



**Change of the Experience and Perception of Open Spaces:  
the case of Mount of Olives in East Jerusalem**

تغير التجربة والانطباع للفضاءات المفتوحة:

جبل الزيتون في القدس الشرقية نموذجا

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**May 2012**



**Faculty of Engineering**  
**Master Program of Urban Planning and Landscape Architecture**

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**A thesis submitted to faculty of Engineering at Birzeit University in  
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of  
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## **Dedication**

To Jerusalem

To each Palestinian who lives in Jerusalem

To each Palestinian who misses Jerusalem

## **Abstract**

Jerusalem has always been a center of contested incidents and events throughout history. Today it endures a unique model of urban planning and design characterized by apartheid. Open spaces and green areas issue in East Jerusalem has been obvious since the Ottoman era, British Mandate, and finally under Israeli occupation.

This research is concerned with open spaces in Mount of Olives in East Jerusalem that is considered as an important site for world religions; also, defined as part of “Historical basin” in Jerusalem 2000 Master Plan. Due to its geo-political importance, this area is going under dramatic changes.

This research aims to investigate the change of how Palestinian inhabitants of Mt. of Olives have experienced and perceived open spaces, in addition to the impact of landscape change on daily life experience of inhabitants and users of the area and attachment to place.

Depending on perception theories; perception of place is relationship between physical components, activities that occur in the place, and individual meanings and understandings. The study developed a three dimensional analytical framework which consist of Experience of place that affect the perception of space in order to produce sense of attachment and belonging to place. Phenomenological approach was adopted to investigate change of experience and perception of open spaces in Mount of Olives; based on semi- structured interviews with residents, observations and the study of available documents and data about the area.

Main findings of the study indicate that experience of residents has changed; unlike past years open spaces are rarely used by residents today. The experience of open space has changed the perception too; most of interviewees perceived the change to be worse than the past. Most residents indicate awareness toward change of open space that changed the sense of belonging and attachment to open spaces in Mt. of Olives. The results were affected by many factors as socio- cultural and economic change in the community, as well as political situation and Israeli planning in East Jerusalem, in addition to life- style change of residents due to modernity and urbanization. Another factor that was major in interviews was the absence of safety in open spaces. As a result, the open space perception has changed from 'Urban Space' to be 'Geo-political Space'.

Therefore, there is an essential need to provide safety in open spaces and urgent solution by social mobilization in order to activate open spaces with Palestinian existence and safety measures.

**Keywords:** Open space, change, Mount of Olives, Perception, experience, sense of belonging, phenomenological approach.

## ملخص

تعد مدينة القدس مركزا لعدة احداث منذ القدم وحتى يومنا هذا. اليوم تتعرض المدينة لنظام تخطيطي عنصري وخاصة الفضاءات المفتوحة في القدس الشرقية. اشكالية الفضاءات المفتوحة قائمة عبر التاريخ ويبدو ذلك جليا منذ العهد العثماني ومن ثم الانتداب البريطاني وحتى الاحتلال الاسرائيلي الحالي.

يركز هذا البحث على الفضاءات المفتوحة في منطقة جبل الزيتون في القدس الشرقية، اذ يعد جبل الزيتون معلما مهما للديانات السماوية الثلاثة. لقد قامت بلدية القدس الاسرائيلية بتصنيف جبل الزيتون ضمن ما يسمى بالحوض المقدس حسب مخطط القدس 2000. تخضع هذه المنطقة لتغيير متسارع ضمن اعتبارات جيوسياسية اسرائيلية.

يهدف هذا البحث لمعرفة كيفية استخدام السكان الفلسطينيين للفضاءات المفتوحة في جبل الزيتون وتجربتهم وانطباعهم تجاه هذه الفضاءات، وهل تغيرت. اضافة لكيفية تأثير التغير في المشهد على تجربة الحياة اليومية والانتماء للمكان.

يعتمد البحث على عدة نظريات حول انطباع المكان الذي يعد علاقة بين العناصر الفيزيائية الموجودة في المكان ، والفعاليات التي تحدث فيه ، اضافة للمفاهيم والاعتبارات الشخصية لكل مستخدم للفراغ.

قامت الدراسة بتطوير اطار تحليلي ثلاثي الابعاد يتكون من: تجربة المكان، الانطباع حول المكان، وشعور الانتماء للمكان، تم تسخير العلوم الانسانية لفحص التغير في التجربة والانطباع في فضاءات جبل الزيتون، بالاعتماد على مقابلات مع السكان، ومراقبة المكان في عدة اوقات بالاضافة لدراسة الوثائق والمعلومات المتوفرة حول المنطقة.

اهم نتائج الدراسة تشير ان تجربة السكان في الفضاءات قد تغيرت حيث انه نادرا ما تستخدم حاليا، وهو وضع معاكس للماضي. كما ان تجربة المكان اثرت سلبا على انطباعات السكان للفضاءات المفتوحة بينما كانت ايجابية في الماضي . عكست المقابلات في الدراسة وعي السكان للتغير الحاصل في الفضاءات المفتوحة والذي اثر سلبا على شعور الانتماء لهذه الفضاءات.

اثر على نظرة الانسان الفلسطيني للفضاءات المحيطة به عدة عوامل اجتماعية وثقافية واقتصادية في المجتمع بالاضافة للوضع السياسي للمدينة والتخطيط الاسرائيلي لشرقي القدس. وكذلك لعب التسارع الحاصل في اسلوب الحياة اليومية للسكان

نتيجة للتمدن والتحضر دورا في التغيير. كما ان السكان اكدوا على عدم وجود عنصر الامان في هذه الفضاءات لذلك فان معنى الفضاء المفتوح تغير من فضاء حضري الى فضاء جيوسياسي .

حالة الاغتراب للمواطنين وعدم توفر الامان في الفضاءات بحاجة الى حل سريع من خلال الحراك المجتمعي بتفعيل هذه الفضاءات بنشاطات وفعاليات للسكان الفلسطينيين وتعزيز وجودهم وتوفير الامان في الفضاءات المفتوح.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

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## 1.1 Introduction

“This was wonderful, interesting space for playing and walking when we were children, but now we don’t go there, even our children...” this is a quote from Nada, a Palestinian woman in her mid-fifties; she is a housekeeper who lives in Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. This incident was the starting point of my research idea. Being one of the Palestinians who live in Mount of Olives in East Jerusalem, I see Mount of Olives as a contested area, affected by many socio- political conditions. As an architect and a planner, my daily life experience and observations of this area forced me to study these open spaces of Mount of Olives in depth.

Jerusalem is a center of a series of contested incidents and events from the past time and throughout modern history. Today it lives a unique model of distinctive apartheid<sup>1</sup> urban planning and landscape systems in the city, where the local Palestinians have second-rate of living rights (Issac, 2008). Jerusalem landscape, which is considered as a holy landscape is used for the benefits of Israel since the British Mandate era. Israeli occupation has used “Green Open Spaces” in East Jerusalem as a tool of land confiscation and domination since 1948 (Issac, 2008; Passia, 2009). Currently, Jerusalem Municipality is applying Jerusalem plan 2000, which concentrates on the “Holy Basin” around the Old City of Jerusalem. “Holy Basin” is part of Geo- Historic Basin<sup>2</sup> that includes holy places for Jews, Muslims and

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<sup>1</sup> Apartheid: An official policy of racial segregation formerly practiced in the Republic of South Africa, involving political, legal, and economic discrimination against nonwhites.

<sup>2</sup> Geo- historic Basin includes the Old City and its surrounding areas -Mount of Olives, Mount Scopus, Zion Mountain, Silwan and Wadi Hilweh, and Sheikh Jarrah.

Christians (Passia, 2009). The “Holy basin” is an Israeli terminology assigned to: Silwan “the city of David”, the Old City, and the part that goes up to the Mount of Olives (Ramon, 2010).

The surrounding areas of Old City were considered as green areas and protected zones since the Ottoman era, British Mandate, and Israeli Occupation. Each period had its plans, specifications, and attempts for green areas (Tamari, 2006, Issac, 2008, Passia, 2009)

Jerusalem is a city of conflicts, especially the eastern part of the city, where the land is scarce. According to Jerusalem plan 2000, 24.4% of eastern part of the city is zoned as open areas (Issac, 2008). Many of Palestinian residents are not fully aware of the Israeli goals toward the historic basin. Thus, this study will concentrate on Mount of Olives that has holy importance for the three religions.

Mount of Olives is one of the hills that surround the Old City of Jerusalem, and includes many parks and green areas. Currently, there is an Israeli plan for the area that will be implemented within a few years, in order to achieve the “Biblical Image”. Consequently, it should be taken into consideration that Mount of Olives with its Arab neighborhoods may meet the same destiny of Al-Bustan neighborhood in Silwan<sup>3</sup>.

The present study is concerned with open space change in Jerusalem -mainly in Mount of Olives- physically and perceptually after the Israeli occupation in 1967. Such open spaces were considered as green areas since the Ottoman era to protect

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<sup>3</sup> Al-Bustan: is the name of a neighborhood in Silwan, right across from the Old City of Jerusalem. In the last few years the Municipality of Jerusalem has been threatening the demolition of the neighborhood, claiming that the buildings were built without permits, and that the area is designated as an open public space and archeological park.

the old city of Jerusalem from the expansion outside of the walls. Then, the British Mandate plans for Jerusalem followed the Ottomans' (Tamari, 2006). Now, Israeli plans have followed the same concept for the area, but with different intentions. Meanwhile, there is no Palestinian plan as Palestinian Authority for East Jerusalem. The available researches from Palestinian institutions such as Palestinian Academic Association for International Affairs (PASSIA), Applied Research Institute- Jerusalem (Arij), and Arab Research Association, are basically analysis of the Israeli planning documents and plans with recommendations. They call to go back to Jerusalem borders of 1947, "Corpus Seperatum". In addition to this, the Palestinian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC) has general studies about Jerusalem without actual future plans. The main reason for the absence of Palestinian Urban Planning in East Jerusalem is the Israeli dominance and governance over East Jerusalem.

Therefore, the study will explore how landscape change affects the inhabitants' perception, experiences, meanings and values to open spaces. In addition, it will identify the key relations between people and these open spaces that have caused changes.

## **1.2 Problem Presentation**

Mount of Olives is one of the important hills that surrounds the old city and has many parks and open spaces. In recent years, these parks and open spaces are empty most of the days and not used efficiently by Palestinian inhabitants although they are part of Arab neighborhoods in East Jerusalem. Meanwhile, they are used by Israeli settlers and soldiers on Saturdays and during feasts, and tourists, in addition to drug addicts. These open spaces are designed to be as attractive viewing points that overlook Al Aqsa Mosque and the Old City. In the past, these open spaces were

strips of natural landscape. They were mainly used for recreation and leisure such as picnics and playing areas for children, youth and women.

Thus, Mount of Olives' open spaces are affected by different factors that cause physical change of these landscapes. Accordingly, inhabitants' experiences, values, and meanings toward such open spaces have been changing too. This case led me to investigate how people's perceptions and experiences have changed toward open spaces and why.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

This study aims to examine the socio- spatial context of open spaces in Mount of Olives in east Jerusalem, and investigate the change of perception, and experience of open space, and explore the following question: what is the relationship between open space in Mount of Olives and its Palestinian inhabitants, has it changed, and if so how did this affect their perception and experience?

### **1.4 The Aim of the Study**

The study will introduce information that can be useful in understanding and planning of contested landscape. Currently, this study aims at understanding the factors that led to the change of the perception and experience of these spaces, and hence investigates the means of reviving and reintegrating such open spaces by Palestinian inhabitants and groups.

### **1.5 Theoretical Approach**

Perception and experience of place theories are based on Thwaites (2007), Sell and Zube (1986) and Zube (1987). Thwaites (2007) considers landscape as a place, and the perception of place by individuals is achieved by three components: physical

components, activities that occur in the space, and the individuals' thoughts, meanings, and understandings (Thwaites, 2007). Furthermore, Thwaites (2007) thinks about place as a human environment and the relationship between emotional functioning and subjective desires. Also, he discusses the experiential dimension through three themes relevant to place experience, which are: "how people attach significance or value to certain locations", "how they orientate themselves", "and how they develop an awareness of their home ground" (Thwaites, 2007). Sell and Zube (1986) argue that human relations in the environment are the reason for change of environment, and so, the observer is affected with the changes in landscape

In addition to social dimension of space that includes behavioral patterns and attitudes, people are relating to places according to memory and identity of spaces. Such theories will be based on Said (1979, 1999) discourse, and Carmona (2003).

Figure 1 shows the theoretical approach used in this study.

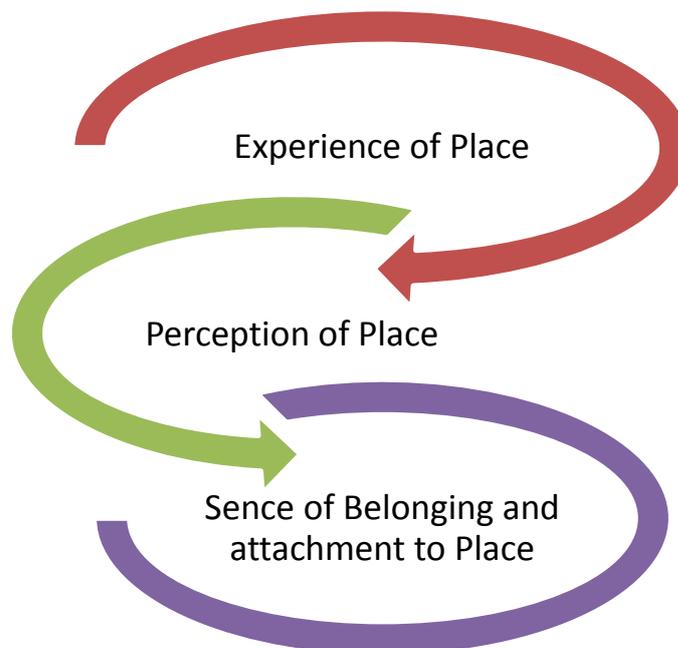


Figure 1: theoretical framework of the study

During the study, several cases has been reviewed which are analyzing political, social and cultural factors. Two of them were local studies, such as Yousef (2009) and Nazer (2008). Yousef (2009) studied urban morphology of conflict in Jerusalem, his case was Silwan which has similar Political situation of Mt. of Olives. Nazer (2008) is a study about landscape change and perception of Artas Valley. The study concentrated on mediating variable that affect landscape change. Other studies were Elkadi (2007), and Nikodemusa (2005) that studied cities that had political tensions.

## **1.6 Methodology Used**

This research deploys a phenomenological approach to investigate perception and experiencing of landscape change of open spaces in Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. At first, observations are essential in this research since the author lives in Mount of Olives and she has daily observations about activities and practices of these places. Observations are documented by photographs taken primarily by the author. Secondly, interviews have been done with residents of Mount of Olives, of different ages: children, youths and adults who witnessed the change in Mount of Olives. Interviews are helpful to understand how changes have affected residents' everyday life, and how they perceive the change, and how they use open spaces currently. Secondary data was taken from historical documents, maps, photographs, and documents from Palestinian institutions.

## Chapter 2: An Overview of Jerusalem

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“Jerusalem holds a special place as a holy city, not only because of its age, but because in time it became the active spiritual center of three world religions”, this was said by Lewis Mumford to explain the vision, the possibility and obligation about Jerusalem in his letter to the Jerusalem Committee (Kutcher, 1975).

The geographic situation of Jerusalem is defined by hills that surround Jerusalem plateau. The “city space” lies between the hills which are Mount of Olives, Mount of Al Mokabber, Mount of Sharafat (Mt. Scopus), and the Mount Abu Tor as shown in Figure 2. The hills are softly domed. They became points for observing and watching the Old City. Mount of Olives is the eastern hill of Jerusalem plateau.



Figure 2: Jerusalem Geographic situation

Source: Kutcher, 1975

The natural vegetation of forests on the tops of these hills are oak and deciduous pistachio, Jerusalem pine,

in addition to cultivated olive trees, cypresses, carobs, figs, pomegranates, almonds and vine yards (Kutcher, 1975).

The hills with their man-made landscapes became monasteries or public institutions. Tops were planted with Jerusalem pine, while hillsides and valleys were planted with olive trees. The surrounding landscape encloses Al Aqsa Mosque and rings it (Kutcher, 1975).

## **2.1 Planning of East Jerusalem**

Jerusalem has been ruled by different occupiers and rules since the Pharaohs, Canaanites, Roman period, Ottoman era, British Mandate, Jordanian rule, and now Israeli occupation. The planning of the Old City of Jerusalem goes back to old history (Nazer, 2010). Urban development outside the walls of the Old City has started during Ottoman Era. The city grew from remote city to become the capital city for the Ottoman Empire (Gilbert, 1987; Tufakji, 2012). According to the scope of the study, this research will review planning of Jerusalem during the Ottoman Era and the British Mandate.

### **2.1.1 Ottoman Era**

During Ottoman era, the old city was considered as a religious heritage to the world religions. In order to keep the old city, Ottomans separated it from the surrounding city of Jerusalem “through the creation of a belt of parks and greens around the old city” (Tamari, 2006). Another point of view about the Ottoman planning of Jerusalem was mentioned during an interview with. Dr. Abdul Hadi<sup>4</sup> said that the Ottomans considered Mt. of Olives as a holy place for Christians. It was the place where Jesus entered Jerusalem however they did not recognize the specific track. Thus, they prevented building in Mt. of Olives area and kept it as a green open space. On the other hand, and in an interview with architect and planner S. A., he argued that the

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<sup>4</sup> Dr. Mahdi Abdul Hadi is a Palestinian politician from Jerusalem, Head of the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA).

development of the old city during Ottoman era was organic, and was according to the topography the surround the Old City. The new development was adjacent to the walls of Damascus Gate northern Old City. Eastern development was limited because of the steep topography. The lands were used for agriculture and cultivation.

The Ottoman Plans were the base for the British mandate plans, which later became the basis for Israeli Jerusalem Plans (Kutcher, 1975).

### **2.1.2 British Mandate period**

- a. **Maclean Plan** in 1918 for Jerusalem was the first Mandatory plan which defined an inner and outer protection ring around the Old City. The inner ring width was about 30 meters that was considered as “prohibited zone”. It was not allowed to build there. The outer ring is the “restricted zone” which is semi-circle zone, with distance between two and three thousand meters of Al Aqsa Mosque toward east. A narrower restricted zone was on the west of the Old City. Buildings were allowed in this zone with special permission (Kutcher, 1975; Efrat, 1993).
- b. **Ashbee Plan** in 1922 translated the geometry of Maclean Plan of the restricted zone into realistic plan depending on landownership and topography. The definition of area was a public open space, which connected smaller open spaces (Kutcher, 1975).
- c. **Holiday Plan** in 1934 was the first legal zoning map for the city. The plan kept the spirit of previous plans with reduction of open spaces areas in the southwest and northeast of the city. The main concept of the open space

around the old city was to be as natural reserve rather than “green belt” park as in previous plans (Kutcher, 1975).

- d. **Kendle Plan** in 1944 became a stampede for Jerusalem. Under political pressure, the open space was reduced to fifty meters from three sides of the old city. The commercial development was allowed near Jaffa Gate. No open space was added in the west of the city (Kutcher, 1975; Efrat, 1993). Figure 3 shows the plans of Jerusalem since early British Mandate till 1944.

