffa seaport and Arab states during that period.

In a study by the Turkish historian Ayyub Oziphran [26] on the Mediterranean cities especially Beirut, he viewed it as key elements manufacturing modernity and crystallizing local nationalities. He refers the process of modernization to the " local religious and cultural dimensions and not due to economic reasons"; the traders class were able bring about modern administrative reforms reflected in the viability of municipal councils of theses cities due to the absence of the nobles class and the traditional artisans clusters. He excludes Damascus-and Tamari excludes Jerusalem pre British mandate-in which there were both nobles class and the

traditional artisans clusters. Oziphran explains why Modernistic approach and modernity in Beirut for example won but failed in Damascus; this somewhat can be apply on Hebron city during these days, if we searching the elements of the social structure regarding to the formation of the municipality stuff members of Hebron city, the universities and chamber of commerce and industry, we can notice, they are still controlled and dominated by empowered families and notables, it is worthy to mention here that the PA refused to make an election to the Hebron municipality since (1996) until this moment to avoid the confrontation with the families and traditional leaders. While it did twice in other cities such as; Bethlehem, Ramallah. In Bethlehem, historically-during the ottoman, British, Jordanian and Israeli governments-the neighborhoods became behavioral and corporal governing patterns for the city inhabitants in making decisions. Bethlehem Municipal Council is made up of leaders *"Mukhtars"* of the nine neighborhoods. this Status quo didn't changed to much following the establishment of the PNA, the PNA decreased the municipality's members to 15, eight of them should be Christians.

Nasir and Dobar [27] differ with the above mentioned; they see that the Lebanese Bourgeois with its Christian majority was able to monopolize the commercial sector during the French Mandate and this helped in the formation of a capitalist sector centered in cities especially Beirut. Al-Sharif [28] points out that the role of the vigorous movement on the commercial level had helped in the growth of commercial cities more than in coastal cities in Palestine (Gaza, Jaffa, Haifa, Acre); it had helped to reinforce the positions of the comprador bourgeois which used to play the role of mediator between the European companies and the local market; they were the ones who were responsible for the task of adaptation of the local produce to meet the European market specifications at the end of Ottoman era. The majority of this sector were from Christian and Jewish families who monopolized the international trade [29]. While Muslims won land property [30].

By the same token, Bethlehem city was distinguished from other inland cities due to the fact that it was open to the external world as a result of the Ottoman reforms in the late nineteen century, influence of the nature of administrative and occupational organization and the large expanse that the professional and commercial along with the missionaries were able to introduce patterns and behaviors of an open life style through civil, religious, educational and vocational organizations in spite of the

existence of social and political sectors which consist of eminent Palestinian Muslim and Christian figures. On the other hand, Ramallah was distinguished for having Christians and the absence of influence of notables sector on the entire everyday life of the citizens or at least to a large extent. This explains why Ramallah is distinguished for its modern manifestations, cultural activity and the presence of a secular middle class which most Palestinian cities in Gaza Strip and West Bank do not possess or gain it after the establishment of PA [31]. As for the commercial cities of Nablus and Hebron, the familial, notables and dignitaries remained as the power that controls the commercial activity while the administration of the municipalities continued to be run in the traditional and familial manner until this present day.

It is noticeable that the movement of immigration of the entire social categories of the Palestinian refugees in (1948) lead to different outcomes according to location; the refugees of coastal cities Haifa, Acre and Jaffa in general departed from Palestine and went specifically to Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. Refugees from the middle region of Jerusalem and its surroundings resorted to the West Bank; Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Jericho and Jordan. As for those in the south of historical Palestine, they went to Hebron, while Khamaisi [32] indicates that some who left Lod, Ramlah and Jaffa took refuge in the city of Ramallah. Regarding to the integration process of the Palestinian refugees it was different according to the hosting city, for example, we can notice that the refugee camps in Bethlehem and Ramallah somehow are located in the center of the city, which helped and facilitated the integration process (culturally, socially and politically) for the refugees and even participating in formulation the culture of city. But for Hebron, the experience was different, since the refugee camps located out side of the central city, which created case of social and cultural gap between them, still exist until these days.

