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The Real Estate Market in Jerusalem between Muslims and Christians (1800-1810)

Musa Sroor
Birzeit University

Abstract

The stable political situation in Jerusalem during the Ottoman Era contributed to the increase in economic activities in the city. Those economic transactions included all religious groups in Jerusalem such as Muslims, Jews and Christians. In spite of the division of Jerusalem into quarters based on the religious affiliation such as the Muslim quarter, Jewish neighbourhood, and Christian neighbourhood, neither quarter was devoted exclusively to a specific religious group. For instance, the Muslims lived in Christian quarters and Jewish people lived in Muslim quarters and vice versa. Such quarter relations among the people from the three aforementioned religions contributed to the development of intertwined economic relations that served their personal economic interests despite of religious differences.

The current study aims at examining the sale transactions that are available at the Jerusalem Legislative Court in the nineteenth century shows that the real estate transactions between Muslims and Christians in Christian quarters were very active. This study aims also finding out if there were any religious reasons behind those real estate transactions. That is, was it in the best interest of the Muslims to convert Christian quarters to Muslims ones? Or was it in the best interest of Christians aiming at eliminating the Muslim existence in those quarters by buying all their real estate in an attempt to change the neighbourhood into a Christian one? Or, was the main goal behind all those transactions purely financial gains and they were not motivated by religious incentives?

This study will investigate and study this issue through the examination and analysis of all the sales transactions that are available at the Jerusalem Legislative Court. That is, a thorough statistical analysis of all those real estate transactions types will be conducted to find answers to the above questions.

Keywords

Ottoman Jerusalem; Christian Quarters; Muslims Quarters; Economic Expansion; Growing Urbanization

The stable political situation in Jerusalem during the Ottoman period contributed towards increasing the economic activities in the city. These activities included all the religious communities in Jerusalem: Islamic, Jewish and Christian. In spite of the fact that Jerusalem was divided into quarters according to religion (the Islamic, Christian and Jewish quarters), none of the quarters was exclusively restricted to a specific religious group. For instance, Muslims lived in the Christian quarter alongside the Christians and Jews lived in the Islamic quarter. Relations in the different quarters among people belonging to the three religious groups contributed to the development of overlapping economic relations that served their economic interests despite the sectarian barriers.

The examination of sale and purchase contracts available at the Archives of the Muslim Court of Jerusalem, in particular, those from the court records (*siğill*) from the nineteenth century shows that real estate contracts between Muslims and Christians in the Christian quarter were noticeably active. These documents reveal that there was an ownership exchange of real estate in this quarter with sale and purchase contracts made between people from the different religious groups. In other words, although we find real estate transactions between Christian and Christian and among Muslim and Muslim, we also have sale and purchase transactions between Muslims and Christians. This shows that the real estate market in Jerusalem included people from various families and religious groups. These sale contracts not only provide us with the identity of the seller and the buyer as well as the price of the concerned property but they also specify the location of the real estate and its borders, showing that property belonging to persons of different religions bordered one another in the quarter. Such information indicates a peaceful coexistence between Muslims and Christians who lived side by side as neighbours.

This study attempts to find out whether there were religious motives behind those real estate transactions. In other words, was it in the best interest of the Muslims to convert Christians into Islam? Or vice versa, was it in favor of the Christians aiming at evacuating this quarter from its Muslim residents through buying all their real estate in an attempt to make it a special Christian quarter? Or, was the main goal behind all these transactions purely financial gains and were not motivated by religious incentives?

This study investigates and analyzes the sale and purchase contracts of real estate records at the above-mentioned Archives of the Muslim Court

of Jerusalem¹ which is the only source for this study. I have carried out a statistical survey for these transactions as well as a classification of them. All sale and purchase contracts for real estate were recorded in this court up until the end of the nineteenth century. In addition, all real estate transactions were conducted with the judge of the Jerusalem Court (*maḥkamah šarʿiyyah*) who had the power to ratify those deals and then to have them officially recorded in the court records with a copy of the transaction going to the concerned parties. This transaction is proof of the transaction and their rights in relation to this.