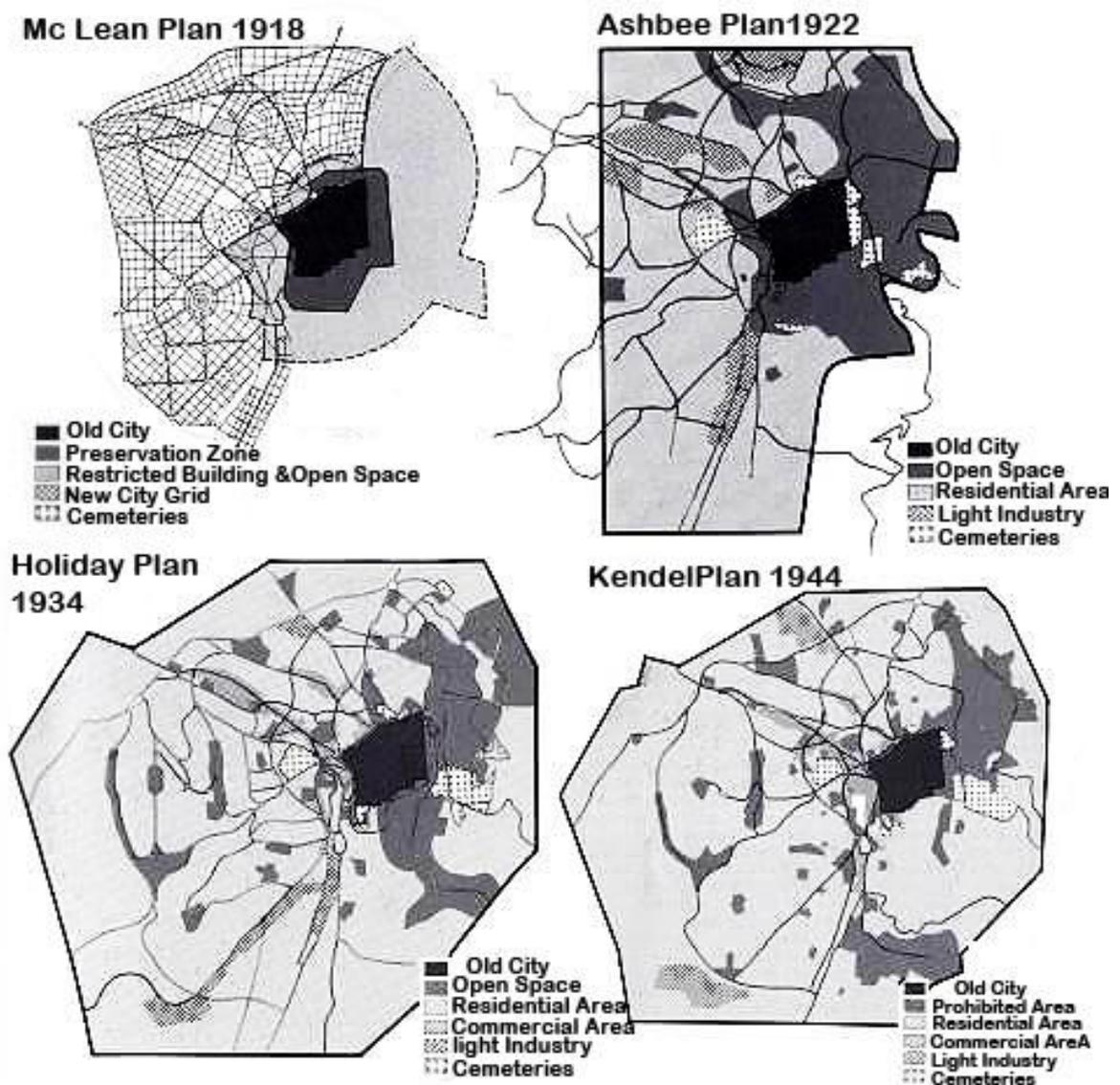


Figure 3: Urban Development of Jerusalem City (1918- 1944)

Source: Arij, 2008

### **2.1.3 Jordanian Rule**

Jerusalem was under Jordanian rule between 1948- 1967. The Jordanian plan in 1964 by Kendle reduced the open spaces to minimal strips around the walls and adding Jewish and Muslim cemeteries to open areas. Hebrew University in the east side was under Israeli custodianship. The remaining areas were designated for residential development. Kendle plan was completed in 1966 but was not implemented because of 1967 six-day war and “reunification” of the city’s Western and Eastern sides by the Israeli Authorities (PASSIA, 2009).

### **2.1.4 Israeli occupation period**

**a. Rau Plan 1948:** Depending on mandatory plans for Jerusalem, the first Israeli plan in 1948 was done by Rau. Rau proposed a nature reserve and agricultural land around the whole Old City. The city’s open spaces were interconnected systems of parks that followed the topography of land. He proposed a series of roughly open spaces that spread within the park system. Hebrew University was one of these open spaces, which reflect the western image of the city (Kutcher 1975; Efrat, 1993).

From an Israeli point of view, Jerusalem’s plans were drawn from physical realities and social traditions of Jerusalem. The neighborhood units were separated with open spaces. The relation between built up areas and open spaces depended on topography and “traditional Jerusalem sitting principles: the valleys were green open spaces, the hill slopes received a carpet of housing and the ridge tops were reserved for public and institutional” (Kutcher, 1975, p. 51).

In 1948, the division of the city into two parts, east and west Jerusalem had two different tendencies for each part. In the Israeli western part, the plans served the

new city development as Rau's plan. The Jordanian east part depended on Kandle plan. Two different ways of planning in each part of the city, the Israeli plans were to develop an excellent city plan.

**b. Master Plan of Jerusalem 1970:** it has been done after 1967 by Jerusalem municipality that aimed to keep the Israeli national interest. Thus, the Arab minority rights in Jerusalem were ignored. The Old City Plan in 1970 was aware of main concept of Maclean's plan in 1918 and Rau's Plan in 1934. The green belt is considered as the heart of the city. Maintaining the integration of Old City with its visual spaces around the city was essential, especially that other open spaces were filled in the city. The boundaries of built up areas were kept as natural areas. However, the proposed Master Plan Landscape had to accommodate three times of people that had been proposed (Margalit, 2006).

The approved plan for Jerusalem in 1970 showed that only 37% of East Jerusalem was allocated for residential purposes, and 40% of land has been defined as green areas or open landscapes, and 20% for public institutions and roads. The purpose of green areas was clear since Amir Cheshin –former advisor on Palestinian Affairs to Mayor Teddy Kollek- wrote about planning in east Jerusalem that planners restricted the development of existing built up areas by open areas that bound Palestinian neighborhoods, which were zoned as “green areas” or “unplanned areas until needed for Jewish residential projects” so, “Planning decisions always had a political background” (Margalit, 2006, p. 37).

c. **Jerusalem 2000 Master Plan:** in September 2004, the Israeli Jerusalem Municipality enclosed the town planning scheme for Jerusalem till year 2020 (Arij, 2008). This plan will be discussed in details in section 2.2.

### 2.1.5 Palestinian Vision for Planning Jerusalem

Jerusalem boundary has been change several times since 1947 as shown in Figure 4. The Palestinian Jerusalem Governorate that was adopted in 1995 by Palestinian Authority is the de facto Government of Palestine.

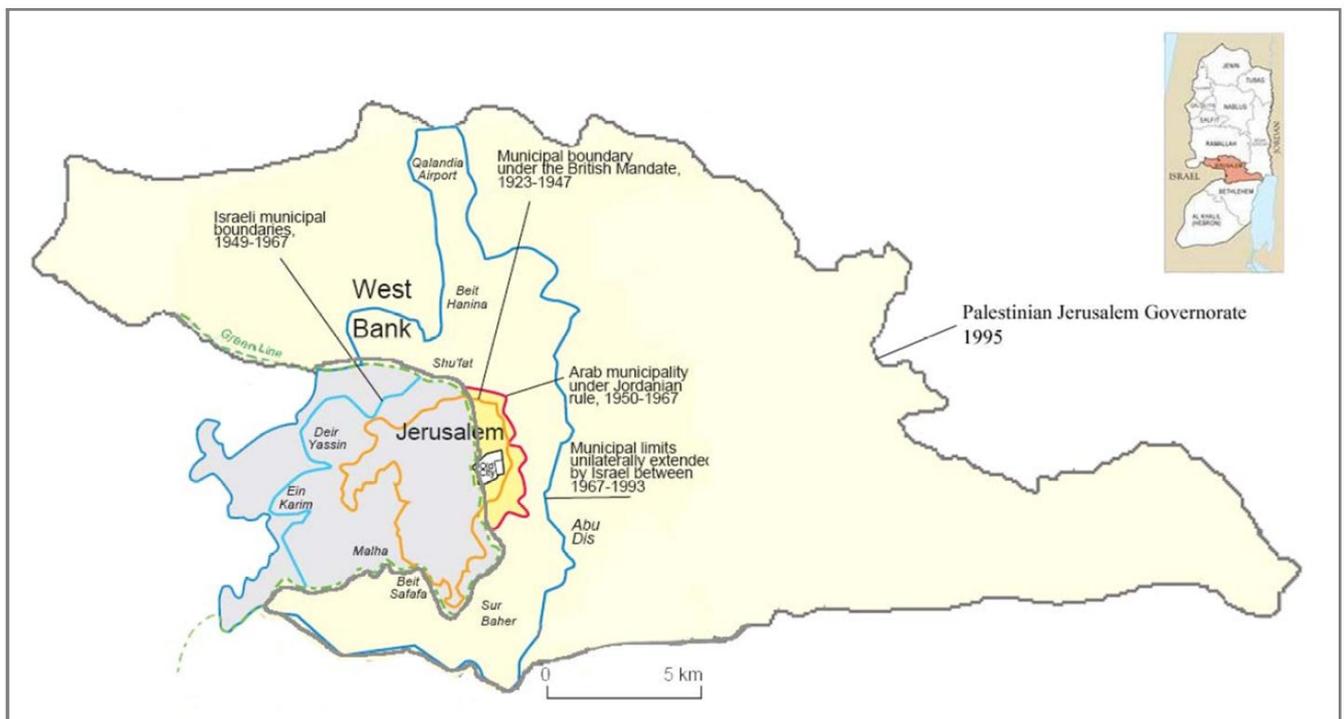


Figure 4: Changing Jerusalem Boundary between 1947 -2000 Source: (PASSIA, 2007)

There is difference between Israeli and Palestinian definition for Jerusalem Boundary. Figure 5 shows each definition for Jerusalem boundary. The Israeli definition considers Jerusalem a “unified city” within a single municipal boundary. The Palestinian definition includes East Jerusalem (J1 area) and adjacent

Palestinian neighborhoods (J2 area), to be part of the Palestinian Jerusalem Governorate (PCBS, 2007).

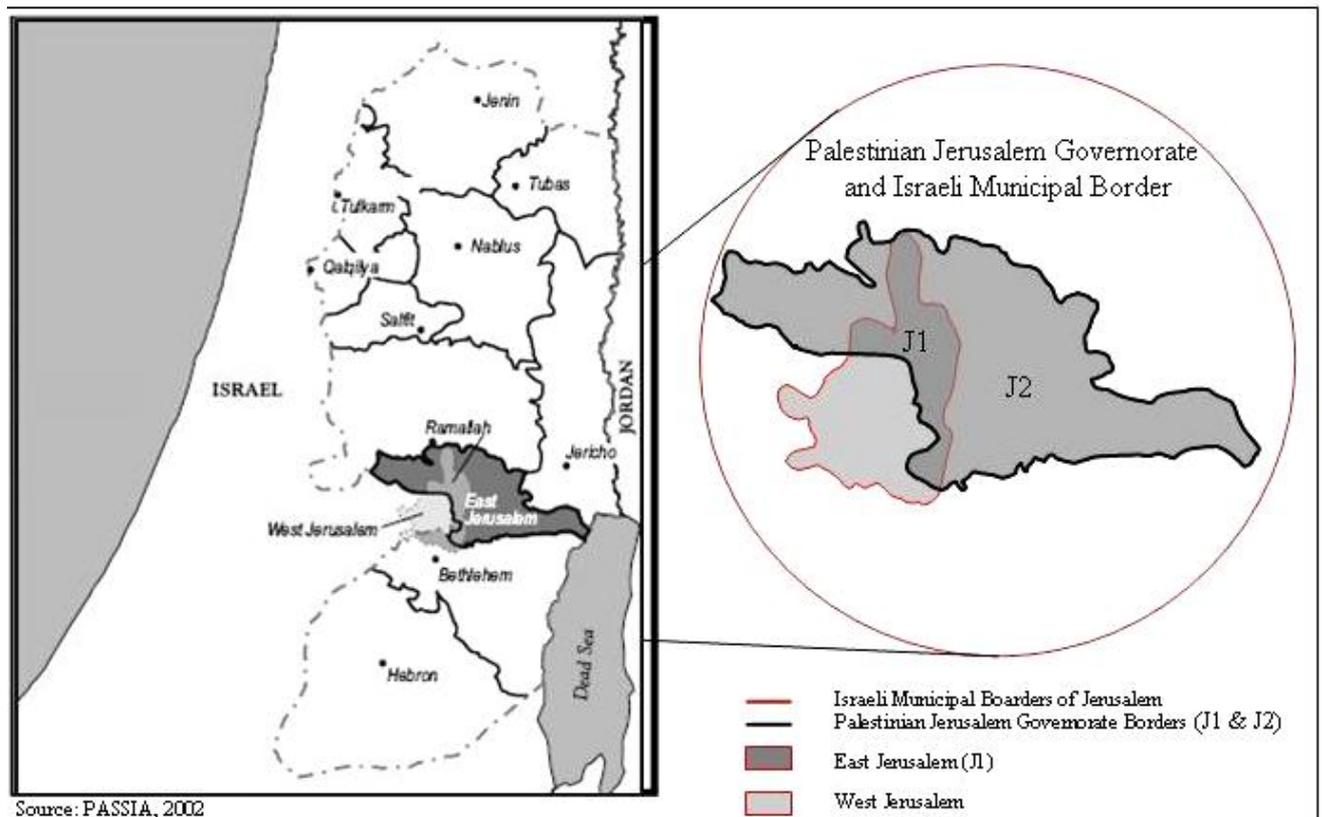


Figure 5: The Israeli and Palestinian Border Definitions of Jerusalem

The East Jerusalem (J1) area of the Governorate is currently under Israeli political and administrative control. The J2 area of the Governorate is under the Palestinian political and administrative control. In fact, there is no political and administrative Palestinian control over East Jerusalem. On the ground Jerusalem Governorate is under Israeli government control. (PCBS, 2007)

## 2.2 Jerusalem 2000 Master Plan

McLean plan in 1918 as in Figure 6 is the most important plan that set the planning strategy from beginning of British Mandate till now. The plan had defined the basic problem of the city and set urban development principles and guidelines for the relationship between the old city and the new. The main ideas of the plan are “Separation between the holy city and the secular city, preservation of the old city, preservation of the areas east of the old city as open spaces and development of new building to the west of the old city”. Most of the development and building activity in Jerusalem from then until now have followed the principles of this plan.

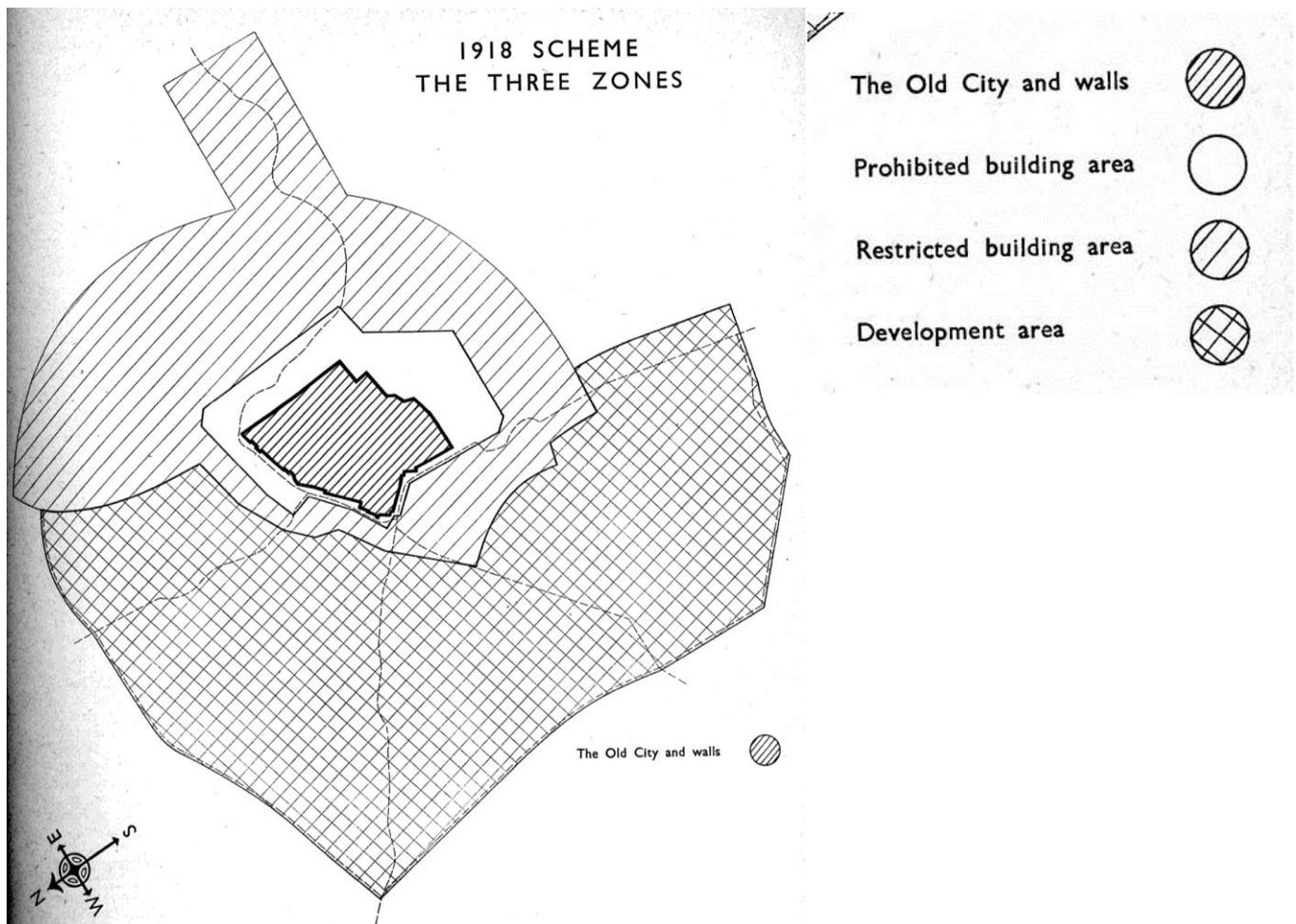


Figure 6: Mclean plan of Jerusalem in 1918

Source: Kutcher 1975

As Mayor Uri Lupolianski announced in September 2004, the main objective of Jerusalem Plan 2000 is to “Reinforce the status of Jerusalem and ensure its continuous development as the capital of Israel and the center for the Jewish people and a sacred city for all religions.” (PCC, 2004)

According to documents of Jerusalem Master Plan 2000 (Figure 7) that had been published by Palestinian Counseling Center (PCC) on their website, the following are some of main Israeli goals of the plan:

- “Preservation of places, buildings and other objects of national, religious, historical, archaeological, scientific, or aesthetic importance.”
- “When a plan that designates an area as a national park has been approved, no building or other action shall be taken within that area”.
- “The Holy places shall be preserved against desecration and any other harm, therefore surrounding the old city is a space of two functions:
  - a. A zone of “Integration”: Preserving the view and space of old, but also integrating within it the new building. Thus it is an intermediate zone between the old city and the new in terms of preservation character.
  - b. A buffer zone that separates between the old and new city by preserving the old patterns and giving “glory” to the old city.
- and any other action that may prevent access by members of other faiths to places sacred to them or cause offence to their sensibilities towards these places”.

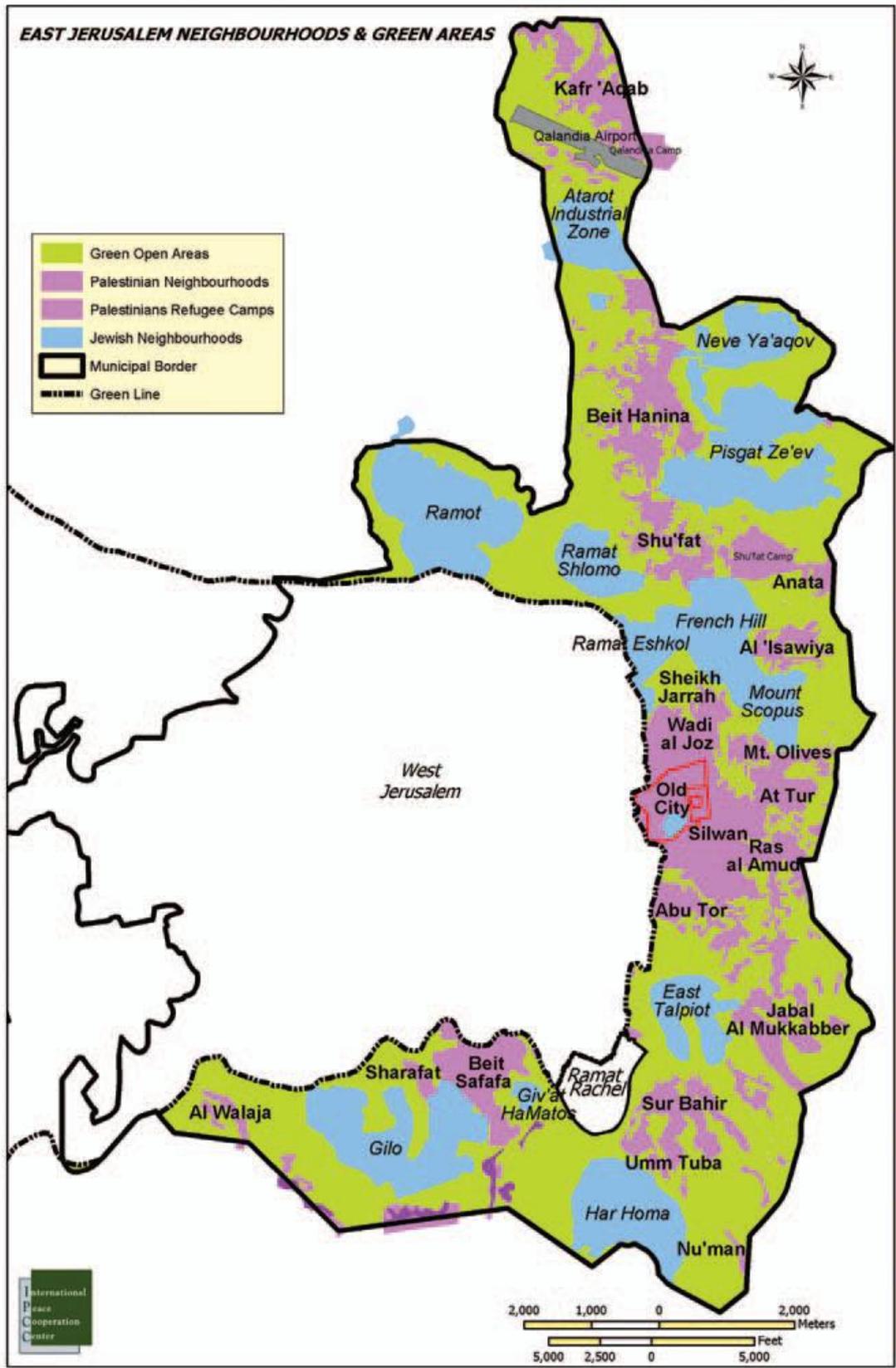


Figure 7: East Jerusalem Neighborhoods and green areas

Source: Margalit, 2006

According to Jerusalem 2000, Mount Zion, Mount of Olives, Kidron Stream are categorized in the category of areas and centers of religious-historic importance in the surrounding area of the old city as in Figure 8. (PCC, 2004; Tufakji, 2012)