Taraki's study [33] indicates the significance of the role of the middle class which historically contributed to the modernization of Ramallah city as a result of the Christian immigration from Ramallah during the past century to north America. This contributed to the civilization of the city as a result of the money orders which its citizens, living abroad, transferred to it. She considers on the other hand that both Ramallah and Gaza where the two cities out of all the cities of the West Bank and Gaza Strip that were mostly influenced by immigration of refugees to them. However, the largest cities in the West Bank (Hebron and Nablus) did not receive many refugees. What makes Ramallah and Bethlehem and

Jerusalem to a certain extent distinguished is the arrival of the civilized middle class of Christians in the year (1948) to Ramallah mainly and Jerusalem and Bethlehem marginally; most of these Christians were from the coastal cities Ramlah, Lod and Jaffa. This modern sector of refugees contributed to the formation of the basic nucleus of the modern middle class in Ramallah as wholesalers, shop owners, government employees, teachers and specialists.

What distinguishes the historical period between (1948-1967) of the Palestinian cities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is the total absence of geographical continuity between them; the emerging Israeli occupation had occupied (70%) of historical Palestine; it annexed the West Bank to the Jordanian regime while Gaza Strip was annexed to Egypt. Palestinians lost their central cities and failed to build modern central cities in the two regions; they continued to depend on the main cities in both Egypt and Jordan [34]. This stage came to an end following the Israeli occupation of the remaining parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in (1967). The Israeli occupation authorities have tightened their grip on the Palestinian cities, villages and camps following the year (1967). It founded a new approach which is to have geographical continuity between them but with borders.

Following the outbreak of the popular Intifada in (1987 until 1993), the occupation increased its restrictions on the movement of inhabitants between the Palestinian territories in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; it worked on shrinking and restricting the development of the Palestinian cities and villages; this control influenced the economic condition and reduced the institutionalization of the society through harassment and pursuit of national, civil and nongovernmental Organization. This also coincided with the rise and development of Israeli settlements at the expense of the Palestinian lands through confiscation. These settlements devoured tens of thousands of dunums of the Palestinian territories. It has besieged the Palestinian cities by settlements terminating any prospect of any expansion and development of the Palestinian cities. If we look now to the geographical map of Bethlehem city for example, it is surrounded by Efrat and Toqoa settlements to the south of green zones to the east; it continues to reach Ma'aleh Adumim settlement which is linked with Jerusalem, Gilo settlement stretches to (60) Road which separates between Bethlehem and Hebron. In addition, the separation wall and Har Homa settlement(Abu Ghnaim Mountain) complete the settler ring around Bethlehem, the results of this policy, Bethlehem become as a victim of the occupation project

which it is the "Greater Jerusalem" and we can say that Bethlehem is experiencing spatial demolishing as a results of occupation's policies.

Oslo agreement signed by the Palestinian libration organization [PLO] and the Israeli government on 13th of September, 1993 is considered a new chapter in the partition of the Palestinian territories and the disintegration of the potentials for state building or construction of a national economy on small geographical spots making it more appalling than the apartheid policies practiced in South Africa. The Palestinian territories in the West Bank were divided into three areas: Area A form (18%) of the Palestinian territories; they are under the control of the Palestinian Authority in terms of civil issues and security control to a certain extent. Areas B constitute (22%) of the Palestinian lands; security control is the responsibility of the occupation authorities while the civil affairs are the responsibility of the Palestinian Authority. Areas C constitute (60%) of the Palestinian territories in addition to the illegal settlements on the occupied Palestinian territories in (1967). This area is under the total control of the occupation [35]. As for Hebron since it is special case, it was divided into two areas according to Hebron Protocol/Accords in (1997); Area H-1 under the Palestinian responsibility and H-2 which it is under the Israeli occupation control. This procedure of division somehow prevented to apply or to enforcement the law by Palestinian Authority, for instance, if someone committed a crime in Areas B, C or H-2, which are under the control of Occupation, prior coordination between the Palestinian police and the Israeli occupation is required so that the Palestinian forces could enter those areas, which takes a lot of time for the implementation of law.

In addition, Israel Occupation implemented different policies in the Palestinian cities; it followed a policy of Judization of Jerusalem and Hebron through imposing unjust measures and procedures. For example in order for somebody from Jerusalem to construct a house, he/she can only do so after licenses were issued by the Occupation Authorities; in most cases this was unattainable. In Hebron divided Abraham Mosque into two part; synagogue for Jewish and Mosque for Muslims in (1996) [36]. Since the two cities symbolize the holiness of Judaism.