Jerusalem was a relatively small city compared with other Arab cities in the Ottoman period since *intra-muros* Jerusalem does not exceed one kilometer. This confined space included all types of activities: residential, economic and social. Transactions on built and agricultural property located within *intra-muros* Jerusalem are the basis for the present study.² Despite the religious importance of Jerusalem to Jews, Christians and Muslims, it was a modest city in terms of population compared with other Arab cities of the same period like Aleppo, Damascus and Cairo. The inhabitants of Jerusalem in the early 19th century seemed to have numbered about 10,000 according to a study published by A. Manna.³ Muslims formed half of this number while Christians totaled about one-third; as for the number of Jews, they did not exceed 2,000 persons.⁴

¹ For the Archives of the Muslim Court of Jerusalem, see Manna, 'Adel. "The *Sijill* as Source for the Study of Palestine during the Ottoman Period with Special Reference to the French Invasion", in David Kushner (ed.), *Palestine in the late Ottoman Period*, Jerusalem, Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1986, p. 351-362; Khadr, Salamah. "Aspects of the *Sijills* of the *Shari'a* Court in Jerusalem". In: *Ottoman Jerusalem. The Living City: 1517-1917*. Sylvia Auld and Robert Hillenbrand (eds.), London, Pt. I-II, Altajir World of Islam Trust, 2000, p. 103-145; Musa Sroor, "Jerusalem's Islamic Archives: Sources for the question of the *Waqf* in the Ottoman period". *Jerusalem Quarterly*, 22-23 (2005), p. 80-86.

² Sroor, Musa. *Fondations pieuses en mouvement: de la transformation du statut de propriété des biens waqfs à Jérusalem (1858-1917)*. Damas, IFPO et IREMAM, 2010, p. 55-56.

³ Manna, 'Adel. *Liwā' al-Quds fī awāsīt al-ʿahd al-ʿuṭmānī: al-idārah wa-l-muḡtama' munḍu awāsīt al-ʿahd al-ʿuṭmānī ḥattā ḥamlat Muḥammad ʿAlī*. Beirut, Mu'assasat al-dirāsāt al-filastīniyyah, 2008, p. 17.

⁴ About this subject, see Hāmid al-Qudāt, Aḥmad. *Nasārā al-Quds*, p. 75-85; Manna, 'Adel. *Liwā' al-Quds*, p. 18; Abir, Mordechai. "Local Leadership and Early Reforms in Palestine 1800-1834". In: *Studies on Palestine during the Ottoman Period*. Moshe Maoz (ed.). Jerusalem, Magnes Press, 1975, p. 291; Ben-Arieh, Yehoshua.

During 1800-1810, Jerusalem witnessed a state of political instability and strained relations between religious communities and, in particular, between Muslims and Christians. One of the most important events in that period was Napoleon's invasion of Palestine and his attempt to occupy the city of Acre. After his withdrawal from Palestine, there was a power struggle between al-Ġazzār, the governor of Acre, and several local rulers such as Abū Marāq and Abū Nabūt. In this period, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was set on fire and, as a consequence, there was a conflict between the religious communities in Jerusalem.

Those events in Jerusalem during that period could not be separated from those that occurred in the rest of the Ottoman provinces. During that period, the Ottoman Empire was forced as a result of its weakness and its inability to resist certain threats to recognize the authority of local rulers in return for their allegiance to Ottoman authority and the payment of taxes to the treasury of the empire. This contributed towards the increase of the local rulers' power who became a real threat to the Ottoman Empire and its institutions. Some of these rulers declared insurgency which created a state of confrontation and conflict between the Ottoman authority and these rulers.⁵

The question here is the following: how did the aforementioned political developments influence the sectarian relations between Muslims and Christians and between members of the Christian community themselves? How did this affect the real-estate market between Muslims and Christians during this period? In other words, was the selling and buying of real-estate in the Christian quarter limited only to Christians? Did these conditions create a barrier for this kind of business on the real-estate market among the religious communities? What was the percentage of the contracts signed by members within a religious community compared with those which took place between Muslims and Christians?

Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century. Tel-Aviv, MOD Books, 1989, p. 13, 23; Laurens, Henry. *La Question de Palestine*. Tome premier, 1799-1922; *ibid.* *L'invention de la Terre Sainte*. Paris, Fayard, 1999, p. 51; Ben-Arieh, Yehoshua. "The Population of the Large Towns in Palestine during the First Eighty Years of the Nineteenth Century According to Western Sources". In: *Studies on Palestine during the Ottoman Period*. p. 51.

⁵ 'Ūdīd, Bīrī. "al-Taġayyurāt al-siyāsiyyah wa-'ab'āduha 'alā al-'awqāf fi al-Quds fi wāḥir al-qarn al-tāmin 'ašar". In: *al-Quds: dirāsāt fi tāriḥ al-madīnah*. Amnon Cohen (ed.). al-Quds, Yād Yitišāq bin Tesfī, 1990, p. 162-176, p. 163.