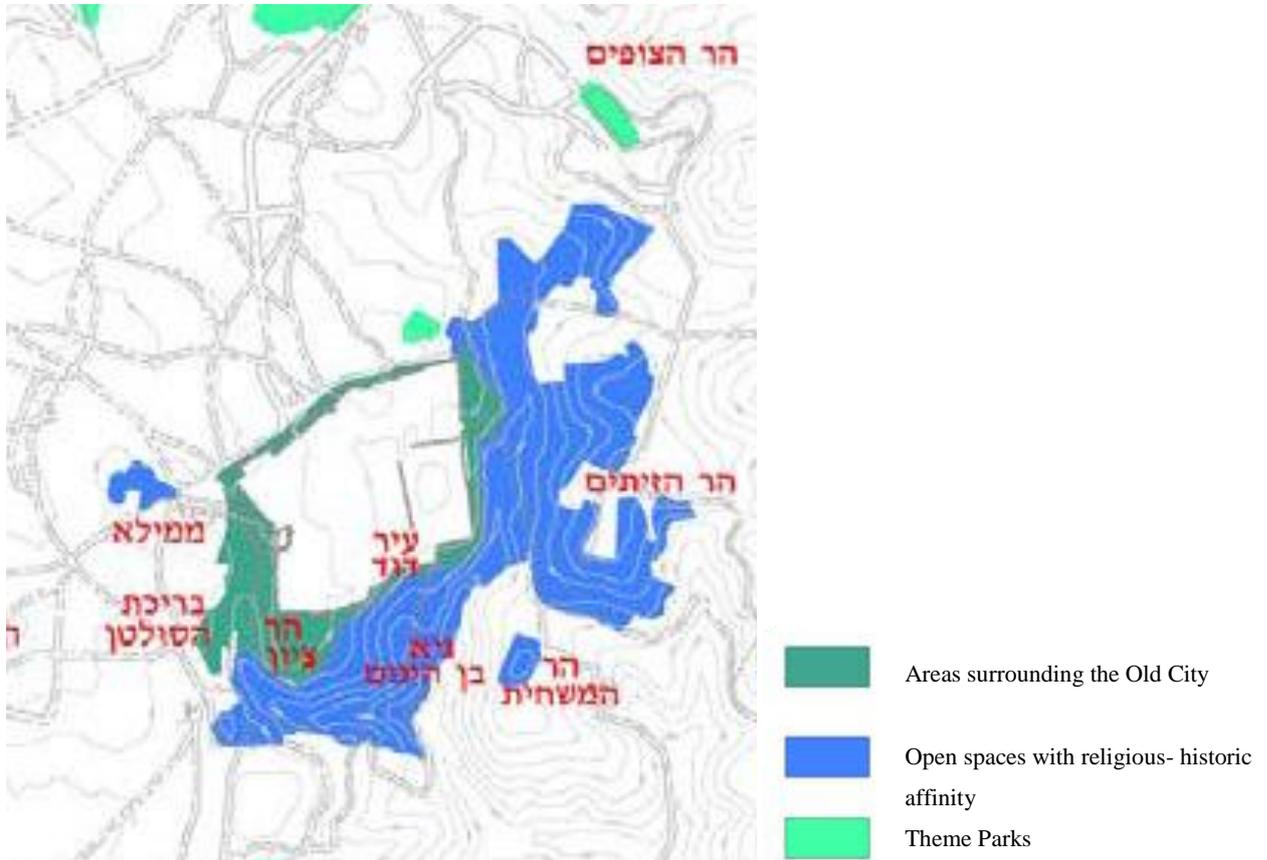


Figure 8: Religious- Historic Site around the Old City

According to Israeli narrative, open spaces are carrying cultural, heritage, and visual values that should be preserved and required great care. The plan of Jerusalem 2000 aims to keep these areas open as they are today. “In addition, each site's unique image needs to be emphasized in order to provide a richer experience in a way that the continuity of the old city basin will not be lost.” The parks serve the residents of the different neighborhoods as neighborhood parks (PCC, 2004) Meanwhile, Mayor Uri Lupolianski announced to Ha’aretz newspaper on 24 of Sept.

2004 that he wants to rezone the area of Wadi al- Joz to be a Jewish-only area to strength the link between Mount Scopus and the Old City (Ha'aretz, 2004).

### **2.3 Discrimination of Planning in East Jerusalem**

The urban planning authorities depended on urban territoriality development around the old city which has shaped the spaces' forms and socio-economic function (Yousef, 2009). Israel's state ideology has great influence on urban policy that is used to help of Jewish majority. This led to creation of fragmented green areas that bound the Palestinian urban development and allow Jewish buildings in such green areas. This made Palestinian neighborhoods to be fragmented by fragmented open spaces and Jewish settlements in the east part of the city.

The ethnically and biased planning in East Jerusalem is reflected by: confiscation of private Palestinian land for green areas and Jewish settlements, roads systems high percentage of fragmented open spaces in East Jerusalem that fragment and limit Palestinian expansion, low budget for development of infrastructure in Palestinian neighborhoods. Preparing development plans for Palestinian neighborhoods are always delayed in order to limit their urban growth. For examples about open areas is that Ministry of Tourism submitted to the District Planning and Construction committee a plan for "setting up a "National Park" in the Kidron – Wadi- Joz area, at the expense of the residential building area designated for the Palestinians". The plan was defended out as "environment ('green') concerns" meanwhile it "supported massive construction at the expense of natural values". This plan has a political point of view in order to narrow the Palestinians' living space (Margalit, 2006, p. 70).

## 2.4 “Illegal Buildings in East Jerusalem

The situation of buildings in East Jerusalem is considered “illegal” from Israeli Jerusalem Municipality’s point of view. However there are many reasons to create such kind of buildings which are:

1. Half of the land in East Jerusalem is unregulated, the ownership of land is not proved and not clear, so permits are not issued.(Margalit, 2006)
2. Since 1993 Jerusalem ID<sup>5</sup> holder loses his residency status and his ID is revoked if he has lived outside of Jerusalem for seven years or more (UN, 2007). That includes cancelling his health insurance and other residency rights. This law has increased the demand of residency in East part of the city. Most of the people who were living outside the wall (Arram, Bir Nabala, Dahyet Al Barid, Kofor Aqab which were Jerusalem suburbs) immigrate back to live in a room or their parent’s home, or in a rent house to keep their residency. Thousands of Jerusalemites get back to inside the city boundary, which caused high demand for housing and increase rent and land prices. These actions have encouraged people to add rooms or facilities to their houses without having permits from municipality. On the other hand, some residents are buying low price parcel which is defined as green area and build on without permit since their economic level cannot afford the high expanses and cost of land price and building permit (Margalit, 2006; Yousef, 2009). All these actions and policies aim to achieve Jewish majority in the two parts of the city, east and west, through limiting Palestinian existence inside municipality boundaries and gain as much as possible vacant land. Thus, urban planning is used as a tool to restrict Palestinian development (Margalit, 2006).

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<sup>5</sup> Jerusalem ID: Since Israeli Occupation in 1967, Israel authority has classified Palestinians due to areas; three types of identity cards (ID) were issued: Jerusalem Palestinians, West Bank Palestinians and Gaza Palestinians. West Bank and Gaza Palestinians are holding Palestinian travel document while Jerusalemites are holding temporary Jordanian Passport or Israeli travel document.

3. The socio- economic level of residents in east Jerusalem is lower than West Jerusalem. 70% of Palestinians are living below poverty line according to Municipal Welfare Division (Margalit, 2006). From interviews, it was noticed that most of young generation work for more than one job, spending more than 16 hours a day in work in East Jerusalem. Woman goes to work too in order to improve the economic level of her family.
4. According to Jerusalem Plan 2000; Mount of Olives is part of the historical basin, which will be part of Jerusalem and not outside the separation wall. This has pushed Palestinians to look for even a room to live within Municipality boundaries. High demand for housing has increased as a re-action on ministry of interiors laws.
5. The municipality refused any approval in the “Holy Basin” area that includes Mount of Olives and Mount Scopus, Silwan, and Abu Tur. This area has been restricted from residential construction for archaeological and religious reasons in municipality plan, Ain, Mem/9.

All these reasons led residents to live in overcrowded conditions (Margalit, 2006).

## 2.5 Study Area: Mount of Olives

### 2.5.1 Location

Study area is located in East Jerusalem which includes Palestinian neighborhoods: Al Sowaneh, Mount of Olives, and Wad Al-Joz in addition to Mount Scopus where Hebrew University and Hadasa Hospital are located. The covered area is 3 km<sup>2</sup>. This part is situated on the Northern- East side of the Old City.

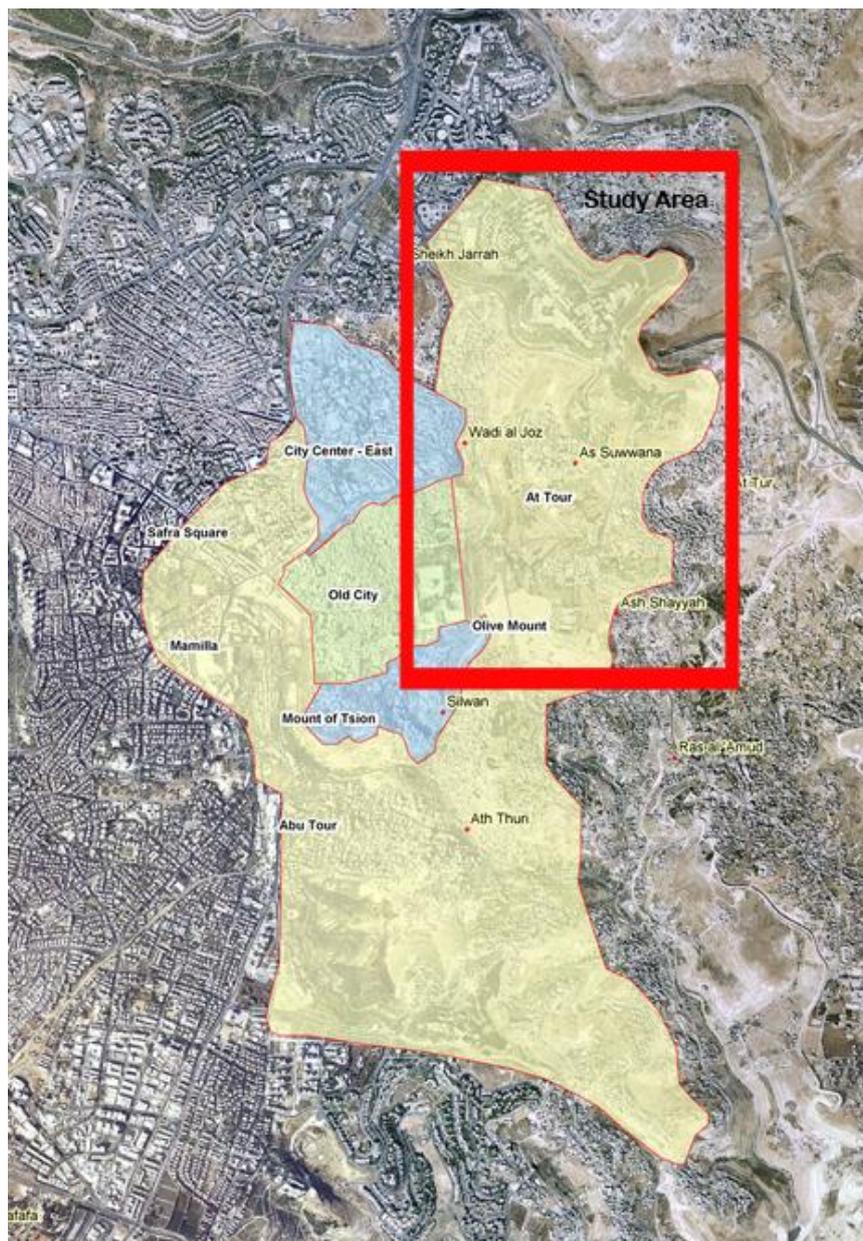


Figure 9: Arial Photo of Jerusalem showing the boundaries of proposed Holy Basin and specific study area  
Source: (Arij,2009)

## 2.5.2 Religious and Historic Importance

Mount of Olives is obvious with its Russian Bell Church of Etur as shown in Figure 10. It is the place where Jewish believes that it is the location of Jesus ascension, and Messiah will come from the east over the top of Mount of Olives. For Christians, Jerusalem is an important city according to Old Testament and during the life of Jesus. Also, Mount of Olives is the place where Jesus entered Jerusalem. For Muslims, Al Aqsa Mosque is the place where Prophet Mohammad started his journey through the sky to see heaven and hell, and to take the order for five times prays. Thus, Jerusalem is a holly site for the world religions (Kutcher, 1975, PASSIA, 2009, Arij, 2008)



Figure 10: Mount of Olives with Russian Bell Church of Etur      Source: American Congress Library

The importance of Mount of Olives is being one of rhythmic sequences of surrounding hill tops where Al Aqsa Mosque is the focal point for these rhythmic hilltops and “visual line of force of landscape come to rest” (Kutcher, 1975, P:23).

Moreover, Mount of Olives is continuation of Cardo axis of Old City. The present Jerusalem with its hills and valleys are the residue of sacred past. The development of the city since ancient ages till nineteenth century had been affected by the common themes of world religions (Kutcher, 1975, P: 25).

The importance of study area is being inside the boundary of proposed “Holy Basin” around the Old City (Figure 9).

### **2.5.3 Land- Use Plan of the Study Area**

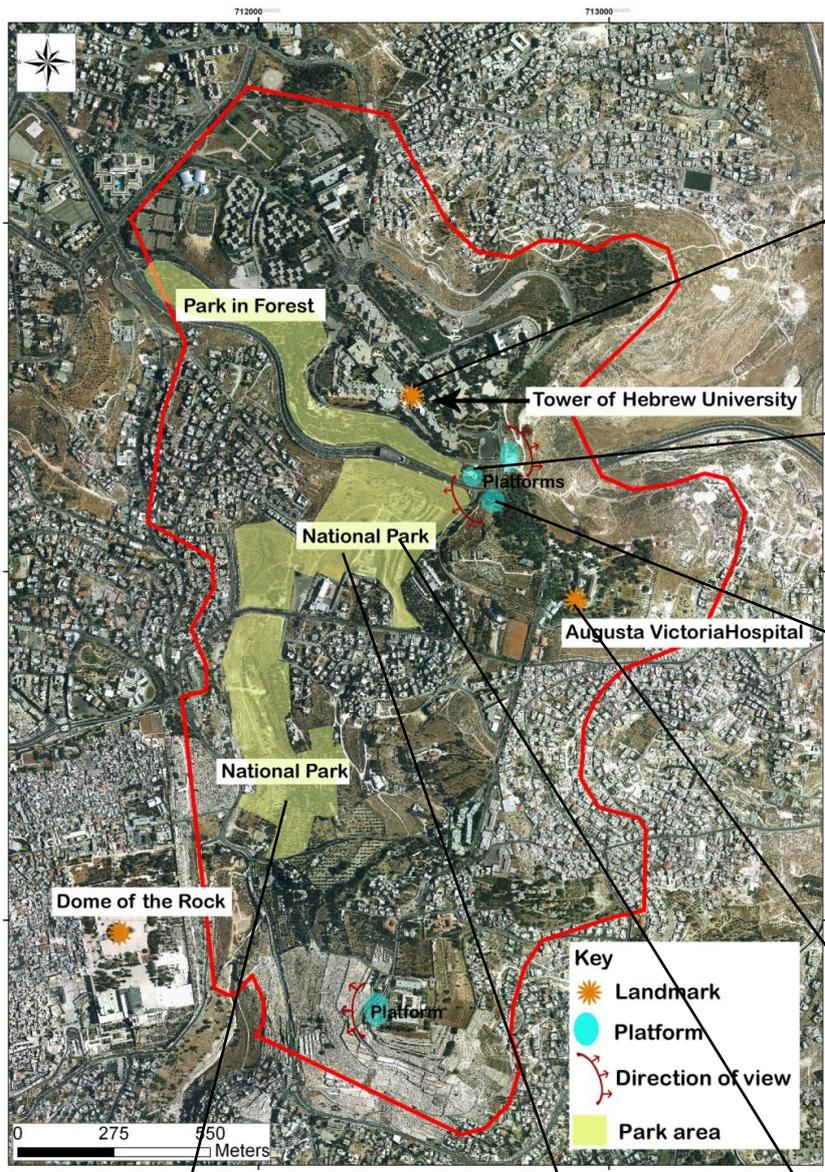
Study area represents a part of the historical, religious, and national meanings of the city today. It is a holy place for Jews, and will be transferred into Biblical Gardens according to Jerusalem 2000 Master Plan. The plan proposed no area for future development in East Jerusalem where Palestinian residents live, and one- quarter of east Jerusalem is classified as temporarily green areas (Isaac, 2008).

Some of these temporarily green areas are private ownership which can be transferred later to benefits of Israeli urban expansion. Moreover, Israel aims to transfer the Palestinian inhabitations from this area to reduce the Palestinian population and increase the Jews. All these facts reflect the ethno- national and polarized society conditions. Palestinian development is strongly minimized through the land use law and zoning policies forced by planning scheme of Jerusalem (Issac, 2008). Land- use plan (Figure 11) reflects Israeli policies in the study area. Most of the land use was classified as public green areas and public buildings. The Palestinian built up area was reduced to minimum to control the Palestinian demography in East Jerusalem.



Figure 11: Land Use Plan of Jerusalem 1993

Source: IPCC



Hebrew University on Mt. Scopus



Unaccessible Platform on Mt. of Olives



Platform on Mount of Olives



Augusta Victoria Hospital



Dome of the Rock from Kidron Valley



National Park – A Sowaneh Valley



National Park – A Sowaneh Valley

Figure 12: Analysis of current land use in the area

According to land use plan 1993 (Figure 11), in addition to observations and interviews; there are many designed parks and platforms in these green open spaces as shown in (Figure 12). There are strong visual elements in the area which are considered as landmarks: Augusta Victoria Hospital, Dome of the Rock, and the Tower of Hebrew University.

As seen above, the study area includes well designed urban parks which have been designed by Israeli Jerusalem Municipality. Some of them with hard landscape, and part of them designed in the forests to feel of naturalness. The parks contain paths for walking or running or cycling in addition to seating areas. Some of parks contain 'Wall of Life' for the names of Israeli personalities as shown in Figure 13.



Figure 13: Entrance of Park on eastern side of Hebrew University and Wall of Life

Another example is Al Sowaneh valley, Israel Nature and parks Authority considered the valley as National Park ( Figure 15) with marked tourist trail which is part of Jerusalem trail in the Holy Land "Israel" as shown in Figure 15 and Figure 16. The Valley was called Wadi Annar and it is part of Wadi Al Joz, Israeli Authority gave it a new name which is Zurim Valley.