The growth of Israeli settlement trebled as it was before Oslo agreement. And so as a results of high rate of settlements expansion most of them become as largest cities such as; Ma'aleh Adumim and Modi'in Illit, the continued construction in the settlement during the negotiation time (1994-2000) created facts on ground which will increase the charge of the final agreement and probably even prevent it. for instance, Jerusalem experienced enormous construction around the city contributed in cutting the part of East Jerusalem off from the west Bank and this will prevent the possibility of ever establishing a Palestinian state in which East Jerusalem is its capital.

Based on the fact that the geopolitical status quo of Jerusalem was postponed to the final status peace talks, the Palestinian political leadership temporarily chose Ramallah and Gaza cities to establish governmental institutions, ministries and public institutions. This is due to the absence of any geographical continuity between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank; these cities were like central nuclei and capitals to both of them until the issue of Jerusalem is tackled in the final peace talks?.

The result of this decision, all of governmental and public/civic institutions concentrated in Ramallah city during the period (1995-2000), that helped to flourish the city life with it's options, services and opportunity that can offer to the citizens. Because of that, Ramallah could attracted all of the sectors in West Bank to live in Ramallah including; students, workers, middle class, political and social elite, which helped together with the local middle class to represent a good model to central modern city, surfaced in it's activities of; civic and cultural organizations, woman centers, political parties, theaters, coffee shops (to elite and public), restaurants and clubs. The high rate of internal immigration to Ramallah decreased the traditional social ties, this predisposed "Unbeknown Phenomena" within the citizens, all of this aspects contributed to the elaboration of modernist ethos, which there is no city in the Palestinian clusters has, this push Taraki [37] to affirm that Ramallah "is the undisputed political, culture and social center of West Bank, including Jerusalem" for it's "outlook and life style ".

In (1996) The Palestinian Authority lunched project "Bethlehem 2000" in order to prepare the city for the celebration of the millennium commemoration the advent of Christianity, the aim of the project was to achieve a) Urban renovation-the street leading to Nativity Church, street illuminated, painted the shops, renovated old houses-b) Development of the tourism and preparation of religious, cultural and artistic events, C) And built the Peace Center which supposed to be focus point for dialogue between the people. The life started to be more open, social, cultural and artistic activities implemented, the life style start to change forward modern life.

However, this situation did not last long, the second Intifada broke out in (2000) after the broke-down the Palestinian Israeli negotiation. When all the manifestations of sovereignty in the Palestinian society were destroyed and ruined; cities were invaded,

destroyed and besieged. Ramallah suffered and still from systemically procedure of concentrated regimen of sieges, Bethlehem stopped here project when Israelis tanks demolished the houses and the streets in the city in April (2002). This has influenced negatively the achievement on cultural and social aspects that Bethlehem was fulfilled during the political stability.

Through control of all aspects of daily life of Palestinians, the Israeli occupation prevented them from having any development and expansion of central cities. This prevented Palestinians from undergoing a state of cultural or social integration. It in fact lead to the rise and strengthening of the local trends (localism) in those small cities which are living in semi isolation away from other Palestinian cities and regions even if they were only (5 or 10) kilometers away from one another.

This coincided with the Israeli harassment of the Palestinian cities mainly Jerusalem and Hebron; they witnessed a campaign of harassments like: closing civil society organizations in the old city in Jerusalem and Hebron, imposing a curfew all year long as the case of old city in Hebron, initiating a colonialist construction movement by the Israeli government in an attempt to carry out a process of Judization the city of Jerusalem, not allowed to any Palestinian to enter Jerusalem without permission and finally built separate wall surrounding all of Palestinian's cities [38]. This procedures decreased after the broke out of Second Intifada (2000) which has pushed several inhabitants of the middle class and the rich class to depart from the old city in Hebron leaving behind the poor class because it was really difficult for this class to move out of the old city; thus, it was described as the bottom of the city (culture of poverty) which is reflected in the educational, economic, occupational and cultural level of this sector.