A recent study dedicated to the Christians of Jerusalem during the Ottoman period indicates that most of the contracts concerning selling and buying occurred among the Christians themselves; rarely did a Christian sell to a Muslim although some Muslims sold properties to Christians.⁶ However, this research does not provide information or statistics to prove this claim despite its reliance on the same source upon which our study depends, i.e., the records of the Ottoman Jerusalem Court.

Influence of the Political Situation on Sectarian Relations

My research relies on data from seventy-five sale and purchase contracts related to the Christian quarter as they are documented in the Jerusalem court records (*siġill*) during 1800-1810. This period has been chosen on purpose. Many significant historical events took place before and during this period which left their traces not only on Jerusalem and its people but on the entire area of Ottoman Palestine and its inhabitants.

At the beginning of this period, Palestine was invaded by Napoleon Bonaparte. It is clear from the documents of the Jerusalem court that the inhabitants of Jerusalem were afraid and worried when they received news about Napoleon's invasion of Alexandria. Since then, the Ottoman authorities warned the residents that the ultimate goal of Bonaparte was to dominate Jerusalem and the holy places in it. On the 3rd of *Safar*, 1213 / 17 July 1798, the Ottoman governor (*wālī*) of Damascus sent a message to the representatives of Ottoman authority (the judges, muftis and the head of the prophet Muḥammad's family [*šarīfīn*]) in Jerusalem, Nablus, Jaffa, and Gaza. The message warned France about targeting Palestine in general and Jerusalem, in particular, saying: "It is clear for you and us that French disbelievers and those who support them, may Allah always destroy them, had seized the forts of Alexandria. This news had become known. It is well known that al-Quds al-Šarīf (Jerusalem) and the noble nearby places are the ultimate goal for the people of the ingratitude".⁷

The fears of the Jerusalem inhabitants increased along with the progress of Napoleon in his campaign. The city started to be filled with fleeing refugees coming from Gaza, Ramlah, Jaffa and the neighbouring areas. Thus, Palestine witnessed a state of political chaos, instability and lack of

⁶ Hāmid al-Quḍāt, Aḥmad. *Nasārā al-Quds*, p. 335-336.

⁷ My translation, *siġill* vol. 279, (3 *Safar* 1213 / 17/7/1798), p. 151.

clarity concerning the future, especially after the success of the French army in occupying Gaza, Ramleh and then Jaffa. An atmosphere of anxiety, fear and frenzy was dominant in Jerusalem among the Muslims. This prompted Jerusalem Muslim scholars (*'ulamā'*) and notables to incite the Muslim population to fight against the French who were expected to arrive in Jerusalem. These events suffered by the residents of Jerusalem brought great pressure on the Christian which increased the deterioration of their economic situation in relation to the decline in the movement of Christian pilgrims and outside donations as well.

What is more, the Christians in Jerusalem were vulnerable to harassment by the Muslim population and their leaders. This harassment was the result of pressure felt by the Muslims and their leaders or it was due to feelings of hatred towards the Christians which dominated in such circumstances⁸ and the Muslims and their leaders retaliated against the Christian population of Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Monks belonging to monasteries were arrested and placed under guard in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Fifty-two Catholic monks were arrested from the monasteries of Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Ein Karem. The Ottoman sultan objected to these measures and he sent many orders to Damascus and Jerusalem calling for the freedom of these monks. It should be noted that the monks remained prisoner in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher for seventy-two days. They were not released until after Napoleon's withdrawal from the region.⁹ With the help of the British navy, al-Ġazzār Paşa was able to stop the attacks by Napoleon's army, thereby putting an end to his colonial plans. Finally, the French forces withdrew from Palestine in late May 1799 and arrived in Cairo in mid-June of the same year.¹⁰

The struggle between the ruler of Acre, al-Ġazzār, and Abū Marāq, one of Gaza's leaders, intensified after the end of the French threat. This struggle was because al-Ġazzār refused the Ottoman's decision which appointed Abū Marāq as governor of Jerusalem, Jaffa and Gaza for life. Jerusalem residents were forced to take a stance in this struggle after opposition to

⁸ 'Udīd, Bīrī. "al-Taġayyurāt al-siyāsiyyah". p. 171.

⁹ Manna', 'Adel. *Tārīḥ Filastīn fī awāḥir al-'ahd al-'uṭmānī 1700-1918 (qirā'ah ġadidah)*. Bayrūt, Mu'assasat al-dirāsāt al-filastīniyyah, 2003, p. 96.