Figure 14: Jerusalem Trail Signs



Figure 15: Zurim Valley National Park

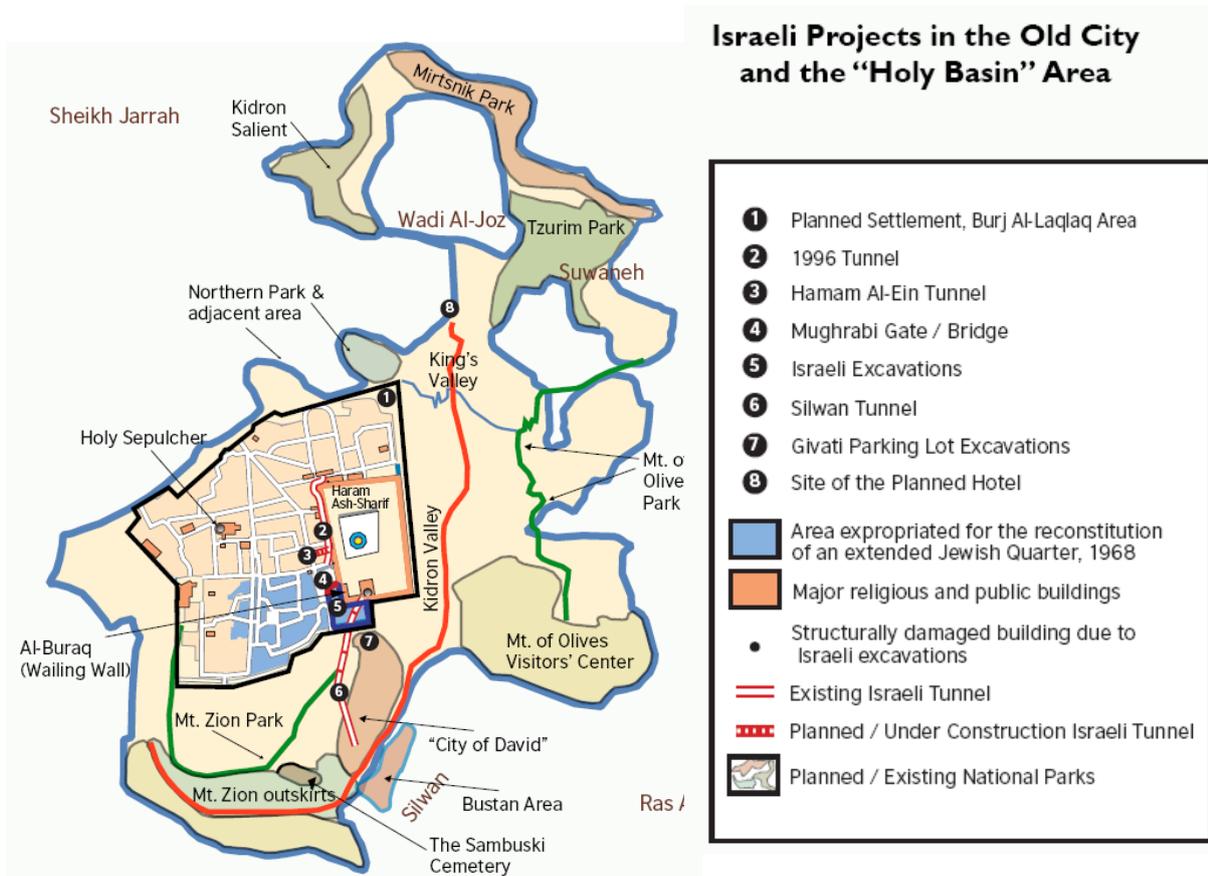


Figure 16: Jerusalem Trail Map

Source: (PASSIA, 2009)

On the other hand top of the mountain is used as platforms to watch the 'Temple Mount' which is currently the Al-Aqsa Mosque, as in (Figure 17) which shows the view from the platform toward Al-Aqsa Mosque. Another kind of platforms is the fenced platform which is closed by gate and not allowed for public, except Jews during their events and feasts.



Figure 17: View from platform toward Al Aqsa Mosque

The built up areas are suffering from crowdedness, informal planning, and lack of infrastructure.

## 2.6 Conclusion

This chapter illustrated the importance of Jerusalem for three world religions. The old city of Jerusalem has been surrounded with green open spaces since Ottomans, British till now under Israeli rule. Each period has its own intentions to preserve these open spaces. Nowadays, Jerusalem 2020 is the crucial plan for the city. Action plans are implementing. The aim of the plan is to preserve the Old City as a holy element within Biblical Gardens. Whereas Ottomans integrated open spaces and were a continuation of Old city with new city outside the walls. The most noticeable that planning in Jerusalem do not participate Palestinian residents in planning process to meet their needs even in their Arabic neighborhoods. Jerusalem Municipality develops the city to be the Capital of Israel and the center for the Jewish people and then to be a sacred city for all religions.

In conclusion, Mount of Olives is one of the hills that surround the old city. It looks toward focal point which is Al Aqsa Mosque. It is the entrance to the Old City from the east. It has religious and historic importance. According to Jerusalem 2000 plan, Mt. of Olives has been categorized as green open spaces. The built up area is limited and bounded since 1967. Currently, study area has planned and regulated areas such as: Hebrew University and National Park. There is unplanned and crowded built up area as Al Sowaneh Neighborhood.

The study will investigate open spaces in Mt. of Olives. It will explore if there is a change in such open spaces. How residents of this area are perceiving and experiencing open spaces.

The following chapter will expose to literature review that talk about theories and dilemmas related to study area including urban planning theories about urban space, perception and experience of space, landscape and memories, and landscape change.

## Chapter 3: Landscape Experience and Perception

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### 3.1 Meaning of Landscape

Landscape is a reflection of dynamic, natural and social system which is described according to its physiographic and environmental characteristics (Laurie, 1986). According to European landscape convention landscape term is defined as: "A zone or an area as perceived by local people or visitors, whose visual features and character are the result of action of natural and/or cultural (that is, human) factors. This definition reflects the idea of landscape evolve through time as a result of being acted upon by natural forces and human. It is also underlines that a landscape forms a whole, whose natural and cultural components are taken together, not separately." (European Landscape Convention, 2000, Article 1: a). Landscape whether urban or rural, artificial or natural, gives us a space, an environment where we find or lose ourselves. Representation of landscape is a matter of internal politics and national ideology. So, landscape is a medium not only for expressing value but also for expressing meaning, for communication between persons, between the humane and non-humane (Mitchell, 1994).

Landscape is an image which is a "construct of the mind and of feelings" (Tuan, 1979, p.89). According to Jackson (1984) "landscape is not a scenery, is not a political unit, it is really more than a collection, it is never simply a natural space, or feature of natural environment, it is a system of man- made space on the surface of the earth... we can create them and need them because every landscape is the place where we establish our own human organization of space and time" (Jackson,

1984, p. 1&7). Olwig (1996) looking at the landscape meaning as link between community and place, in the same time it reflects estate ideology and politics.

In conclusion, landscape reflects the everyday meanings of people, experiences, and perceptions toward landscape that they are interacting with. Landscape is not only what it means but also what it does and how it works as a cultural practice. It is an interacting system between social, cultural, ideological, political, and economics of human and the nature to produce the human place.

### **3.2 Meaning and Urban Space**

Spaces are visual urban images permeated with memories and meanings (Said, 1999; Yousef, 2009). Each space develops his character, name, and creates attachment. It can be a place of healing or aggression. Urban space is related to social values; therefore, people's experience in urban space is different from group to another. Urban space is a reflection for social, political and economic power distribution within society. It reveals cultural values, and at the same time it reveals landscape of exclusion and socio-ethnic segregation that can be found in slums, refugee camps and ethnic ghettos (Yousef, 2009). Moreover, religion could bind people to place (Tuan, 1977).

During the study of urban space, the words "space" and "place" were interesting and pushed the author to investigate their meanings and differences. "Space and place are basic components of lived world." (Tuan, 1977, p.3) Space and place are dependent in terms of definition, but space becomes a place when it has meaning and definition (Tuan, 1977). Also, Olwig (2001, p.94) stated that "the landscape is contested both as cultural place and as figurative site of an ongoing socio-political discourse concerning the relations between community, self, and place". In the same

context, Mitchell (2002) argues that “space, place, and landscape are a dialectical triad, a conceptual structure that may be activated from several different angles” (Mitchell, 2002, p. x).

The place can be considered as a subjective image according to individual values and experiences. The image is combination of identity with perception of place. Furthermore, perception is biological, social, and cultural processes, depends “on age, gender, ethnicity, lifestyle, length of residence in an area, and on the physical, social and cultural environment in which a person lives and was raised” (Carmona, 2003, p.88; Tuan, 1977). Place image requires three attribute to be workable which are: identity, structure and meaning (Lynch, 1960). Another point of view considers urban environments contain symbols, meanings, and values, where the world consists of signs which can be understood as a function of society, culture and ideology. However, meaning is changeable according to changing of socioeconomic organization and lifestyles which modifies social values. Thus, meaning consists of different layers which enabling distinction between the use of object and the social understanding of it. Some environments represent patterns of power and domination (Carmona, 2003).

One kind of meaning is ‘sense of place’ which “suggests that people experience something beyond the physical or sensory properties of places, and can feel an attachment to a spirit of place” (Carmona, 2003, p. 96). During understanding of place, social structure and ideology should be taken into consideration since they affect the everyday life experience (Dovey, 1999). Thus, individuals, groups or societies change space into place through daily experience. Concepts of place concentrate on sense of belonging and emotional attachment to place (Tuan, 1977).

Hence, space with its landscape creates specific meaning of place for each person, which is different from another. The meaning of space is affected by many factors such as socio-economic organization, cultural and ideological aspects, political situation, personal attributes and values. Moreover, meaning of space is affected by experience of user through the place. So, space and living experience are related to each other's that will be discussed in the following section.

### **3.3 Space and Living Experience**

“Urban space is a social space by definition and it is consumed and experienced through the practice of daily life” (Yousef, 2009, p.40).

Experience is related to dealing with external world which creates thought and feeling. Feelings and thoughts toward a space or place produce from personal and shared experiences. (Tuan, 1977) The everyday living experience and the accumulative experiences over time produces the meaning of space to be a place (Yousef, 2009; Tuan, 1977; Antrop, 2005). People experience landscapes, perceive and integrate their perception with their knowledge and memory and according to their cultural context (Antrop, 2005; Tuan, 1990; Meinig, 1979). It is the place where political and physical dimensions are dissolving together to go through everyday life practices to produce narratives, stories, rumors, feelings, emotions, and responsibilities (Yousef, 2009). Moreover, it is a resource for wealth and power if it is exploited well. Space can be historical if it has privileged perspective. In addition, time and space coexist, and define each other in personal experience (Tuan, 1977). Such experiences create memories and attachment to space which give spirit of place and define its identity. Thus, perceived landscapes contribute to national identity and shaped by ideology and politics (Antrop, 2005).

Places are changing continuously, and people are changing with places through their attitudes, behaviors and perception. (Nazer, 2008)

Designing fulfilling open space experience becomes a national importance. Thus, design of quality places has been developed in regenerating cities and towns. Quality of place is related to place experience rather than use of space or admiration of its beauty (Baxter, 1998; Llewelyn-Davies, 2000). Therefore, it is worthy to understand “what experience matters to people and how to interpret it in environment” (Thwaites, 2001).

### **3.4 Experience and Perception of Place**

Perception and experience of place are essential dimensions in urban environment. Thus, place understanding is a start point where research considers place as a human environment relationship between emotional functioning and subjective desires (Thwaites, 2001). Carmona (2003) argued that perception depends on meaning and symbolism of place, which is an interaction between people and environment by sight, sound, smell or touch of environment. Thus, perception involves gathering, organizing, and making sense of information about the environment. There are two processes of gathering and interpreting environment: sensation and perception. There is no clear edge between perception and sensation. “Sensation” refers to human sensory system reacting to environmental stimuli through four senses which are: vision, hearing, smell, and touch. Vision is the most dominant sense.

Canter (1977) proposes three components of individual’s perception: “physical components”, “activities that occur there”, and “the individual’s thoughts, meanings and understandings”. Other researchers suggest that processes of communication

sustain sense of place where places can be stabilized through shared activities and common language. Thus, place is important to develop surroundings and to processes identity of individuals and community (Thwaites, 2001).

### **3.5 Aspects of Place Experience**

Thwaites (2001) discusses the experiential dimension through three themes relevant to place experience which are: first, “how people attach significance or value to certain locations”, second is “how they orientate themselves”, and third is “how they develop an awareness of their home ground” (Thwaites, 2001; Tuan, 1977).

1. Significance and Value: attaching significance to place is personal processes.

Several themes can be identified to understand how places become important in people lives, which are:

- Social imageability: places are memorable according to social relationships (Stokols, 1981) as well as physical form (Lynch, 1960). Attachment of people to place is according to its: functional necessity, compatibility with personal or collective goals, valued physical features, or social functions (Stokols, 1981). All these elements can satisfy particular needs and desires of people, and reflects distinctive environment quality or “meaningful in terms of events” (Thwaites, 2001).
- Restorative places: are places for people relaxation, dealing with mind to extend which normally experienced, producing sense of psychological engagement, and to achieve compatibility of one’s expectations and its inclinations (Kaplan, 1989)

- Social interaction and territoriality: places of routine daily life are significant which allow people to meet and motivate conversation (Whyte, 1980).

Individuals need to achieve their sense of belonging to place, sense of its identity, and sense of entering into an area to be inside or outside of place (Carmona, 2003). To create adaptable places, there are design strategies to assist a sense of identity for people and groups: creation of environment with deep understanding of the values and behavior of people, participation of future users, and creation of environments that user can modify and adapt (Yousef, 2009).

2. Orientation: people need to be familiar with their surrounding (Lynch, 1960, Tuan, 1974), and to extend beyond familiar wondering, experiencing mystery and being able to discover places (Kaplan et al., 1998). There are three types of place experience that contribute in the orientation skills of people:

- Movement: people through movement orient themselves according to surrounding motivation. This can be achieved through exercising imagination and attention attracted (Kaplan et al., 1998). Such environment can offer permeability of routes, “diversity of experience, and encouragement to explore (Thwaites, 2001; Bentley, 1985).
- View: the presence of strong visual elements, such as landmarks, views are important to emphasize sense of direction and provide orientation supports (Kaplan et al., 1998; Lynch, 1960, Antrop, 2005). Through experience of walking people can identify a series of intermediate goals through their journey to a more distance destination

(Alexander et al., 1977). Sense of sequence influences on how places become memorable (Llwyn-Davies, 2000).

- Change: sensation is important to feel physical or visual change of places. According to Alexander (1977), points of change should work as joints of different spatial realms as well as sensations which create feelings of arrival and induce a sense of change.

3. Neighborhood awareness: Subjectivity of perception is according to individual experience at a place. Two components of place experience strengthen the sense of identity:

- Private- public awareness: feelings and behaviors of people are different from one to another according to the level of privacy perceived (Hall, 1966; Thwaites, 2001). Place should satisfies basic needs and provide security. Considerations of safety are related to concerns of crime. Furthermore, distinction between fear and risk should be made; since feeling safe is differs from actually being safe. Women are more fearful of victimization than men. Perceptions of crime come from many sources: Press reports of crime, however many people take precautionary actions to avoid risk or to reduce their exposure through risk management, urban design improved opportunity reduction methods: control of space and territoriality, surveillance, and activity. (Thwaites, 2001)
- Thematic continuity: place needs identity to be distinguished from rest surroundings. Sense of identity requires thematic continuity within variants to establish an overall sense of rhythm, pattern and coordination (Lynch, 1960). Personal experience is based on some level of cultural or group norm. Thus,

balance is needed between diversity and variety to reflect differentiation of places (Thwaites, 2001).

The following diagram (Figure 18) illustrates consequence of place experience's components.

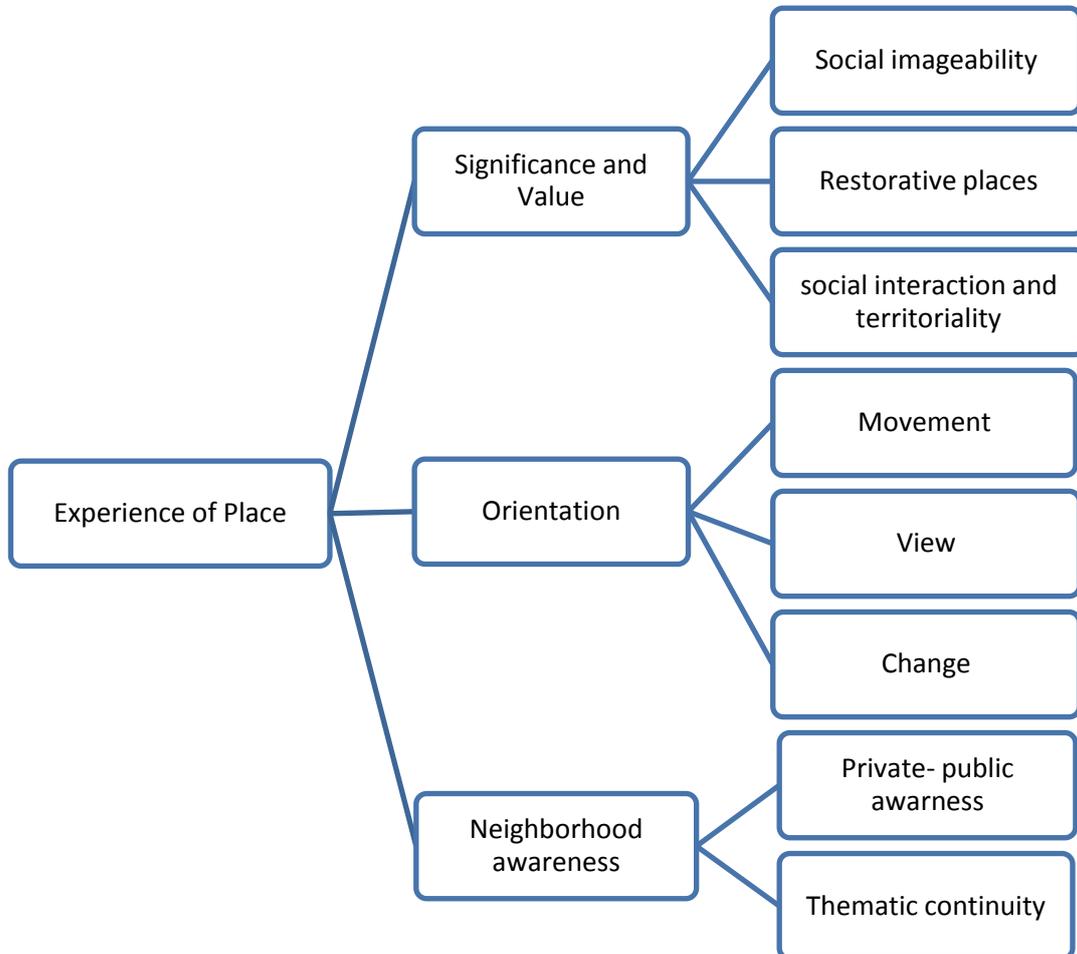


Figure 18: Place Experience Components

### 3.6 Place Accessibility

Accessibility to public space is necessary. However, there is hierarchy of accessibility and exclusivity of space, where exclusivity reflects the security and using power to control a space and access to it. Carr et al (1992, p: 138) identify three forms of access: a) Visual access where people would feel comfortable,

welcome and safe in the space. B) Symbolic access: can be animate or inanimate where it can be perceived as threatening or comfortable or inviting which may affect entry to public space. C) Physical access: concerns whether the space is physically available to public. Furthermore, public space should be accessible to all social groups especially disabilities, women and elderly. In urban design, environmental disability involves: understanding social disability and the ways in which the environment is disabling, designing for inclusion rather than for exclusion or segregation, and ensuring proactive and integrated consideration rather than reactive provision (Carmona, 2003).

In summary, meaning of space produces sense of belonging and attachment to urban space is associated with living experience, whether social, cultural, political or physical experience. Perception is related to space experience which is considered as interaction between physical components, activities that occur in the space, and individual thoughts, understanding and meanings. In addition, there are experiential themes that are related to place experience which are: significance and value of place, orientation through movement of the user in space to familiar with the environment of place, and awareness toward place that emphasizes sense of place and its identity. However, space cannot be conceived without social context. Therefore, the following section will concentrate on the behavioral patterns and attitudes that are associated to social context within an urban space.

### **3.7 Behavioral Patterns and Perception**

Space cannot be conceived without social context is in the same time society cannot be conceived without the spatial content. It's "continuous two-way process" where people create and modify spaces and are influenced by them in different ways. The

physical environment facilitates or obstructs human activity. Dear and Wolch (1989) argued that social relations: constrained through space, constrained by space, mediated by space.

Society can be considered as human grouping, which occupy bounded territory, interacting, possessing its culture. Yousef (2009) argues that people tend to make their own rules to govern the use of their space according to their social and cultural convention.

The public realm has physical spaces and social activity dimensions. Thus it means the “spaces and settings” that support or facilitate public life and social interaction. Thus, socio- cultural public realm is the activities and events occurring in these spaces. Public realm includes many functions as: forum for political action interaction and communication as a stage for social learning, personal development and information exchange (Carmona, 2003).

Briefly, people create spaces and influenced by them urban space facilitates or constructs human activity which creates user perception toward space. The image of space is combination between perception and identity of place which is also influenced by social structure and ideology. As a result of these components, the sense of belonging and attachment to a place is created. Each society is occupying a space that is defined as territory, and the society imposes its own rules to control the space. Therefore, the socio-cultural realm is the result of socio- cultural and political activities that occur in the space.

### **3.8 Space and Conflict**

To create adaptable places, there are design strategies to assist a sense of identity for people and groups: creation of environment with deep understanding of the

values and behavior of people, participation of future users, and creation of environments that user can modify and adapt (Yousef, 2009).

City management, governing ideology and urban planning are influencing the ethnic planning in the city (Bollens, 1999). Thus, land use plan which reflects state's policy represents the relationship between the city and its urban space.

Contested cities, with ethnic minorities are affecting urban space from political and ethno- national aims (Yousef, 2009). Urban space has components of geo-political components which reflect the socio- political and economic structure in society (Bollens, 1999). Moreover, controlling of territories, and giving assigned functions for the space, is shaping the urban life according to their rules and goals of socio-political powers (Yousef, 2009).

State ideology, society's political and socio- economic forces have the power to control and guide institutions of planning in the state. Thus, in order to implement rules of territoriality, authority and power are essential need (Sack, 1986).

Territoriality means bounded area whether being inside or outside, which shape the behavior of inhabitants of place (Carmona, 2003). It is also defined by Sack (1986) as "the attempt by an individual or a group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over a geographical area" (Sack, 1986, p.19). Therefore, "territories are the result of a strategy that intend to affect, influence and control actions and interactions in a specific area" (Yousef, 2009, p.49). Territory and geography are shaping the social life and shaped by it (Yousef, 2009).