Khadir's study [39] refer the spread of the phenomenon of Political Islam in the Palestinian's cities, villages and camps amidst the poor-started in first Intifada (1987) and separated in the second Intifada (2000) -to the economic conditions influencing its residents. The extend of Political Islam in the society lead to the spread of conservative and conventional values and norms which in essence are contradictory to those of civic life. We agree with the final outcome of the analysis while differs in the reasons behind the spread of this phenomenon; this condition applies to the Arab countries in general but it varies in the Palestinian society since the spread of Political Islam coincided with the retreat and deterioration of the nationalist, patriotic and leftist parties and this lead to a state of interstice which Political Islam was able to refill.

The Conflict on Identity of the City: The studies of the Israeli researcher Yiftachel reflect the Israeli colonialist and discriminatory policy of persecution and deprivation of the Palestinians of their rights to live in the West Bank or inside "Israel". On the other hand, his study [40] analyzes the relationship between the ethnocracy and religious radicalism; the two researchers stress the relationship between the policy of urbanization by the Israeli colonialist and the racial discrimination and exploitation policies on one hand and the creation of a holy discourse around the Abraham three cities (Jerusalem, Hebron and Negev) and its relationship with the growth of the religious Jewish movements in the three cities on the other hand. This has also coincided with the rise of different Palestinian religious Islamist movements that differ in their radical discourse towards the city and the colonialist policy applied in the three cities; this reaction came as the Palestinian inhabitants lost their political, civil, cultural and national rights and this also contradicts with the general frame which "Israel" wanted to have in terms of building of a "civic nation".

This process of sacred spaces is not separate from the power of the Israeli occupation since these sacred centers are not only thoughts and symbols but also an ethical boycott by which they deny the rights of others. The spread of Political Islam in Hebron comes as a result of the Israeli exploitation, persecution and violence against the Palestinians and it comes concurrent with the religious Jewish discourse regarding the significance and sacredness of the city; this, in return, lead to the rise of a radical Islamist movement against the take over and usurp of the city.

The holiness and symbolism of the place in the eyes of Palestinians is a nationalistic scheme backed by religious discourse; it had only reached Jerusalem and Hebron but it excluded the other Palestinian cities in order to create an opposite discourse to that of the Israeli religious movements regarding the two cities since they both represent the national and religious identity to both sides.

This explains the historical spread of Islamic movements; Hizb Tahrir (Islamic Libration Party), Jihad Islami (Islamic Jihad), Ikhwan Muslimin (Islamic Brotherhood) and later on, Hamas Movement, in Hebron. It is not only recently when Hamas was able to dominate all the seats in the elections of the Legislative council and in most local councils in (2005-2006). The sacredness, symbolism and identity of Hebron started historically with the start of the Zionist scheme to occupy Palestine, in the year (1929) registered the first bloody confrontation between the Palestinian and Jewish settlers. From that

time until present day, all of political parties, notables, families and charitable organizations Stress and confirm the significant of the city to Muslims. This historically explains the rise of the religious movements in Hebron while the national and secular movements in Bethlehem and Ramallah.

The conflict on identity of the city has witnessed considerable differences; there was not any discourse expressing the state of struggle on identity in Bethlehem city for instance; on the contrary, there was an agreement on the universality of the city in light of its significance to the Christians of the world and in considering it as an outlet to establish ties with the western countries. The secular and Islamic political leaderships including the local elite have historically emphasized the significance of the city considering that it is the birth place of Jesus Christ. In contrast, Hebron city witnessed the early stages of conflict over identity. It also witnessed a state of colonialist and settlers attack by religious Israelis in the mid sixties expressed by a strict religious discourse based on the sacredness of the city and its Jewish religious significance as the city of prophet Abraham. It also witnessed an increase of tension and friction in the discourse of the different religious Jewish movements over the city. This coincided with the colonialist policy which aimed at the Judization of the city and emptying it of its Palestinian residents as it was expressed by policies: in (1983) The Israelis occupation took over Osama Bin Munqith school and converted to be as religious school for the settlers-as the same for 'An-Nahdha, Al-Fayha', Tareq Bin Ziyad schools used as a military camp in the second Intifada-, confiscating Palestinian houses in old city, one settler killed (29) Palestinian in Al-Ibrahimi Mosque while they were praying in (1994), closure of the central market adjacent to the Abraham Mosque in the late of nineteenth, Siege and preventing the Palestinian to enter Alshohada street (2000-2005), settlers throwing stones and attacking the Palestinian and their houses in Tal Romida and old city started in (2000-untill now), curfew all year long in (2002-2004) it was around (745 days), closed the universities of Hebron and Palestine Polytechnic for eight months in January 14, 2003 and so the results, deprivation the Palestinians of their minimum civil, political, cultural and national rights.