¹⁰ Safi, Khaled. *The Egyptian Rule in Palestine 1831-1840: A Critical Reassessment*. Berlin, Bensch & Buch, 2004, p. 21; Cohen, Amnon. *Palestine in the 18th Century*. Jerusalem, Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1973, p. 27-29. Laurens, Henry. *La Question de Palestine*, tome premier 1799-1922; *ibid.*, *L'invention de la Terre Sainte*. Paris, Fayard, 1999, p. 18-19.

the new policy imposed by the new governor, in particular, with respect to taxes. In this struggle, they supported al-Ğazzār who forced Abū Marāq out of Palestine. Abū Marāq came back to Palestine as governor only after the death of al-Ğazzār in 1804. He did not stay long in governance of the region as a new struggle began in 1807 with his successor Abū Nabūt.¹¹

This year also saw attacks and abuses carried out by Muslims against some Christians and their places of worship. The French, Italian, and German consuls in Damascus raised the issue of ill-treatment of Christian pilgrims in Jerusalem which prompted the Ottoman authority to intervene in order to prevent such attacks and to remind its Jerusalem administration about the need to implement this order.¹²

Jerusalem had also seen a state of instability as a result of the fire which broke out in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher on 30 September 1808 which destroyed a large part of its western wall.¹³ The Armenians were indicted because the fire broke out in the section dedicated for them. In the aftermath of the fire, various Christian leaders set up tents in the courtyard of the church to guard against looting and abuse. Senior Muslim religious scholars (*‘ulamā’*) and notables of Jerusalem participated in this effort, among them: the Ḥanafī mufti Ḥasan Afandī al-Ḥusaynī and a leader of the notables, ‘Umar Afandī al-Ḥusaynī and others.¹⁴

In 1809, the Orthodox community received permission from the Ottoman sultan to restore the Church and remove the damage caused by the fire but they were confronted with opposition from the Armenian and Catholic leaders who incited some Muslims to forcibly prevent the Church’s restoration process; the restoration thus came to a halt. A tense sectarian atmosphere dominated Jerusalem. In addition to this, Jerusalem’s leaders lost control of the situation, especially after the Janissary opposition to restore the Church. The Janissaries used their arms to obstruct the restoration process despite the sultan’s order. Moreover, the Janissaries organized a revolt against Mustafā Aġā, governor (*mutassalim*) of Jerusalem and expelled him out of the city as well as declaring control over the city and its castle.¹⁵

¹¹ Manna’, ‘Adel. *Liwā’ al-Quds*. p. 24-25; Safī, Khaled. *The Egyptian Rule in Palestine 1831-1840*. p. 21.

¹² Ḥāmid al-Quḏāt. Aḥmad. *Nasārā al-Quds*. p. 441.

¹³ Divine, Donna Robinson. *Politics and Society in Ottoman Palestine: The Arab Struggle for Survival and Power*. London, Lynne Rienner, 1994, p. 37.

¹⁴ Manna’, ‘Adel. *Liwā’ al-Quds*. p. 26.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Mustafā Aġā could not return to his post in Jerusalem until after the arrival of a military campaign from Damascus which put an end to the revolt and expelled the rebellious elements. However, the restoration process of the Church did not resume until the beginning of 1810.¹⁶ In the midst of this chaos, during the Janissary domination, the restoration work undertaken in the Roman monastery was stolen. The news reached the Ottoman sultan who issued a decree denouncing this act, wondering how this happened with the presence of the governor in Jerusalem. The decree called upon the governor of Jerusalem to discover those who stole the restoration and to bring back the stolen things to the monastery. It also called for the means of providing protection to the monasteries in Jerusalem.¹⁷

Within the same context, the Ottoman authority prevented the governor of Jerusalem from asking the monks belonging to the Armenian monastery for an increase in their annual gifts and revenues. This order was considered an encroachment on the rights of the Armenians and a violation of Ottoman orders. The Ottoman sultan was also informed that Muslims in Jerusalem encroached on Christian religious and residential sites and demanded to be paid in order to vacate those premises. In the meantime, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was attacked in 1810. In accordance with this, the Ottoman sultan issued a decree to prevent such violations.¹⁸ The sultan thus played an active role in restoring an atmosphere of tolerance to the city which, as in the past, was Ottoman public policy between Muslims and Christians.¹⁹

Impact on the Real-Estate Market

With this in mind, let us examine the impact of these conditions on the real-estate market in the Christian quarter in Jerusalem and, in particular, on trade relations between Muslims and Christians in accordance with a comprehensive survey of the records of the Ottoman court in Jerusalem for the first ten years of the nineteenth century. Seventy-five contracts were

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Hopwood, Derek. *The Russian Presence in Syria and Palestine 1843-1914: Church and Politics in the Near East*. Oxford, Clarendon, 1969, p. 13-16; Ḥāmid al-Qudāt, Aḥmad. *Nasārā al-Quds*. p. 440.