“In territorial conflicts of ethno-national nature involving military occupation, territorial expansion and the building of ethnic settlements, army presence, surveillance infrastructure, and police become an essential part of the daily landscape” (Yousef, 2009, p. 33).

Urban space and landscape are used by urban planning guidelines that are supported with security systems to create urban morphology that obstruct urban flow. Thus, urban planning policy is spread through geography and its social systems in order to facilitate certain urban activities, while ignores and punishes other minority’s activities and needs (Yousef, 2009). Adopted policy affects maintenance of identity and viability of group, in addition to protecting or threatening collective rights and identity through education, religious expression and cultural institutions (Bollens, 2005). Therefore, territoriality controls social and ethnic actions and interactions in polarized societies. In addition, it is used as manipulation tool of ethnic space.

“Territoriality is much more than a strategy to control space; it is associated with ways of thinking, acting and world making that are strongly “informed by beliefs, desires, and culturally and historically contingent ways of knowing” (Yousef, 2009, p. 58).

Memory is related to significant issues such as identity, nationalism, power and authority. National identity always includes narratives about nation’s past and events. Memory is a social, political, and historical combination. (Said, 2000)

Landscape meaning is affecting with important factors: “collective memory” and “national ideology”, and its relation to politics. It is necessary to understand these relations to recognize landscape change and invention. Said (1979) in Orientalism

based on “imaginative geography- the invention and construction of geographical space”. (Said, 1979, p. 1)

The colonial landscape was based on Israeli narrative which was collected from bible and memory. As Orientalism of Edward Said, the Zionist movement has been trying to overpower and then write history “to appear in that history as the true owner of that land” (Said, 1999, p. 12). Conflict between Israelis and Palestinians is a conflict between two memories, historical inventions, and two geographical imaginations. (Said, 2000)

Palestinian Landscape is considered as a holy landscape especially Jerusalem. Jerusalem has been considered sacred city for Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. For Jews, Temple mount is the holy of holies where Solomon’s Temple was sited. For Christians, Jerusalem is an important city according to Old Testament and during the life and crucifixion of Jesus. For Muslims, Jerusalem is the third holiest city. Al- Aqsa Mosque the place where Prophet Mohammad ascended to Heaven and met previous prophets and God ordered the five prays a day for Muslims.

Israel claims its legality to be the original owner of the holy land (Said, 2000). For Said (2000) landscape in Israel is related to the national imaginary and collective memory. The truth of the combined holy landscape is civilization through different eras and conflict. It represents the clash of two media of spatial organization in landscape which are the Palestinian and Israeli landscapes. (Mitchell, 2002)

The Israeli –Palestinian conflict is mainly about the occupation and control of Palestinian’s space. Israel developed a territorial understanding geographically and demographically to grasp control over the West Bank. Israel has re-imagined the land as a multilayered system instead of two dimensional terms. The occupied

territories have been layered with strategic, religious and political layers. Thus, the Palestinian land has been reshaped by military power to represent the Zionist narrative which was inspired from biblical history and collective memory (Wiezman, 2002).

Jerusalem is considered as contested city on both political and religious dimensions. Therefore, the case of Jerusalem is a unique case that there is no similar cases before. This was one of thesis' constrains during the study. Also, the religious discourse is sensitive discipline.

### **3.9 Landscape Change**

Landscape change is a result of interaction between natural and cultural forces in environment. Sell and Zube (1986) consider natural change of environment is a major environmental factor that affects people's perceptions, responses and attitudes toward environmental change. Landscape values and perceptions are changing with time.

Hull and McCarthy (1988) explain that changing of the scene can be due to landscape change or change in the landscape observer. The physical landscape changes can occur slowly, suddenly or regularly. Change in vegetation size is one of psychophysical models that affect the landscape change. Therefore, concept of change can be used to concentrate on landscape problems (Hull & McCarthy, 1988). Antrop (2005) considers landscape changes as negative development for the "loss of diversity, coherence and identity of the existing landscapes" (Antrop, 2005, p.22). Burgi (2001) discusses the human impact on ecology and how the historical and ecological landscapes are real problems that need interactive solutions.

There are different driving forces that affect landscape change, and so, are affecting on perception, such as cultural, socio-economic, political and technological activities, where there is link between timelines of changing landscapes and changing human activities. (Burgi & Russell, 2001; Gobster, 2004; Palmer, 1997; Nazer, 2008)

### **3.9.1 Driving Forces of Landscape Change**

Landscapes are changing according to dynamic process, which are natural processes or human activities (Antrop, 1998; Nazer, 2008). Human activities and environmental changes are interconnected (Burgi & Russell, 2001). Landscape change is a result from one or more of the following driving forces of landscape change:

- a. **Accessibility and Geography:** Accessibility of chosen place is important factor in site selection. The quality of place is improved by creating a controlled access. Geographical situation of place and its accessibility is important to improve its growth and its economic and political power development (Antrop, 2005). Areas that are not accessible by people could be considered as natural landscapes. These places are stable till transportation infrastructure is getting in (Antrop, 2005, Antrop, 2000).
- b. **Urbanization and population growth:** Urbanization is mainly a change of life- style which demands new needs that adapt new structures and make change (Antrop, 1998; Antrop, 2005). Moreover, the number of singular families is increasing more and more which increase the need for new houses and settlements (Antrop, 2000). Population growth makes widespread changes of open spaces (Gobster and Rickenbach, 2004).

- c. **Globalization and technology:** globalization indicates to general processes and initiatives affect decisions and actions at the local level. (Antrop, 2005). Moreover globalization has increased mobility and communication that affect relationship between local communities (Antrop, 2005, Nazer, 2008).
- d. **Socio-economic:** Social and economic changes are considered as drivers of landscape change (Nikodemus, 2005). Economic is considered as driver to change landscape. Especially that land value is increasing which affect the economic situation and according to policies (Gobster and Rickenbach, 2004). Poverty -which is a social factor- is also considered as a driver that changes landscape (Nazer, 2008).
- e. **Political and policies:** laws, regulations and policies are factors that affect landscape change (Burgi, 2004). Moreover, land ownership and tenure are changing landscape (Gobster and Rickenbach, 2004). According to Nikodemus et al. (2005) politics led to change the structure of landscape of the Vidzeme Uplands in Latvia significantly after its independency. Another study is Elkadi (2007), who argued that areas of political conflict exposed to change in its landscape, that the heritage monuments and buildings are destructed by military violence in order to remove any record of their existence.
- f. **Culture** is one of driving forces that change landscape (Burgi, 2004). Culture is guiding and directing people to create their landscape. For example, change of life style changes culture (Jackson, 1984).
- g. **Values and motivations:** According to Gobster and Rickenbach (2004), this driver is related to desires. For example in Wisconsin Northwood forestland, participants desire to own another house in the forest land.

- h. **Land use change:** Palmer (1997, 2004) analyzed land use change, and he conducted that there is stability in perceptions over time, and through landscape metrics, people's perceptions can be predicted according to land use change.

In conclusion, Landscapes are dynamics and changing continuously. Humans have adapted the change to fit their life style and the new needs according to population growth and development (Antrop, 2005, Burgi, 2004). Therefore, the above literature discussed the driving forces of landscape change. These factors are interrelated and affecting each other, as well as landscape. There was a lack of literature related to political, economic and social factors in countries under occupation.

### **3.9.2 Perception of landscape change**

Perception of landscape has been studied by many researchers (Tuan, 1974; Kaplan, 1989; Antrop, 1998; Gobster, 2004; Sell & Zube, 1986; Zube, 1987; Nazer, 2008). Sell and Zube (1986) stated that there is a little information about relation between physical change and perceived change. However, they found in their research that change in environment is physical in addition to change social, economic and political environments. Moreover, they emphasized on individual's perception of change as a result of its individual experience of his environment.

Zube (1987) studied the perception of people in relation with land use pattern and value. He concluded that land form and pattern affect the process of people perception. Perception is affected by individual experience, desire and need, socio-cultural context. Zube (1987) defined these factors as mediating variables of perceived values and human responses.

Gobster (1998) discussed different topics related to people's perception and their future vision of their area. The topics included outdoor activities, awareness, perception of use, and attitudes toward development. He concluded that people's perception changed over time. The people priorities were the need to increase safety and access, improve maintenance of area and cleanliness, in addition to take ecological diversity into consideration during future development (Nazer, 2008).

Palmer (1997) considered perception is affected by many factors which are: different cultures of people, lifespan developmental variations, and the reactions to landscapes from different biomes. Palmer (2004) indicated that public sensitivity to scenery is the most important catalyst of environmental awareness and action. Moreover, Palmer (2004) reviewed theories about landscape ecology concepts applied to landscape perception assessment. Therefore ecological appropriateness should be considered in the study of landscape change.

In conclusion, there are many factors that affect the perception of landscape change, which are: cultural background, social context, spatial context, experience, information, needs and desires, site features as topography, vegetation and water, personal characteristics as age, gender, education, etc. Accordingly the physical and perceived landscape change factors are related to each others.

For the wide range and multi-disciplinary themes of this thesis and limited time, the ecological part will be excluded. Ecology and perception of landscape change can be a recommended theme for future study.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed multi-disciplinary literature that has covered meaning of landscape and urban space. Then it has discussed relevant literature related to

perception and living experience including the variables that influence perception, experiencing and meaning of space. Moreover, it has discussed some literature about physical landscape change and its drivers.

Landscape reflects the everyday meanings of people, experiences, and perceptions toward landscape that they are interacting with. It is an interacting system between social, cultural, ideological, political, and economics of human and the nature to produce the human place. The following is the main concepts that have been driven from Literature review.

Urban space is part of landscape. Space is becoming a place according to its meaning. The meaning of space is affected by many factors such as socio-economic organization, cultural and ideological aspects, political situation, personal attributes and values. Therefore, everyday living experience and accumulative experiences over time produces the meaning of space to be a place.

People experience landscapes, perceive and integrate their perception with their knowledge and memory and according to their cultural context. Everyday life practices produce narratives, stories, rumors, feelings, emotions, and responsibilities. Such experiences create memories and attachment to space which give spirit of place and define its identity. There are experiential themes that are related to place experience which are: significance and value of place, orientation through movement of the user in space to familiar with the environment of place, and awareness toward place that emphasizes sense of place and its identity (See Figure 19).

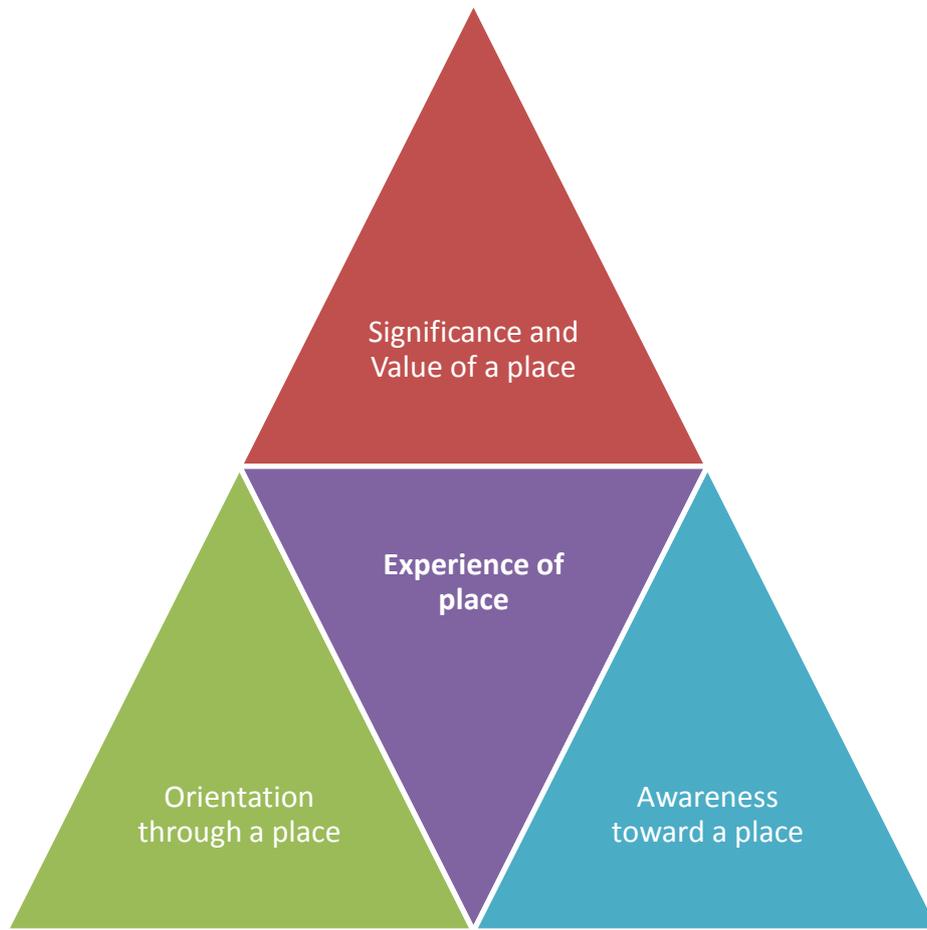


Figure 19: Components of Experience of place

Perception depends on meaning and symbolism of place. It involves gathering, organizing, and making sense of information about the environment. Perception is related to space experience which is considered as interaction between physical components, activities that occur in the space, and individual thoughts, understanding and meanings (see Figure 20).

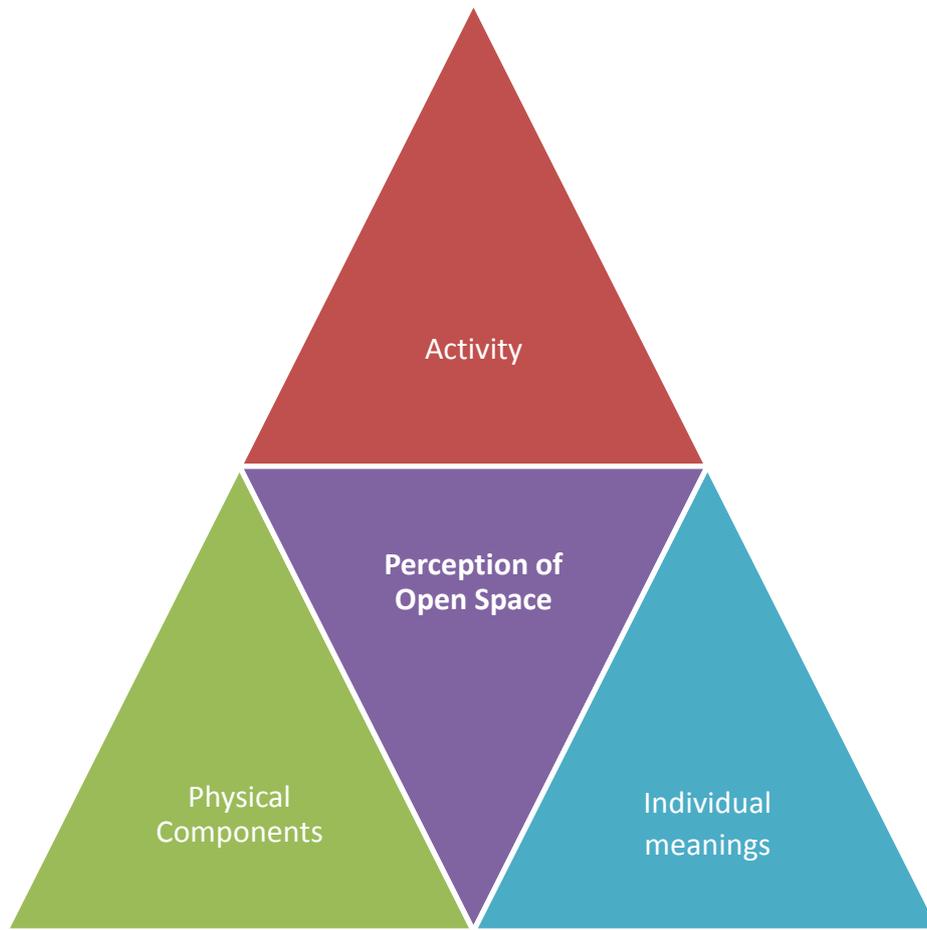


Figure 20: Components of Perception of Place

There are many factors that affect the perception of landscape change, which are: cultural background, social context, spatial context, experience, information, needs and desires, site features as topography, vegetation and water, personal characteristics as age, gender, education, etc. Accordingly the physical and perceived landscape change factors are related to each other. Thus, individual's perception of change as a result of its individual experience of his environment.

There is a strong relationship between perception of landscape change, experience which creates the meaning of space with sense of belonging and attachment to place as illustrated in Figure 21. This combination creates identity of place which is considered as one of the most critical and crucial issues in East Jerusalem as a city

of conflict; where perceptions could be different from other cases. Therefore, this triad relationship will be the analytical framework in order to investigate the perception and experiencing of open space change in Mt. of Olives in Jerusalem.

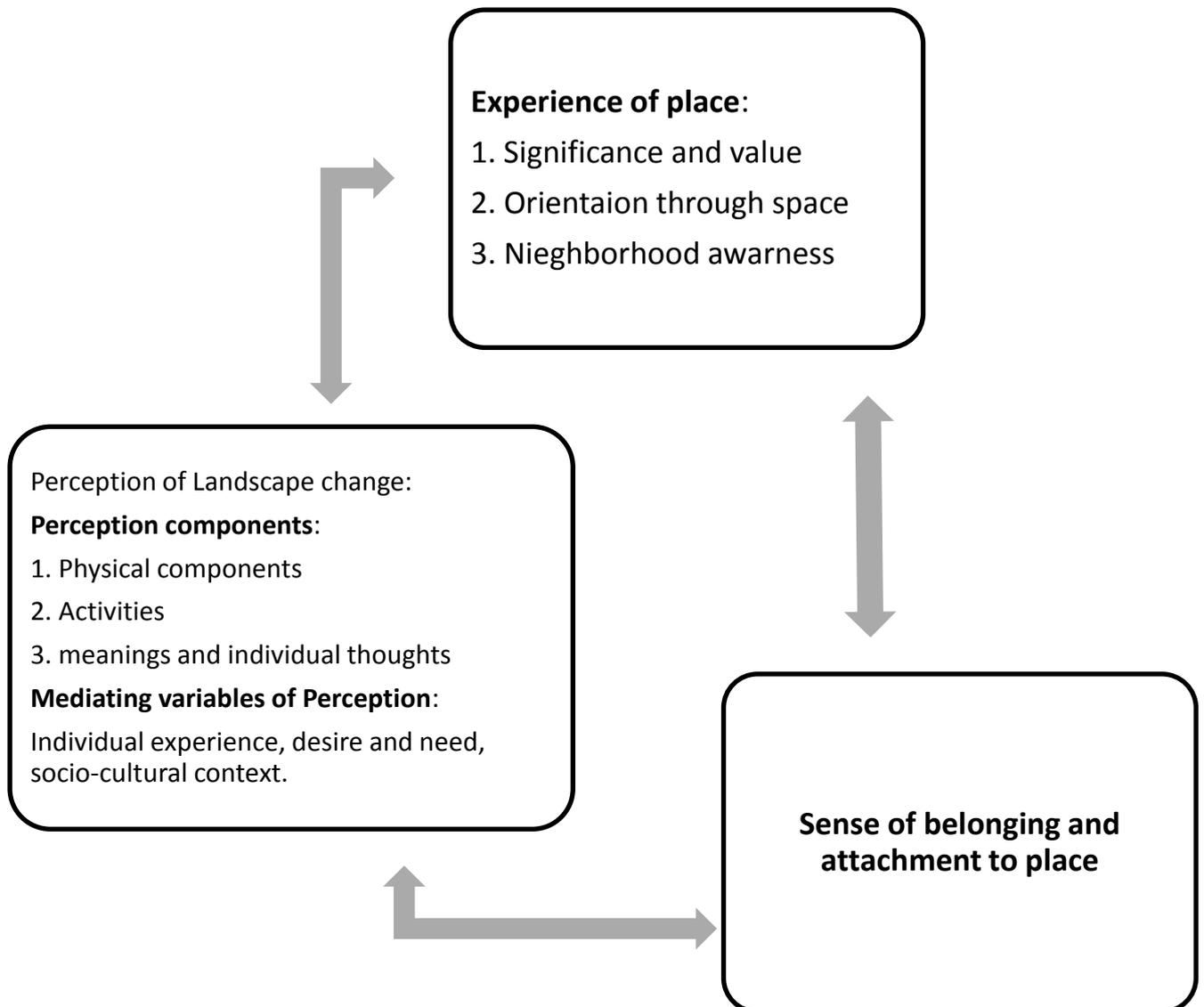


Figure 21: Relationship between Experience, Perception, landscape change and sense of belonging and attachment to place

Therefore, this research has used phenomenological approach in order to understand the perceived and experiential change in open spaces and its relation to actual physical change.

## Chapter 4: Methodology and Study Site

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Previous chapter is a presentation of relevant literature and theories about place experience and perception of landscape change. This chapter aims to identify methodological and empirical frameworks that will be used to investigate perceptual and experiential change of open spaces in Mount of Olives in East Jerusalem. Furthermore, it will illustrate procedure of collecting relevant data.