On the other side, the Palestinians established and developed the Islamic discourse expressing the significance of the city of Abraham to Muslims. They expressed this through delivering political speeches, Manifestos and holding special religious ceremonies and festivals commemorating Prophet Abraham (Ibrahim), for

example, Hebron is well known with it's delivering the soup of prophet Ibrahim (*shorbit el Nabi Ibrahim*) on poor/ rich people, specially in Friday days, until this moment. And all of the National and Islamic parties during the two Intifada used religious slogans in their Manifestos and they are calling the people as grandchildren of the prophet Ibrahim (Abraham). This played a functional role in terms of empowering Muslims and regenerating their feelings so as to preserve unity in the confrontation and resistance of the Zionist scheme. On the other hand, it linked the present with the past. This discourse depicted the pattern of the cultural and religious life style in the city; it also identified the kind of behavior that fits with the conservative reputation of the city since any behavior that contradicts with its reputation is considered a violation and disrespect to Prophet Abraham (Ibrahim).

As for the old city in Hebron, it witnessed in the (1993-2004) a large scale campaign of displacement of Palestinians out of the old town by both middle and rich classes in light of the Israeli occupation policy of siege and strangulation against the Arab residents. On the other hand, the poor sectors remained since they were unable to move out; this contributed to the reinforcement of the poverty culture in it. This status quo constituted a rich soil for the spread of Islamic movements in it. According to Max Weber analysis, " Those poor and persecuted people are in need of a savior out of their bitter reality. The Islamic movements represented a safe heaven and salvation for them; whereas, the rich sectors and leaders of secular and communist parties were not in need for any savior, but they wished to gain legitimacy to their status, so these sectors exploited the religious discourse to stress their place and legitimacy.

The policies of the Israeli occupation army directed at the residents of Hebron and the old city in particular have created a number of sociological controversies about the Israeli measures in the old city and their impact on the social, intellectual and economic life and the nature of its formation and development, with regard to:

- The policy of Judaization that Hebron was subjected to and the state of constant siege, which hampered the intellectual and cultural interaction of the city residents and other Palestinian cities, which left traces and gaps between the mentality of the Hebron residents and the other cities, as a result of the stagnation of the ideas held by the residents of the city and the absence of other ideas and lifestyles due to the lack of enlightenment and interaction.

- Closure of the main market in the old city deprived the residents of Hebron of a public space in which the residents of cities and villagers gather for commercial and social and even the intellectual, exchange. So, the targeting of the market was in fact targeting of the public space in the city, which formed a center in which all interacted economically, socially and culturally.

These factors had an impact on the structure of Hebron's civic life. These factors have undoubtedly characterized Hebron and distinguished its local community in ways different than other Palestinian cities, with the exception of Jerusalem, which underwent a similar process of influence caused by the occupation. Thus, we can understand the reasons why allegiance to family and religion than in other Palestinian cities.

Public Sphere: Traditional or Modern: In light of the ideological and political field struggle of Fatah and Hamas movements to dominate the Public Sphere in the Palestinian society, this started in the first Intifada and after the establishment of PA, the concern of Fatah was to stay in power. Thus, Hilal [41] considers that the secular discourse of Fatah movement as well as the PA had subsided in this competition; also the use of the religious slogans to dominate the public spirit of the Palestinian people had subsided. The Palestinian society considers the public religion as a fundamental component of its identity. In the absence of other active political parties on the Palestinian arena in addition to the state of political and administrative corruption of the Palestinian Authority, Hamas movement achieved a landslide victory in the legislative council elections and in most local and municipal councils in the Palestinian cities and villages in (2005-2006).