According to objective of the study that will investigate the experience and perception of people in open spaces of Mount of Olives, and examine experiential and perceptual landscape change by using phenomenological approach.

### 4.1 Research Questions

The study has main research questions which are:

- What is the relationship between inhabitants and open spaces of Mount of Olives currently and in the past?
- How does this relationship affect perception and experience of Palestinian inhabitants toward open spaces in Mount of Olives?
- How do people perceive landscape change in Mount of Olives?
- What are the factors that affect the landscape change in Mount of Olives?
- What are the effects of these factors on experience and perception of inhabitants, and on open spaces? See appendix 3 that illustrates the interview questions.

## **4.2 Criteria for choosing the site and the period of the study**

The selection of the site of the study was initiated from the current political, social, and cultural situation in East Jerusalem, especially after launching plans of “Holy Basin” by municipality of Jerusalem. The plan aims to convert surrounded areas of old city in parks and open spaces and get rid of Palestinian communities in this basin to be reflection of Jewish state and attractive for tourism. The implementation of plan has been started in Al Bustan by demolishing of Palestinian houses in order to put into action King’s Garden plan. Mount of Olives will be the next action plan which actually has been started to work on current open spaces by municipality. Furthermore, it has given permission to build 24 housing units for settlers in Mount of Olives while Palestinians are not allowed to build legally in their lands.

Mount of Olives has contained open spaces since the Ottoman era till nowadays. The importance of these open spaces is historical, religious, cultural and political. Being one of inhabitants of Mount of Olives and living with elder people who are always talking about the places how they were and how they become inspired me to take this site to investigate the landscape changes physically and perceptually.

The study will cover the period between 1967- 2010. This period is related to political situation of East Jerusalem after the Arab- Israeli war of 1967 when Israel occupied East Jerusalem and unified east of the city with West Jerusalem. During these period, open spaces has affected with political situation which influence the cultural, social, and physical characteristics of Landscapes in Mount of Olives.

## **4.3 Methods and Data Collection**

This study adopted phenomenological approach to study the relationship between changes in open space, experiencing and perceptions of inhabitants of open space

to produce their sense of belonging and attachment to open space according to individuals' meanings and understanding of space. This approach was helpful to show individuals' views through semi-structured interviews, in addition to observations by many visits to the site on several times of the day and year.

Secondary data was obtained from books, maps, and photographs. Documents and maps were collected from the Applied Research Institute (Arij), and Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA), and International Peace Cooperation Center (IPCC).

The research investigated people perceived and experiential change of open spaces through semi-structured interviews with residents of different gender and age who have observed or perceived the change during the last 40 years. Also, the sample included youth and children who are using open spaces currently. I used aerial photo of 2009 and photos for the study area during the interviews which were helpful for interviewees to understand the boundary of the study area and to show me exactly the space that they were talking about.

Main topics were the following:

- The personal relations with open spaces in Mount of Olives through use of open spaces, experience, meaning, memories,
- What are the activities in open spaces in the past and nowadays,
- How they were experiencing the space,
- Perceived and physical landscape change in Mount of Olives,
- Questions about age, gender, profession, education, and economy.

The questions that were raised during interviews are clarified in Appendix 3. The interviews covered a sample of 27 persons which 22 were local residents including males and females. See appendix 2 for more information about their age, knowledge and gender. This number was enough since the data became repeated after the 6<sup>th</sup> interview (Creswell, 2005). Five professionals from Jerusalem were interviewed who are having different knowledge and experience such as: planners, architects, and politicians. Appendix 1 shows their names and profession. Snowballing technique was used to select the interviewees of local residents (Creswell, 2005). Each interview took from 1 hour to 1 ½ hours. Each interview was recorded. The transcript of interviews was analyzed to examine the questions of interviews.

Observing current activities in open spaces was through many visits to open spaces in different times in the last year to take notes and photos for practices in these spaces. Also, as a resident in the area, I had my everyday observation in different times. The photos that have been used in the research are taken by author between 2009-2011 except sited ones.

#### **4.4 Limitations**

The study could not rely on statistics for population and income, since the study area is included with A'tur neighborhood which is considered as high density area. During observation, some cases were unable to take photos for security reasons, especially during the existence of soldiers in the study area.

## **Chapter 5: Analysis and Discussion**

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This chapter explores the change of experience and perception of open spaces at Mt. of Olives in addition to the landscape change that were mentioned in interviews with Palestinian locals and professionals. Interviews depended on semi-structured interviews, targeting different groups of residents according to age, gender, education, and living duration in the area. These interviews aim to investigate the change of experiencing and perception of open spaces in Mt. of Olives. The questions concentrated on peoples' experiences and perceptions toward open spaces and how it change, in addition to raise their awareness of the importance of this area and current incidents and actions.

### **5.1 Change of Experience in Open space at Mount of Olives**

According to previous literature, place experience includes: significance and value of space, orientation through space and neighborhood awareness. This section illustrates the experience of residents in open spaces in the past and present times according to these aspects.

#### **5.1.1 Significance and value of Open Space**

Place experience acquires its significance and value according to its social imageability, its restorative place, and social interaction and territoriality. The interviews included these sub titles in order to investigate the residents' experiences in open spaces of Mount of Olives.

### a. Social imageability

Half of interviewees who were above 40 years old assured that these open spaces are **memorable places**. Open spaces were considered for them as home ground, where they grew up, played and learned. Salwa who is a teacher in her mid-forties, said: “we used to go to these open spaces after school almost everyday... we would jump from wall to wall or metal fences to go to play in the valley... we used to take our food with us to eat there”. Huda is a Ph.D. holder and instructor at AL Quds University in her mid-fifties. She considered open space as a meeting place: “we would meet with our friends and neighbors in these open spaces”. Some of them talked about the natural elements and biodiversity, among them Nada who is a housekeeper in her mid-fifties said: “In the past we would go up to the mountain to catch birds, poppy flowers, rosemary and other wild plants that no longer exist today”.

**The image of open space** in Mount of Olives had a natural image with agricultural terraces according to most of interviewees. It was used by residents who visited the mountain, Hebrew university forest, Kidron “Annar” valley, and National park ‘Snake Park’<sup>6</sup> daily. The whole family enjoyed these open spaces, especially women who used to take their children to these areas for picnics with neighbors or long walks,. Om Ahmad, an old woman in her mid- eighties said “Oh... my daughter, I used to take my children to the mountain, it was wild... taking what I had cooked such as: Mjadarra -Rice with lentil- Vine leaves, or Maqloba to eat underneath the trees... all the neighbors would meet in the mountain, it was a place for rest and pleasure”. She added that not only the residents of the area used these open spaces but also the

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<sup>6</sup> Snake Park is the same of National Park in Mt. of Olives; this name is used by residents according to the form of the park.

residents of the Old City. Also, 5 of interviewees said that open spaces were attraction points for Palestinians from the West Bank.

Usually **girls or boys would go to the open spaces** of the area after school. Boys used to play football between rocks and acanthus, or bicycle in 'Snake Park', and they would hike the rocks and walls of terraces. Girls had different kind of activities. They used to to build houses out of stone, or potato barbequing, picking wild plants such as poppies, (خبيزة, زعرور, بلبوس), etc. . Sally who is 32 years old recalled from her past "I once asked if anyone was up for a football match, and all the boys with short pants came and played football together between rocks and acanthus... Oh no today, they refuse to play unless there is a paved playground... their desires are different from the past". Layla is a 38-year-old woman, said "we used to make mask parties and birthday parties at the national park". The little girls were allowed to go and play at these open spaces alone according to Sally "Our parents would feel safe to go there and allowed us to go to play at these open spaces without any supervision". On the contrary to current days, children are not allowed by their parents to go away from house surroundings to play in open spaces. All interviewees assured that they do not allow their children to go play in open spaces or parks alone. Interviewees talked about the Kedron Valley 'Wadi Annar', they called it Al Ansari Land. It was used as shortcut to Old City and gathering area for prayers during Fridays, feasts, and Ramadan. Nowadays, this area is fenced and separated from surrounding lands (see Figure 22). Nada said "they changed the valley... they are working everyday..."

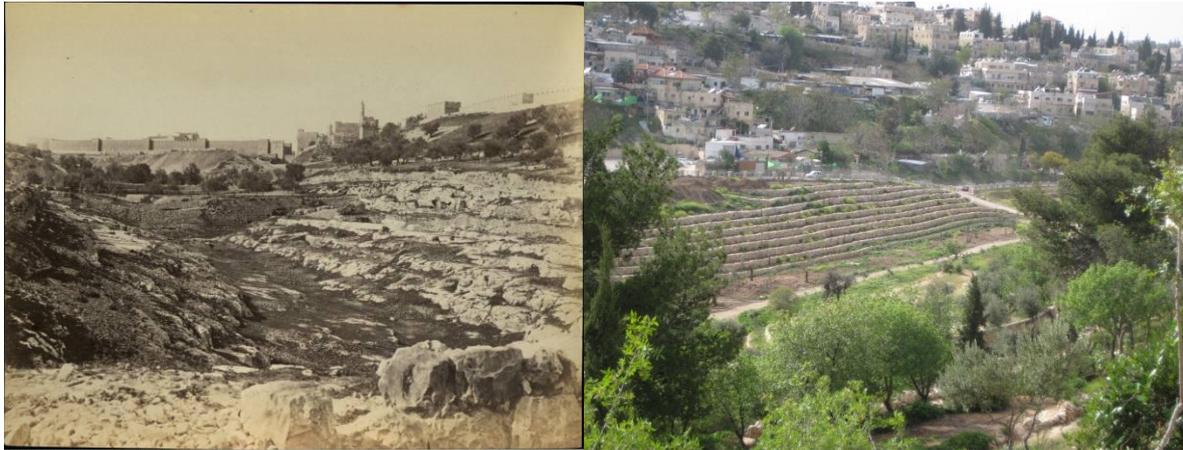


Figure 22: Wadi Annar- Kidron valley before and now.

**Unplanned parts of valley** are used as car and bus parking. The area becomes full of cars and buses; and it is not a priority for the municipality to plan and solve this problem. The municipality has its own vision for this area to be protected and to surround the Old City to reflect the Biblical Garden image as in Ain Mim/9 Plan. (See Figure 23 and Figure 24)



Figure 23: Using the valley as parking area during Ramadan, Fridays, and Feasts



Figure 24: The unique historical-architectural qualities of Jerusalem, Plan Ain Mem/9.

**Hebrew University Campus** with Hadasa Hospital and forest the close to Hebrew University were used as open space for locals and visitors of the Hospital. Om Yousef who is in her mid-seventies said: “I used to cross the Hebrew University campus when I go to Hadasa Hospital... but now the campus is closed and cannot pass through”. Huda said: “Hebrew University area was closed in the last 10 years where the walls are surrounding the buildings of the university and the green area under the university... This green area was open to its surrounding but now is fenced with guarded gates”. (See Figure 25).



Figure 25: Park Western Hebrew University

Since 1925 Hebrew University started with old building open to its surrounding as show in Figure 26. The buildings number of university has increased and the image has changed. The feeling of residents toward university's buildings became as fortified and gated complex with its high walls and secured gates as shown in Figure 27.



Figure 26: Hebrew University Buildings in 1937

Source: (Kedar, 1999)



Figure 27: Hebrew University buildings in 1995

Source: (Kedar, 1999)

**‘Snake Park’** (Figure 28) was the most visited place for residents, at least twice a week. Nowadays, most of interviewees said that they rarely go there, and if they go, they go in groups. Most of them fear that these parks and open spaces are havens to drug addicts; in addition to the fact that it is uninhabited. Layla said: “we used to go to the park 2 or 3 girls and we would feel safe, but now we are afraid to go there unless we are in large groups... a while ago we went to the park and it was weird... we are always looking for places which are populous”.



Figure 28: National Park 'Snake Park'

The whole image of the study area is affected by built up area and urban development. All of interviewees indicated that the built up area is crowded, and the image of the neighborhood transformed from classy elegant neighborhood in Jerusalem to be slum area. Kamal who is a trader in his mid- fifties said: "Sowaneh was one of the classiest neighborhoods of Jerusalem... currently it looks like any refugee camp".



Figure 29: Image for built up area at Sowaneh Neighborhood

3 interviewees considered open spaces as not attractive places today; they do not satisfy their needs and desires. Issa said: "for me, I appreciate wilderness of open spaces and I like to simply wonder around, but it is not suitable for my mother since she is an old woman, she cannot walk easily there, and for my daughters, since the paths are not paved which increases the

possibility of injury”. Other point of view was mentioned by three of the interviewees who said that they do not use these open spaces for picnicking, and do not go to other cities because of their **financial situations** and political pressure. They can't bear the expenses of the current lifestyle or payments for municipality to prevent their house demolition. As a result, open space in Mt. of Olives has geo-political components which reflect the socio-political and economic structure in the society as mentioned by Bollens (1999).

Currently, most of interviewees consider **open spaces as suspicious** places and do not prefer to go there. They consider them unsafe places and attraction point for drug addicts. Ahmad who is 18 years old said: “as a young guy I don't go to open spaces since people will think that I am going there to do unacceptable practices such as smoking, drinking alcohol, or drug addiction... Nobody goes there with his family for picnicking or walking, you see only guys... also I see Israeli soldiers that come to these open spaces”.

As seen above, in the past, open space in Mt. of Olives was compatible with residents' needs and desires. The space was wild and natural meanwhile many activities were done in the space; such as: neighbors meeting, children playing, picnicking... also it was used not only by residents of the area but also it was attractive point for Palestinians from West Bank and visitors. Therefore, the open space had a collective view and social functions in open space as discussed by (Thwaites, 2001; Lynch, 1960; Tuan, 1977; Stokols, 1981). According to locals, open spaces are memorable places for social relationship that was happening in places in addition to natural physical form of rocks and acanthus. These kinds of activities for residents have made meaningful open spaces; full of events. Open space had a

distinctive environment that had transformed the space into place. Therefore, old generation of interviewees have attachment to these open spaces much more than new generation.

### **b. Restorative places**

Spring days were the most preferable for most of interviewees; since open spaces were covered with green lawn and red poppies. Nada said “spring days were wonderful, the vegetation in open spaces was refreshing, it was so rejuvenating... I would pick herbal plants, (خبيزة, زعرور, بلبوس) and other kinds of wild plants that I do not see today”. Most of these plants do not exist now, due to the urban development of the area. Figure 30 shows a small remnant area in the Mountain , which has fragmented by built up area.



Figure 30: Remnant vegetation

According to the land use plan, in addition to observations and interviews, there are many designed parks and platforms in these green open spaces. According to interviews, the only designed park before 30 years was the National Park of

Jerusalem 'Snake Park' and the rest was green areas are natural areas. (See Figure 31)

Currently, Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem is working on green areas to be well designed biblical gardens. 'Biblical Garden' the new terminology that is used by Jerusalem Municipality creates fears that the image of the area will be different. Salma is a teacher in her early forties said: "the new terminology for the area introduced fears and feelings of residents to be aliens in the area and not the real owners".

Briefly, open spaces in the past were considered as restorative places that locals were using it in order to relax. This goes with (Kaplan, 1989; Thwaites, 2001) theories who consider restorative places to create sense of psychological engagement.

The **old generation** of interviewees reflected its **engagement to open space**, which was missing with young generation. Huda in her mid- fifties talked about the open space in front of Hebrew University and she was describing with a cheerful face when she was passing this area especially during feast; "The forest of Hebrew University was full of vegetation, we were passing the forest to go to the bakery, each one of us was carrying bread or cookies to be baked, the people were singing all the way... on the contrary to current days, the vegetation is less than before, a lot of trees were uprooted and olives were cultivated instead, the person feels that he is constrained due to the existence of security near the park and in front of Hebrew University".



Figure 31: red circle shows the location of the National Park of Jerusalem

The current psychology toward open spaces changed to be **unsafe** and wary areas. Open spaces today are losing their restorative adjective, which also means losing locals' sense of engagement. Therefore, new generation in Mount of Olives don't experience open spaces or even they do not think to use it.

### **c. Social interaction and territoriality**

As discussed in social imageability of open spaces in Mount of Olives, the activities that were occurring included social interaction as an essential component to achieve successful experience in open spaces. Open space was used as **meeting place** for neighbors, mothers with their children most of the time and fathers sometimes. The social relations were strong; all residents knew each other. The social problems were solved by social tribal group according to social norms.

Four of the interviewees talked about **seasonal activities** that women in the neighborhood were meeting at one house or area. each activity according to season, such as tomato season where women would clean tomato, crush it then boil it in order to store it for the whole year. Another one that Om Ahmad talked about was vine season and Maftoul. Issa said, "all women in the neighborhood were meeting at our house to work together, since it was hard work and usually took a long time to be done... and all know each other, I knew all the women and their children". Such activities were strengthening the social relation and motivate social conservation as discussed by Whyte (1980). Most of interviewees are looking for places that are full of people and well-designed places to meet their needs and desires.

During the interviews some of interviewees were using name of family for specific location in open spaces; such as Al Alami lands, Al Ansari Lands, Shihabi Lands, and Al Hidmi lands. This kind of **land identification** is related to land ownership.

According to most of interviews the land was private ownership for special families. Each area was for one family. After the 1967 war most of the lands were categorized as green areas and most of them were confiscated by Israeli Authority. Moreover, the municipality has controlled the lands and buildings of people who migrated in 1967 and became under control of absentees Authority.

Land identification was a reflection for **territoriality** of the public realm. Territoriality of spaces in Mount of Olives was affecting people's attachment to open spaces as reviewed by Kaplan and Kaplan (1989) and Thwaites (2001). This kind of territoriality of place was encouraging residents' sense of belonging to place. Due to interviews, social norms were controlling actions and interactions in open spaces. Therefore, open spaces were shaping the social life of the area as reviewed by Yousef (2009).

Today, the young generation is defining another kind of territoriality and new terminologies were used by young and old interviewees. The area is divided into Hebrew University area, Beit Orout Area which was called Al Alami Lands, Environmental conservation in the Valley or using the new Israeli name "Tsurim Valley" instead of Al Hidmi Lands, and National Park instead of Shihabi Land. The new territoriality for open spaces creates new understanding for open spaces, new functions and users for space. Salma stated, "Most of the visitors to open spaces are Jews during Saturdays and Jewish feasts or Israeli soldiers or foreign tourists" which was similar to most of interviewees. The new territoriality reflects Israeli ideology of urban planning as reviewed by (Yousef, 2009; Bollens, 1999), where the new orientation of users is concerned with tourism and Jews.

The built up area in Mt. of Olives was defining private territory of each family. In the same time the private territory was considered as public realm which was shaping

the social life and interaction between families which similar to Yousef (2009), Whyte (1980), and Thwaites (2001). Nowadays, there are a lot of new inhabitants that are not related to Mt. of Olives; especially in recent years. Center of life Law in 1993, in addition to political rumors about keeping Mount of Olives under Jerusalem boundary and taking off Shu'fat and Biet Hanina Neighborhoods; has increased housing demand in Asowaneh which also increased land price. Therefore, the built up area became dense and the social relations became limited due to population growth.

In conclusion, the significance and value of open spaces of Mount of Olives has changed. In the past, open spaces were experienced by local inhabitants from different ages and gender. The interviews reflected lively open spaces, with different kinds of activities that attached people to open space. Therefore, open space was important for residents socially and physically. It was a meaningful place that impacted residents to develop special significance and value for open space. On the contrary to current open spaces, residents have lost its significance and value and these open spaces have created negative feelings for users and inhabitants and developed fears toward open spaces.

### **5.1.2 Orientation through space**

Orientation through space enhances the experience of space. The study area has different elements that affect the orientation of users which are divided as following:

#### **a. Movement**

According to old interviewees, open spaces were continuous and connected. There were no boundaries or fences that cut their movement. A major physical change that was mentioned by most of interviewees is **the tunnel**. The tunnel under Mt. Scopus connects Ma'ale Adomim settlement with Jerusalem as in E1 plan (see Figure 32).

Huda said: “the tunnel has decreased the area of green areas and a lot of vegetation was removed”. Also, Kamal said: “the tunnel became like a border, separating the Hebrew University from Palestinian Neighborhoods”.



Figure 32: the tunnel that connect Ma’ale Adomim Settlement with Jerusalem

Another element that mentioned by 4 interviewees is **Biet Ourot**<sup>7</sup> (see Figure 33). The existence of Israelis in this house has forbidden residents to pass near it, especially during the first Intifada. Also, it is the place where Israel celebrates the re unification of the city since 1967. Therefore, it cuts the movement through open space.



Figure 33: Biet Orouit

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<sup>7</sup> Biet Ourot is an old house was owned by Palestinian family. After 1967, it was bought by Israelis to be a religious school for Jews.

However, this new road is used by residents of Mount of Olives. It helps to void traffic junctions in city center. The old street led to Salah Eddin Street and Wadi Al Joz or Al Asbat Gate that traveler should pass through to go to other places. Moreover, the new road network made the **mobility** of residents by their private cars much easier. They are using the tunnel to go to Jericho.

Currently, open spaces are used sometimes as **shortcuts** for workers as they go back to their homes. Also, it is used as shortcut to Hebrew University for Arab students that live in the area.

**b. View:**

The study area includes many strong visual elements that enhance the orientation of user through space. The main landmarks in the study area are: tower of Augusta Victoria, Atur Russian Bell, Tower of Hebrew University, and Dome of the Rock. During Interviews residents were talking about these landmarks as essential elements in their area. Layla said: “our area has many important and distinctive buildings as Augusta Victoria Hospital, Mormons University, Hebrew University, and Atur Russian Bell”. The most important view is Al Aqsa Mosque as shown in Figure 34. Therefore, the designed platforms were on the top of the mountain to provide clear vision for viewers and visitors.

These elements are strong enough to emphasize direction and orientation of user in open spaces. This was indicated in theories of Lynch (1960), Kaplan (1998), and Thwaites (2001). They emphasize the sense of direction during people walking through space which improve their experience and places become memorable.



Figure 34: the view toward Al Aqsa Mosque from National Park of Jerusalem 'Snake Park'

**c. Change:**

Open space in the past was continuous and natural. According to interviews, the change was due to the geography of the study area. Open space was on the mountain or in the valley which was physical change. The valley was distinctive with its bare rocks and the mountain with its olive trees and wild plants in addition to the forest near Hebrew University.

According to observations, current open space includes many new elements and designed places such as platforms, Snake Park and the National Park which creates change inside open space. Although of physical change, these open spaces are not joined, each space has its own entrance from different side or road. As a result, the sense of change is not induced in the entire space as discussed by (Alexander, 1977; Thwaites, 2001).

In conclusion, the orientation through old open space was clear and obvious for residents. At the same time each area in open space has its character and identity as seen from interviews. The change was not only physical as the difference

between valley and mountain; it was also change of meaning and property of land. Interviewees were using their social terms to identify each place; such as: Al Hidmi Lands, and Al Alami Lands.

### **5.1.3 Neighborhood awareness**

Neighborhood awareness is correlated with sense of place, which related to private-public awareness and thematic continuity:

#### **a. Private-public awareness**

According to interviews, all of interviewees stated that open spaces of Mt. of Olives are not safe for many reasons. The first and foremost reason is the existence of shady spots used mainly by drug addicts. Secondly, the presence of orthodox Jews in open space for worship on Saturdays, and during feasts and events. Thirdly, the visiting tourists and foreigners who come to the area that becomes a lookout to observe the old city from Mt. of Olives. The fourth reason, which most of them mentioned was the daily activities performed by the settlers and soldiers in the area. Most interviewees have expressed their fears toward Jews, soldiers and tourist that are accompanied with security. 'Unsafe place' was the first answer when asking about people's absence in open spaces. The major reason for this unsafe feeling is drug addiction in open spaces, which was totally controlled the mentality of local residents. Consequently, I asked them about examples that they really know about such fears and ideas. Some of them talked about few users that are drinking alcohol, or taking drugs. They simply avoid going to these open spaces so as not feel unsafe and uncomfortable. From interviews, children and women had more concerns regarding these places than men. They do not feel safe to use these open spaces; especially that some of them has had some clashes with settlers, verbally or simply

by veiled threats. Most of them assured that settlers come to open spaces in groups, with security, and they sing loudly during their walks.

According to Thwaites (2001), place should provide security and safety. Feeling safe is not enough; the user should be safe actually. Salma said: “we used to go two or three girls without fear... now the space is empty most of the time and scary... if we go only in group”. This reflects the existence of safety factor in the past in these open spaces.

Public awareness is necessary to know public rights in the city. Most of them are not aware their rights as residents in East Jerusalem. Due to the illegal building, they are always afraid of asking the municipality to provide their neighborhoods with minimum services, such as: garbage collection, road pavement, and children playgrounds. Meanwhile they are paying high taxes ‘Arnona’<sup>8</sup> for municipality and payments for illegal building. Only few interviewees were aware of the Israeli plan for East Jerusalem, “Holy Basin Plan” in specific. Most of them are busy with their daily life concerns. Most of them assured that people in 1970’s were more aware about their political and social rights than today. They were having the national spirit and they were socially connected. Nowadays, the social relationships are being minimal; neighbors do not know each other. Most of them believe political and social rumors. Since 1970’s till first intifada, the residents were one social and political body overlooking the different political affiliation and ideological differences. They tried to establish a youth association in the neighborhood that cares about public property and provide sports facilities and services for youth. But the Israeli authority closed

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<sup>8</sup> Arnona is the housing Tax in Israel which depend on the area of house, it location, and classification. Arnona in Jerusalem is the highest in Israel.

the association as a result of a mysterious incident that interviewees refused to talk about. Such initiatives to establish community center have not been repeated again.

#### **b. Thematic continuity**

According to interviews, the description of open space at Mt. of Olives in the past was continuous natural image. It had a special rhythm: the valley was cultivated with seasonal crops; the foothill is full of olive trees, to end up the mountain with dense pine trees. Current open space is fragmented by built up area. Many agricultural lands are fenced.

As discussed by (Lynch, 1960; Thwaites, 2001) place needs identity to be distinguished from rest surrounding which requires thematic continuity. Past open space gained natural and agricultural thematic continuity with integrated build up area. Now, open space has fragmented by the built up area. Currently, Israeli Jerusalem municipality is working to apply new design for open spaces, which holds the theme of 'Biblical Garden'. Currently, the study can't evaluate the new gardens. It could be a new topic to examine the post occupancy experience of residents in new open spaces.

In conclusion, the experience of open space has changed. Past open space was natural and agricultural that satisfied residents' desires and needs. It had special significance which enhanced the value of open space. It was social open space due to social interaction that has occurred there. Users were able to move through open space and watch inside and outside views easily and safely. It was a continuous green area with houses that were scattered yet integrated in a natural way among the highly vegetated areas. All these components strengthened the experience of

user to be meaningful and rich. Thus, past open space was memorable place that people attached to.

On the other hand current open space is fragmented, has less vegetation, unsafe place especially for children and women. Therefore, open space has lost its value and significance due to negative experience of users. Most of interviewees liked and preferred the previous situation of safe, natural open spaces with rocks, Olive trees and wild plants.

According to conceptual analysis tool for experience of place; past open space fulfilled the place experience which is different from the present open space. Therefore, the following section will examine the residents' perception of past and present open spaces, in addition to its relation with experience of place.

## **5.2 perception of open space in Mount of Olives**

According to previous literature, components of perception are: physical components, activities that occur there, and individual meanings and understanding toward space. This section focuses on these themes to discuss residents' perception in the past and now and how it has changed.

### **5.2.1 Physical components**

#### **a. Religious buildings**

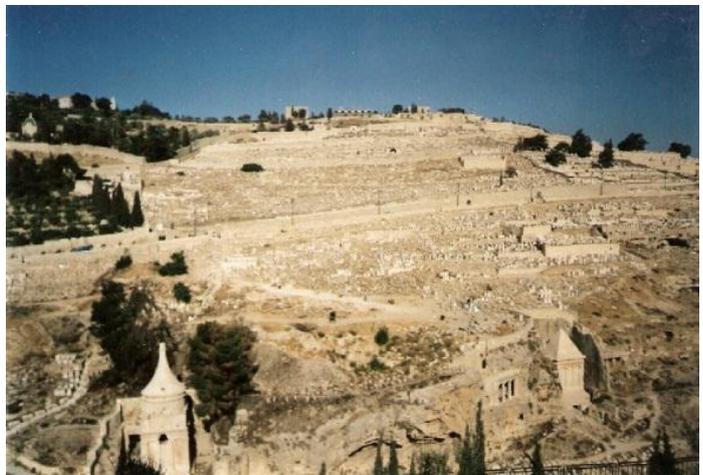
During interviews, residents were aware of religious buildings that exists in Mount of Olives which are: Rab'a Al Adaweia tomb, Gethsemane, Tomb of Mary, "Tomb of Zechariah", Russian Church, in addition to mosques and Muslim and Jewish cemeteries (see Figure 35).



Figure 35: Gethsemane, tomb of Mary, and Russian church in Mt. of Olives.

Source: Congress Library

There are many historical places in Mt. of Olives that should be reserved and protected. Most of interviewees said that in the past these public buildings were open to public, but nowadays are not accessible any time except limited times. The Jewish



cemetery (Figure 36) was open and accessible for Palestinians, but now there is fear to go there according to

Figure 36: Above is the Jewish Cemetery, in bottom is Thom of Zechariah

Source: American Congress Library

Jewish presence and security. Likewise, Mount of Olives is considered as one of entrances to Old City of Jerusalem and overlooks Al Aqsa Mosque. (See Figure 37 )



Figure 37: Al Aqsa Mosque from Mt. of Olives

Source: American Congress Library

#### **b. Built up area**

In general, the built up area was the most considerable change. All interviewees above 40 years stated that built up area has changed greatly. In addition to the urban development that has taken a vertical approach much more than the horizontal development. Some of them assured that the area of Sowaneh neighborhood is the same since 1967. Issa said during the interview: “there is no geographical change in the area, Sowaneh neighborhood area did not increase or expand beyond the 1967 borders... people are building without permits... the urban development is vertical or random extensions to existing buildings, it became crowded area, so people have moved out to live in Isaweya or Abu Dies”. Layla said: “In the past the built up area was minor, and the area of open spaces was dominant”. However, they are aware that there was no horizontal development, and the borders of neighborhood did not increase. The urban development has taken an

approach of simply filling the void through addition and new extensions to main mass shown in Figure 38. According to Jerusalem municipality these additions are illegal.



Figure 38: new additions to buildings

The ‘illegal construction’ in East Jerusalem has forced residents to look for quick, cheap, and insignificant building materials to be used in construction, such as: bricks, plain concrete, aluminum and steel as shown Figure 38. From observations and according to old residents the architectural style of the area was mainly stone and individual houses as in Figure 39.

According to interviewees, this kind of ‘illegal building’ has started since municipality of Jerusalem imposed constrains and complicated regulation building on building permits. People are not affording the cost of permits, so they are making additions to their homes without permissions which have transformed the area to be crowded as a sprawl. Jerusalem Municipality does not give permits for residents and allows only limited cases to build with permits such as Islamic Waqf housing which is row housing project in Wadi Al-Joz and Al Julani buildings.



Figure 39: Old stone and individual buildings that are surrounded by new additions

Islamic Waqf housing project is seen as the main change in the built up area. This project took the permission to be built under constrains and limitations. In 2009, Islamic Waqf asked the municipality to build another housing project in the valley in Waqf land at Kedron valley (Wadi Annar) but the Municipality refused, unless it was a Hotel in order to go with future Israeli vision of the surrounding area of the Old city which should be touristic as Jerusalem plan 2000. Even though, in 2004 the Mayor announced that a settlement will be established in the Industrial Zone in Wadi Al Joz.

Another kind of architecture was introduced to the area exemplified by the Mormons University. The architect tried to reflect the spirit of the place and city to harmonize with context. He used terraces and arches in addition to Jerusalem limestone to go with the mountain. The area also contains many public buildings and institutions such as Palace Hotel and Al Ibrahimeya College that are considered as post-modern style, which are shown in Figure 40. Most of interviewees mentioned that public institutions that have appeared in the area such as Mormons University and the massive development of the Hebrew University look like fortified complexes. Ibrahim

said “I see Hebrew University as an alien in the area” while Salma considered it as “a castle”.



Figure 40: Public Building in Mount of Olives

### c. Vegetation

The name of the study area is “Mount of Olives” that reflects the image of the area. Mainly the area was cultivated with olive trees. Till now trees do exist but most of interviewees stated that a large number of trees were uprooted. According to interviewees the area of ‘Snake Park’ was full of olive trees that had been taken off and replaced with cypresses and other bushes such as rosemary. In the past the residents were benefitted from the olive harvest but now after land confiscation for the sake of green public areas, they can no longer take any of their harvest. Some of interviewees over 50 years old- mentioned that the valley was used for wheat agriculture or seasonal crops, which disappeared since 1970’s.

#### **d. Entrances and Accessibility**

As said by interviewees, open spaces were accessible any time and they were accessible since they were integrated with their surroundings. Currently, open spaces are bounded with fences or walls with specific entrances (see Figure 41). Most of entrances are not clear visually, and some of them are gated or entrance is not well defined.

The accessibility is necessary for public space. However, access is important to provide security and to control the space. Therefore, residents have the feeling that the space is controlled. In compliance with Carr et al (1992) in addition to Antrop (2000, 2005) they stated that accessibility is a factor of landscape change. Therefore, open spaces are not considered as natural areas as before. Moreover, it is considered unstable since the transportation system has been introduced, which aims to implement the political and religious vision of the area as Jerusalem plan 2000. As a result, the meaning of open space in Jerusalem has transformed into a geo- political space.



Figure 41: One of entrances to National Park “Snake Park” that is surrounded with a wall.

### **e. Demography**

According to interviews and observations, a Jewish residency has appeared in Arab neighborhoods (Sowaneh and Atur) within the last 10 years. This appearance aims to change the demographic situation in the area to be considered as shared neighborhoods in East Jerusalem. Dr. Abdul Hadi said that “this situation can be used in political negotiations between Israel and PLO to keep such areas under Israeli control. On the other hand, the Palestinian existence in these areas has increased. The reason was the political rumors about including Sowaneh and Wadi Al Joz within Jerusalem borders and the rest of the neighborhoods will be part of the West Bank. This forced Jerusalemites to concentrate their existence in this area and go back from new suburbs such as Bir Nabala and Arram. They left their new large homes to live in small houses or bad quality additions to their old homes. Thus, the population of this area has increased while the horizontal area did not increase. All these factors led to increase social problems in Jerusalemite society. The boys spend most of their time outside the house, ignoring their homework and study, which encourage them to drop out of school and work in “Israel” as workers. The girls are much bounded than boys. So, they spend most of the time at home or studying. Thus, the percentage of educated girls is more than boys. Some of these girls cannot find their equivalent husband. As a result, the social problems have increased and so has the divorce percentage in Jerusalem.

### **Platforms and Parks**

Nowadays Mount of Olives includes many public parks and lookout areas toward the Old city as discussed before. However, interviews showed that residents are not

using these parks for entertainment or recreation during weekends especially in the last 20 years.

### **5.2.2 Activities**

Most of interviewees have memories about their activities in open spaces, which are quite different from nowadays. According to interviewees, open spaces were not used only by local residents; but also for recreation and leisure by Palestinians and visitors from West Bank. Also, it has been used for tourism in addition to religious activities for Muslims, and Christians. Currently, open spaces are used mainly by Israeli settlers and foreign tourists for recreation, tourism, or Jewish religious activities; other that open spaces are empty.

#### **a. Religious activities:**

1. Palm Sunday celebrations: this Christian feast is the Sunday that is before Easter. This celebration has started in the late fourth century by the Jerusalem Church<sup>9</sup>. According to interviewees this feast was considered as an annual and national festival, people come from different cities of Palestine. Nada said “we are waiting this day... all the people christians and muslims come from different cities to observe the event... green almond, lettuce, and cotton candy are usually sold by travelling peasant along the route”. The participants in Palm Sundry are from different cities, nationalities and religions (Christians and Muslims). This event has been affected by seperation of Jerusalem by seggregation wall since 2000. Fewer people than before observe this feast, they used to come from all over the West Bank, who no longer are permitted to enter Jerusalem by the Israelies . Even those who have permits to enter Jerusalem do not prefer to attend because

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<sup>9</sup> Source of data is [www.FaithClipart.com](http://www.FaithClipart.com)

of difficulties and spending long time on chek points. Diala<sup>10</sup> said “I do not come every year to Jerusalem to participate in Palm Sunday, sometimes I do not get permission to enter Jerusalem... last year I had a permission to enter Jerusalem but we missed the celebrity due to the difficulties and hassling at the checkpoints... this year 2012 there were a lot of foreign Christians which were dominant and the existence of Arab Palestinian Christians was insignificant”.



Figure 42: the old route of Palm Sunday

Nowadays the route of Palm Sunday has been changed for security reasons. The old route (see Figure 42) was open to its surrounded open spaces; while the new route is surrounded by walls of churches as shown in Figure 43. This event was considered as recreational, religious, social, and cultural event. On contrary, today it is limited to foreign Christians with no Muslim and limited participant of Arab Christians. Some of



Figure 43: Palm Sunday 2011

<sup>10</sup> Diala is a Christian girl, 30 years old; she is from Ramallah city in the West Bank, holding Palestinian ID.

the interviewees said that in the past they were waiting for this ceremony while now nobody remembers it, and if they know they don't go, since they consider it as Christian feast or because of safety measures. As a result, the social, cultural meanings of this route have changed to be religious and political meanings.

2. Jewish Passover and Daily Tours: Mt. of

Olives from Jewish opinion is located within the "holy basin" that surrounds the Holy Temple that built by Solomon the son of King David. From daily observation for the study area and interviews, Mt. of Olives is an attraction point for Jews to walk through and pray in front of "Temple Mount" Al Aqsa Mosque. Thus, the municipality of Jerusalem established a park on Mt. of Olives



Figure 44: Signs of Jerusalem Trail

overlooking the Old City since 1970's, which is the Jerusalem National Park – Orson Hyde Memorial Garden. This Park is one node of Jerusalem trail that passes through Wadi Annar "Kidron Valley" to end at "City of David" in Silwan. Figure 44 shows the one of the signs of Jerusalem trail that residents are not noticing and aware the meanings of these signs. From observations, groups of Israeli soldiers, tourist, and Jewish children use this trail to watch Old City and walk through historical and archaeological part of the city. In addition to Jewish families that come every Saturday for worship. (Note: the author cannot take photos for security measures).

Another annual event is the anniversary of reunification of East with west Jerusalem in 1967, the ceremony is made at the religious Jewish school Biet Orout in Mt. of Olives. Many interviewees said that the Israeli soldiers celebrate every year on Mt. of Olives since war 67 the whole night, and they were pouring tanks of salted water from Dead Sea in the lands on the top of mountain. This scope of celebration became less after the first Intifada in 1987 for security measures. The residents of the area are irritated with such activities. Om Ahmad said: "Israelis celebrate every year till 5 am... they use loud music, fireworks, and block streets before vehicular movement and allow only pedestrian ... it is so annoying".

3. Muslim feasts and Ramadan: Mount of Olives is the entrance to the Old City from eastern side and the closer entry to Al Aqsa Mosque through Al-Asbat Gate. According to interviewees the area in Wadi Annar –Kidron- valley was considered as a gathering area and short cut to Al Aqsa Mousque to enter the Old City through Al Asbat Gate. In the past, people from Atur, Wadi Al Joz and Al Isaweya used this way. Om Youef said: "people would come from Al Isaweyeh, Atur and pass through Al Ansari Lands to go to Al Aqsa Mosque". Om Ahmad added that "the valley was a gathering area for the visitors of Al Aqsa Mosque and Old City". Nowadays, the valley is used as parking area for cars and buses, since there are no parking lots for prayers on Fridays or in Ramadan. In addition, pedestrians are not taken into considerations. Muslims used the area as transitional zone; there were no Muslim festivities in the area. But it was used mainly by residents of the area for recreation, adventure and playing.

### **b. Recreation and entertainment:**

According to interviews, and as discussed in previous section open spaces were used for recreational and entertainment activities such as: walking, gathering and meeting areas, cycling, picnicking, hiking, and herbs collection. Most of interviewees assured that open space were used by both boys and girls without any fear.

### **c. Children's games**

Through previous explanation for place experience, children games had social dimension. Children of Mt. of Olives used to play traditional games such as "Seven Stones" and "marbles" which require open space to play. The games were collective and the type of the game is related to season. Issa mentioned "we would play football in the summer... In autumn we would play marbles and other games such as seven stones". Mariam who is in her 40's said that "in summer we used to fly kites on the mountain, exactly at the location of your house, it was empty space and suitable for flying kites... it is rarely now to see kite in the sky... unfortunately, my children do not know how to make a kite... they are spending their time watching cartoons".

Children of today have their own way of playing and spending free time. Most of Interviewees mentioned that their children are spending their time inside home, watching television or playing computer games or surfing the internet. This trend has started since 1990's after satellite technology. Before this period the only available channels were Israeli TV and Jordanian TV where options were limited. Today, there are indefinite channels that fill leisure time for whole family. The boys go out sometimes to play football or cycling. Parents don't allow them to go away from the house surroundings. Girls are not allowed to go alone to open spaces for walking except with parents or young men. Moreover, children said that they don't go there

because the common negative judgment about the users of open spaces. One of interviewees is Saleem who is 16 years old said: "I don't go to open space, because the guy who goes there, he is going to smoke, or drink alcohol, or take drugs, and all these activities are forbidden in our society. So I do not put myself in doubtful situation". Ahmad who is 18 years old said that "I don't like to play in the area since there is no suitable and morality atmosphere to play with other guys... most of them are bad guys". The way of children playing today is different from their parents or generation of 30's and 40's. "When we were children, boys and girls, we would wear shorts and go play football between rocks and wild plants at the mountain" said Sally, 32 years old. She continued: "Children used to visit open spaces almost every day after school. These activities no longer exist today. Now, the only place that they feel safe to play football is Al Ibrahimiya school parking or at Lutheran earthy playground". Currently, the Lutheran playground is converted into a paved playground in order to be used by the new settlement. Football is the only game that currently children enjoy in the open spaces, or simply stay home and enjoy other means of playing,

### **5.2.3 Individual meanings and understanding of open space**

The meaning of space is affected by many factors such as socio-economic, cultural, and political aspects in addition to personal attributes and values. Therefore, Interviews covered different ages, gender, and knowledge. The interviewees above 40 years had special meaning and value of open space according to their memories and experience. This part was clarified in the section of place experience previously.