On the other hand, due to the daily confrontations with the Israeli occupation, a general trend in the Palestinian society has emerged and it is supported by Palestinians in general and the leftist, rightist and Islamic leaderships and factions including a part of the secular intellectuals in the first Intifada (1993); it calls for holding fast to the cultural legacy, folklore, customs and traditions which constitute a significant part of the identity of the Palestinian people. This is due to the fact that occupation is linked with an uprooting characteristic that threatens the existence of the people and its cultural identity. Consequently, the society held fast to the customs and traditions as an expression of defense of its existence. The political Islam represented by Hamas movement has found

an outlet through which it can influence the total social values and customs by considering it a religious and ethical reference in the society.

Islamic religion constitutes a reference in the political and social issues since it is in the heart of the social fabric exercising its influences on the level of popular religion or through civil society organizations or the political parties. In spite of the fact that the Palestinian basic system is a secular democratic one, it could not separate religion from politics in the legal and social measures like laws and courts since religion in the Palestinian society is linked with the reality and everyday life of the society.

As for family and its role in the Palestinian society, it still represents reference in decision making; it is one of the most important aspects of the political, religious and social manifestations which support and back its member in times of need or support. If this has to do with the social rank, the family contributes towards the production of a middle class [42]. As for power and influence, the family backs its nominee in the legislative and local elections. Socially, it constitutes a protective shield for its member in case of danger or threat. Legally, the tribal law represents one of the main branches of laws that reaches solutions in social disputes or even in politics.

On the other side, the Palestinian Authority did not establish and unify the local cultures in the Palestinian society; it followed different policies in every city alone. The judiciary, legislative and executive institutions of the authority pervaded the life style and way of thinking of the Palestinian cities in accordance with what suits their culture and values. The best legal example that stresses the non creation of a citizenship based on patriotic belongingness but on locations and residential clusters is the Palestinian elections law; it is based on the place of residence so any person who changed his domicile cannot vote in the new city of domicile even if he moved to it more than ten years ago.

As for the class formation of the Palestinian society especially the modern middle class in the Palestinian cities and the role it plays in the modernization of urban behavior and its address which is based on liberalism and democracy at least from a theoretical perspective and the fact that some are following a critical approach towards the Authority since it represents the public interests although the Palestinian middle class is divided between the conservative and the secular, one of its main characteristics is the weak formation of its cultural capital due to the weak modernistic formation in these regions; this contradicts with the size of the modern middle class in Ramallah and Birreh which are the smallest of the Palestinian cities; the percentage of its existence is (46%)

and (45%) respectively while the size of the middle class in Bethlehem is (29%). As for Hebron which is the largest Palestinian city in the West Bank, its percentage is (17%) while the percentage of the crafters (petit Bourgeois class) forms (31.5%) of the Palestinian cities. It is the second largest city in the West Bank and Gaza Strip after Nablus city (32%) [43] the most active and civilized sector of middle class exist in Ramallah as it was explained.

It is worth noting in the Palestinian society that size of the middle class in the Palestinian camps is close to the percentage of the middle class in the cities. It constituted (22.3%) in cities, (22.1%) in camps, while it is (14%) in countryside (Hilal, 2006a: 299). This supports Al-Qutub's study [44] which stresses that the close habitation location of the refugees who come from rural origins has helped in their modernization. We do believe here that the fact that a camp is close to the city or in fact in its heart has established a relationship with the cultural and social change of the camp inhabitants and the state of mutual exchange of culture with the city dwellers. This applies to Bethlehem city camps and the fact that they are situated in the city center beside their original homes in the surroundings of Jerusalem city and in the middle of Palestine. However, the camps of Hebron city were formed and developed outside city center; they are surrounded by some Hebron villages and the majority are rural of the south of historical Palestine before (1948).

Final Comments: It worthy to affirm that the transformation process toward civic city with it's life style as "new/ modern city" in Palestinian context cannot be understandable away of the political situation, basically the Israeli Occupation polices toward Palestine as spaces or citizens. Thus we can say that the absence of city formation in the Palestinian society as well as nonexistence of a central city together with the absence of any geographical continuity also coincide with Israelis polices regarding spatial demolition, plus the possibility of any expansion of Palestinian cities, have lead to the formation of separate cities with it's local cultures, these reasons prevented Palestinian from moving forward towards civilization and modernization their cities and it's culture.

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