During the interviews, I was asking interviewees about the meaning of green open space. Eight of them answered that it is a place to play or recreation. Five

interviewees answered that it means that the land is green and not allowed to build on. Four interviewees said that it is confiscated land and will be used later to build Israeli settlements. This reflects the different individual meanings and understanding of people. Each one has his/her own idea and consideration.

Three interviewees considered parks are designed for Palestinian residents, and Jerusalem Municipality works for the benefits of Palestinian residents in the area. While other 13 interviewees considered open spaces and parks are designed for Israelis; especially according to existence of physical elements such as 'Wall of Life'. Salwa said "when I see wall of life I remember that Israel occupied our land and took our places... it present its heroes on this wall which means for me occupation".

In conclusion, perception of open space depends on the conceptual analytical tool of perception previously discussed in the literature review. The tool will examine the three components of perception: physical components, activities, and individual meanings and understanding; and comparing past perception of open space with now to see how the perception of residents has changed.

### **5.3 Change of perception in open spaces in Mount of Olives**

Interviewees have noticed the change of the area in the last 20 years; especially the change of built up area, vegetation, safety, and transportation. Each issue will be discussed as following:

**Vegetation** is one of physical components of open space, which is well perceived by interviewees. According to interviews vegetation types and amount had changed. In the past there were many types of wild plants that some of them do not existed

today. In the past time during spring, the mountain was covered with poppy flowers and “Fojeleh” of yellow flowers with olive trees. It was an attractive place for local residents and from the Old City for picnicking, and playing. It was a valuable place for residents, especially plants that residents were familiar with; such as “khobezeh” and “Balabos” that were cooked, and “Za’ror” that was eaten fresh, rosemary for cooking and medication. They appreciated these plants, in addition to economic value for land owners. Residents were selling their product of olive oil and olives and get money. Another activity illustrated by Nada who said, “we would cultivate our land with lettuce or “Karnabit” and then would give the neighbors” which demonstrates the social relationship of residents and individual meaning that improve ties between people. According to interviews, present vegetation in open spaces is less than before. From observation there is still poppy flowers and “fojjeleh” but they cover fragmented and insignificant areas. Rarely open space is used for picnicking or playing. Some of families are not able to harvest their Olive trees since their lands have been confiscated by Israeli municipality. Consequently, Individual meanings of vegetation have changed. The perceived change is related to ecological value of open spaces which can be a topic for future research. (This thesis will not tackle ecological factors that affect landscape change for limited time) Moreover, as Margalit (2006) argued that the national park has political point of view where the marketing for the idea of the park that it is for the benefit of Palestinian residents, meanwhile it constrains Palestinian’s living space. Perceived vegetation - agricultural or nature or forest- has changed that people consider it less than before that they preferred more.

The perceived **Wilderness** of open space has changed. As shown previously, most of interviewees who are above 40 years preferred the old natural components of

open space as rocks and wild plants. Rocks and stones were used by children for playing, they climbed rocks and stone chains, girls used stones to make house plans in order to play “beit biot”, or to play a traditional game “seven stones” that was played by girls and boys. Such interaction between people and environment by touch created human- environment relationship as discussed by (Thwaites, 2001; Carmona, 2003). Therefore, residents have their own feelings and thoughts toward open space, which is different from the present situation. Currently, the National Park has natural theme without any of the hard landscape features; paths are compacted aggregates. However, residents do not use this park. They consider it lacking facilities that suit their needs and desires. Most of them look for places that include recreational and playing areas for their children with easy and neat walking paths. Residents also consider open space as empty and unpopular space that they are looking for. As a result, residents perceived elements and components of past open space as positive elements due to their experience. The perception of such elements has changed which had lost their meaning and value. On the other hand, natural paths of National Park are part of Jerusalem Trail which is used by Israeli groups, soldiers and children. The trail strengthens the relationship between Israeli settlers and “Holy Land”; which creates place attachment and belonging to open spaces.

**Safety** is one of most important factors affecting urban space. Perception of safety of open spaces has changed in the last 20 years into unsafe and suspicious open space. Most of interviewees’ perception is a result of stories and rumors about drug addicts or Israeli settlers’ existence in such places. Open spaces have been transformed from safe places to suspicious spaces. Therefore, children or women are not allowed to use open spaces alone without men accompanying them and

during daytime. Therefore, open space are empty of users most of the time except Jewish feasts and Saturday's in addition to tourists. Place should provide security and safety for the users as stated by Thwaites (2001). Therefore, risk management for open space should be taken into consideration of urban design and improve open space by control and surveillance of space in addition to activity of space.

Perception of open space has been affected by the **road and tunnel** of Ma'aleh Adomim. This road cut the continuity of open space and divided it. It has changed the perception and experiences of residents which became as a border for open space. Also it has changed the perception of vegetation which becomes less than before. The perceived change of the road was negative toward vegetation and continuity of space which affected movement of users through space. On the other hand, it has positive dimensions as it makes the mobility of residents easier. This road has become part of landscape and affect the image and identity of the area which similar to (Lynch,1960; Thwaites, 2001).

The interviews indicated that that **built up area** has changed essentially. The crowded built up area has also affected the mental image of old generation. As shown in Thwaites (2001), Tuan (1977) and Lynch (1960) theories, the perceived image of built up area lost its identity, value, and sense of attachment to these spaces. Therefore, some residents are looking to move out and leave their homes and land since sense of attachment to these spaces no longer exists. Privacy is one of the most important factors for housing which has disappeared in such crowded area where most of residents are closing their shades even during daytime.

**Perception of** public institutions especially **Hebrew University** is like a military presence and surveillance. This goes with Bollens (1999) theory that planners and

architects try to create adaptable image for the new buildings in order to support sense of identity for people and to be familiar with original environment. However, gating these public institutions is considered controlling these territories, with their rules and regulations. Therefore, a new urban morphology has been created in Mt. of Olives which stopped the urban flow toward such institutions as Bollens (2005). Hebrew University in the east side was under Israeli custodianship during the Jordanian rule. Thus, it was a territory to control spaces in East Jerusalem, which reflected Israeli political and urban vision of deploying this place as a tool of control.

As a result, interviewees considered open space change deteriorating in terms of ecological, physical, and perceptual dimensions.

#### **5.4 Mediating variables of open space change**

Perception of people toward open space change can be affected by many factors as mentioned in Chapter three. The mediating variable that affected the perception of residents in Mount of Olives are the following:

**Life-style** of residents has changed according to globalization, modernization and new technologies. Most of the young generations consider technology as reflection of modernity, and cultivating land is getting them backward. The new lifestyle caused the new generations to neglect their lands and instead of cultivating they would rather be spending time doing 'modern' activities, and hence they no longer take pleasure in nature. Another factor that has changed the life-style of residents is the **economic** factor. Interviews reflected that young men are working more than 12 hours a day. The wife is working outside of home in order to improve the economic level of the family. The family spends most of the day out of home, and after work

the mother is taking care of children and cooking. The children are doing their school homework. Thus, the whole family became busy most of the day. Remaining time is used to rest, or tutoring the children, or rarely visiting relatives, which has affected the social life and changed the family activities. Therefore, most of current activities are inside the house such as: watching TV, playing video games, or using internet instead of spending time at open spaces.

**Moreover, Children** are looking for new places with new designs and technologies that meet their **needs** such as Ramat Gan Park in Tel Aviv that contains many recreational activities such riding, cycling, boating, in addition to sports facilities and high tech playing equipment instead of traditional games that their parents used to play.

**Socio- cultural context in the area:** the social structure of the area was homogenous in the past; most of the residents are known families in Jerusalem and know each other. On the contrary of nowadays where there are a lot of new residents from different cultures. Also, four of the interviewees mentioned that the land price in Sowaneh is very high that can't be afforded by average residents, and some of new landowners are Israeli agents.

**Mobility and openness** of Jerusalem to other cities such as Jaffa and Tel Aviv, Dead Sea and Jericho in addition to new networks have attracted residents to go farther distance to spend pleasure and recreational time much more than their adjacent open spaces

**Population growth is** a main driver behind landscape change. Mt. of Olives is affected by the Palestinian population growth which has increased the built up area

to be overcrowded. This change affected the perception and experiences of residents as mentioned by Antrop (2005), Burgi(2001), Gobster (2004). Also, the new residents in the area have different perception than the old residents who have different experiences and activities in open spaces as stated by Tuan (1977) and Carmona (2003). For old residents the belonging to open spaces was obvious, through their memories that build meanings and identity of space as Said (1999).

Another factor is “**illegal building**” issue. Most of interviewees lived in homes, and they feared of house demolishing. Some of them are paying violations since 10 years and did not get a permit till now. So, they feel unstable for their existence, in addition to high building taxes that they are paying to the municipality. So, all these expenses are more than they can bear. Therefore, residents are looking for surviving in East Jerusalem and they are exhausted by these living conditions. Quality of life is no longer essential.

**Land-use pattern:** The first land use plan of study area was in 1993, and had not a development plan after 1967. Therefore, the building of houses was without municipality regulations or permits. The area at the southern of Hebrew University has been classified as green area, and till now Palestinians are not allowed to build there in order to transform the open area into national park. However, Jerusalem municipality has given permits to establish 24 housing units for Israeli settlement in the area that is considered as green area and not allowed to build there as shown in Figure 45.



Figure 45: The new settlement in Mt. of Olives

The crucial battle in Jerusalem is the **land ownership**. The proof of Palestinian ownership means the victory and getting back the land. Land ownership affected the perception of open space change. Since Land Israeli Authority put constrains on Landownership people are hesitating to register their land officially, because they fear land confiscation. Landownership reflects the state ideology that affects landscape perception which similar to Mitchell (1994), Olwig (1996), Margalit (2006).

**Political situation:** the built up area reflects the political situation and discrimination of planning system in East Jerusalem. As Yousef (2009) and Kutcher (1975) indicated that East Jerusalem has been excluded from development in parallel with West Jerusalem since 1967, and the result of this is socio-ethnic segregation that produced slum built up areas in the Eastern part of the city. Moreover, it is a reflection of internal politics and “national” ideology as Mitchell (1994) and Bollens (1999). But it should be noticed that the “national” ideology that is forming the space in East Jerusalem is not the Palestinian ideology, but it is the Israeli one. The

ideology is related to power relations in the area. In the past the people were not aware of Israeli long term plans and visions for Jerusalem, but it started to appear after launching Jerusalem 2000 plan. The “Holy Basin Plan” is specific for the study area, and adopts the Jewish biblical ideology. It can also be recognized that the main aim of unplanned areas is to prevent people from building in the historical basin around the old city, and to give the municipality the right of demolishing illegal housing in order to achieve their future plans. Al Bustan neighborhood in Silwan is the first example of such Israeli practices. Sowaneh and Wadi Al-joz will be the following target.

**The closure of Jerusalem** since 1993 and checkpoints reduced people entry to such open spaces. For example, those accompanying patients used open spaces in front of Augusta Victoria during waiting time for rest and eating. This activity has almost disappeared after Jerusalem separation and isolation from West Bank. Hence, politics and political factors have affected the landscape change in Mt. of Olives as similar to Burgi (2004) and Gobster P.H. and Rickenbach (2004). The palestinian land is being reshaped by Israeli power through policies in order to represent the Israeli narrative.

### **5.5 Sense of Belonging and attachment to open space**

As the conceptual frame work, experience of place is affecting the perception of place which is affecting the sense of belonging and attachment to space. Meaning of space is affected by experience of user through the place. According to previous discussion, people’s experiences had changed and change the perception of open space. Huda said “when I sit in the park I always remember that this land was confiscated and does not belong to us anymore, I feel that I’m a stranger in the

area... everything was taken from us". Israeli activities in open spaces reflect the Israeli power and control. The Palestinian residents have the feeling of being minority without any power in their land. So, they feel unsafe in their lands and out of place. They are not belonging any more to these places. They lost the sense of place of open spaces.

The **children games** tended to indicate the change of life-style, socially and culturally in the study area, which are considered as drivers of landscape change. Children of today have not any relation or attachment to open spaces according to rumors and stories about open space. This is considered as an alert to relation and belonging to land in future. On the other side, Israelis are aware of relation and attachment to land. They are bringing their children whether with school or with their parents to spend time in open spaces and telling stories about the area, then making a tour on foot or using tractors to be enjoyable experience that attach child to Mt. of Olives' places. Therefore, awareness of parents to such issue is essential in order to empower their children and enhance their relationship with land.

Perception of space of residents in Mt. of Olives has changed according to change in their places and experiences for several reasons which are: socio-economic, cultural, political, in addition to urbanization, globalization and technology, values and desires of residents (Antrop, 1998, Burgi & Russell, 2001, Elkadi, 2007, Gobster, 2004, Hull & McCarthy, 1988, Nazer, 2008).

## **5.6 Conclusion**

Landscape of Mt. of Olives was a reflection of social life and living experience of residents. Open spaces were where people find themselves. It was space that

embraces different cultures, and social activities. Thus, open spaces had meaning and value according to residents experiences and memories. Open space was a reflection of link between community and place which similar to Mitchell (1994) and Jackson (1984). Therefore, open spaces in Mt. of Olives had their perception according to these activities. Moreover, each open space had its own sense of place according to daily experiences which create attachment and feeling towards place as stated by Carmona (2003), Tuan (1977) and Dovey (1999). Therefore, the sense of belonging and emotional attachment was obvious for interviewees above 40 years which was different from children who had limited experience in open space.

However, it is important to understand the character of open spaces that surround the Old City. According to previous literature, the topography in the eastern side of Old City is steep, which is not easy to build their. Therefore, this part of land has been agricultural land since the Ottoman Era. These open spaces were a connection between the Old City and the new urban expansion outside the walls. They were the transitional zone between inside and outside the old city as mentioned by most of interviewees. Also, they were the gathering areas for people in feasts and Fridays. Open spaces were accessible for all people and any time without any control or fear. Such open spaces had a special perception for the residents according to their memories and experiences of the area. They consider open spaces have been changed negatively. Open spaces are now bounded with fence or wall and accessible through gates only, which reflect the power and control over open spaces. Moreover, open spaces have lost the natural character to be regulated terraces Parks with new plants. The planting reference for these parks is the Bible in order to reflect the image of Biblical Gardens around that surround Old City. The big terminology such as “Biblical Garden” and “Holy Basin” are producing fears for

residents of the area, especially toward their existence in the area. Therefore, open spaces are now considered as separation element between inside and outside the Old City. In addition to be considered as confiscated lands that have true owner. Residents are not considering these open spaces as Palestinian open spaces that are related to their culture or conducted from their social life. Therefore the meaning of open space has been changed and thus, its perception and experiencing of open space. As a result, open space in Mt. of Olives has been changed from **Urban Space to be Geo-political Space.**

Moreover, most of interviews reflected the nostalgia toward the past. Therefore, the perceived change of open spaces has been to the worse. During the interviews the political factor was the major cause for the change of the area, which reflects the subjectivity of perception. Interviews reflected several factors that have affected open spaces which are:

- Social and cultural aspects which have been affected by globalization and technology, and changed the life style of residents.
- Economic factor that affect the priorities of residents, where open space and recreation are on the top of needs' pyramid.
- Safety of open spaces
- Values and new needs and desires of residents.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

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### 6.1 Main Findings

The study provides that open spaces of Mount of Olives are holding special meanings and values which are related to memories, experience, and character of open space. The continuous changing of building policies and regulations in addition to increasing of building expenses have pushed the residents to use any available space in order to survive and keep their right of land without any concern to quality of produced space. This has affected the physical situation of built up areas which was the most dominant perceived and physical change in the area. The study reveals that perception and experience of residents has changed due change of physical components of open space, change of activities and change of individual meanings. The following diagram (Figure 46) illustrates the components of perception change.



Figure 46: change of perception of open spaces in Mt. of Olives

- Palestinian outdoor activities have been decreased, and children play has been changed to be indoor activities, as a result of changing of life style and technology.
- The most perceived considerable change was perception of safety, that all interviewees assure that open spaces are not safe today as in the past. Moreover, the design of open spaces was used to be hidden spaces that unseen from public that can contains unaccepted social activities.
- Change of people needs and desires affected the meaning and importance of open spaces in Mt. of Olives. They are looking for more attractive places.
- Mobility and openness to other cities attracted people to have recreational time and entertainment in further cities such as Jaffa and Tel Aviv.
- The considerable perceived change of activities was the increasing of Jewish activities during Feasts, Festivals and Saturdays.
- The political factor that Jerusalem is under Israeli occupation and Palestinian power in East Jerusalem was the major factor that influences the perceived change.
- In this case the socio- political drivers are affecting landscape perception and experience much more that physical change of landscape.
- Awareness of residents toward their spaces, meanings and needs are less than the past.

As a result of indicated changes of perception and experience; relationship between residences and open space has changed, which affects sense of place and place attachment. Therefore, sense of belonging and attachment were different between adults, youths, and children. The adults have sense of belonging to open spaces through their memories and experiences, while Youth and children have sense of

alienation toward open spaces as a result of rumors and fears of adults about open space.

## **6.2 Conclusions**

This study conducted that residents' awareness is insignificant and shallow toward their surrounding open spaces and needs. Most of them are not aware their rights as residents in East Jerusalem due to the illegal building. They are unable to demand for minimum services such as road pavement, of collecting garbage. Residents' judgments toward open spaces were affected by their awareness, which are affected by rumors about drug addicts in addition to political rumors. The study concluded also that change of life style was a major factor that has changed the activities in open space.

Thus, there is an urgent need to activate these open spaces to meet current residents' needs, in order to strengthen their attachment to open space; especially children.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

According to previous findings, the recommendations in this section are directed to the Palestinian planning community, the Palestinian Authority, the local and international organization operating in Jerusalem.

- As occupied city and Palestinian residents are considered as minority in the city, awareness of locals should be increased about their rights as residents in the city and remove the fears that resulted from "Holy Basin" and Biblical Garden" terminology. Moreover, demanding adequate services should not be considered as collaboration, but as a lawful demand.

- There is essential need for community mobilization and increasing awareness toward open spaces by community associations and schools. This can be achieved by activation Palestinians' activities in open spaces for adults and children through tours or other attractive activities in addition to improve the design of public area to meet their needs and desires, which increase the sense of attachment to land and belonging especially for young generation.
- Providing security and periodic Palestinian existence to prevent suspicious activities in open spaces to encourage people to reuse these open spaces safely as in the past.
- Providing parking areas that goes with open spaces especially at Kidron valley to be used during Fridays and Ramadan.
- Community participation and intervention during planning process.
- Community participation and intervention during planning process.
- Palestinian, Arab, and international efforts should be combined to achieve an alternative plan for Jerusalem in order to strengthen the Palestinian presence in Jerusalem and according to Palestinian vision.
- Palestinian initiative plans in order to develop unregulated areas.
- Preparing re-parcelization plans, to solve land ownership arguments, and demanding an increase in the building percentage in the Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem can help temporary development and avoid creating harmful built environments that threatening the historic and cultural value of the city.
- In order to achieve the above initiatives, public and private partnership is needed in addition to local and international organizations support to control the necessary funding and technical assistance needed to achieve the

desired results. Local and international organizations, such as the World Bank, the European Union, and others should work closely with the planning community to design and fund projects that help Palestinian community.

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## Appendix 1

### Key persons interviewed

No.	Name	Sex	Specialization
1	Mahdi Abdul Hadi	Male	Political
2	S. Q	Male	Planner and Architect
3	Rasem Kamaisi	Male	Planner
4	Omar Yousef	Male	Architect and Planner
5	Jamal Amro	Male	Architect and Planner

## Appendix 2

### Local residents of Mount of Olives interviewed sewing

No.	Name	Age	Sex	Level of education	Profession
1	Om Ahmad	86	F	Illiterate	Housewife
2	Om Yousef	74	F	Illiterate	Housewife
3	Om Waleed	81	F	Sixth grade	Housewife
4	Mariam	52	F	Eleventh grade	Housewife
5	Issa	46	M	University, Masters	Medical devices Engineer
6	Layla	38	F	High school	Sewing worker
7	Salwa	44	F	Diploma	Teacher
8	Huda	53	F	University, Ph.D.	University instructor
9	Nada	54	F	High school	Housewife
10	Kamal	60	M	Ninth grade	Trader
11	Maha	40	F	University, English	Housewife
12	Ibrahim	36	M	University, Engineering	Electrical Engineer
13	Sally	32	M	University, Biology	Sales woman
14	Ghaleb	22	M	University, Engineering	Unemployed
15	Ahmad	18	M	High school	Student
16	Saleem	16	M	High school	Student
17	Salma	41	F	University, Arabic	Teacher
18	Khawla	45	F	High school	Housewife
19	Om Sami	40	F	Tenth grade	Housewife
20	Midhat	48	M	University, Engineering	Electrical Engineer
21	Dima	56	F	University, Ph.D.	Landscape architect
22	Diala	30	F	University, Masters	Architect

### **Appendix 3**

- The interview questions were:
- What is the meaning of green open space in the past and now?
- How people are using these open spaces now? In past?
- Are spaces accessible? Do you go there and how many times?
- Which is open space the most visited in past and now?
- Is there change in open spaces? How?
- How do you spend you free time? Where do you go during weekends?
- Do you this the area is important religiously, historically or politically?