¹⁸ Abū Ġābir, Ra'ūf. *al-Wuḡūd al-masīhī fi al-Quds ḥilāl al-qarnayn al-tāsi' 'ašar wa-al-'išrīn*. Bayrūt, Markaz dirāsāt al-waḥdah al-'arabiyyah, 2004, p. 14-17.

¹⁹ Divine, Robinson. *Politics and Society in Ottoman Palestine*. p. 15.

found which contained information about real-estate sales in the Christian quarter. I have classified these contracts into four sections:

1. Six sale and purchase contracts whereby the seller was a Muslim and the buyer was a Christian.
2. Ten contracts whereby the seller was a Christian and the buyer was a Muslim.
3. Thirty contracts whereby the sellers and the buyers were Christians.
4. Twenty contracts whereby the sellers and the buyers were Muslims.

Through this classification, we note that the bulk of real-estate deals were made either between Christian-Christian or Muslim-Muslim. But the presence of a number of transactions that took place between Muslims and Christians, whether the seller was a Muslim or a Christian, indicates economic relations between members of the two religions. As such, we can say that there were no religious barriers or impediments that prevented commercial relations between members of the two religions.

On a whole, these contracts reveal the existence of neighbourly relations between Muslim and Christian families in the Christian quarter. The contracts show that this quarter was not limited only to Christians but that Muslims shared the ownership of real estate with the Christians as well as owning much of the real estate in this quarter themselves. The presence of 29 contracts for selling and buying real estate in the Christian quarter, all of which concerned residential buildings, were Muslim-Muslim during the period of the ten years studied here (1800-1810), in addition to 16 contracts between Muslims and Christians in the same period. These transactions clearly show the prominent presence of Muslims in the Christian quarter. Moreover, the acceptance by Christians to sell their real estate to Muslims in this quarter is evidence of their acceptance to share accommodations and to establish neighbourly relations. The best proof of this is found in tables one and two which show that 5 out of 6 contracts mentioned in Table One indicates that real estate was partially sold and that share was what the seller owned as a result of purchase or inheritance. Table two also shows that 2 out of 10 contracts indicate that the entire real estate was sold.

We can conclude that selling a share in a property and not the whole real estate itself would change the identity of the owners of the property. In the case of selling shares to persons who do not belong to the same family or religious community, this will lead to the participation of people of different religious communities in the ownership of a property. The fact that most of the properties mentioned in the tables are places of residence, the

possibility remains that the new owner will share the living space with the former owners. This is evidence of the existence of the principle of sharing property and accommodation in one quarter even though the name itself, the Christian quarter, carries religious significance.

Table 1. Contracts of Sale and Purchase between Muslims and Christians (1800-1810) (the seller is a Muslim and the buyer is a Christian)

N.	Sellers's Name	Buyer's Name	Type of Real Estate	Place	Price
1	The daughter of Mas'ūd 'Usfūr al-Ġabālī	al-Ĥūrī Niqūlā b. Ġubrān al-Rūmī	One <i>qirāt</i> (part) of the <i>dār</i> (house) called Dār al-Sitt. It has one floor which contains 5 <i>bayts</i> (rooms)	Maḥallat al-Nasārā (Christian Quarter)	90 <i>zultas</i> ²⁰
2	'Abd al-Rahīm b. al-Ĥāġġ 'Alī al-Jā'ūnī	Niqūlā b. Ġubrān al-Rūmī	One and a half <i>qirāts</i> of the <i>dār</i> called Dār al-sitt with one floor and 5 <i>bayts</i>	Maḥallat al-Nasārā	200 <i>qirš asadī</i> ²¹
3	al-Ĥāġġ Sulaymān b. Yūsuf	The son of Ġubrān al-Rūmī	One and a quarter out of six <i>qirāts</i> of the <i>dār</i> with one floor, it contains 2 <i>bayts</i> , one <i>dukkān</i> (shop) and one <i>matbaḥ</i> (kitchen)	Maḥallat al-Nasārā	200 <i>zultas</i> ²²
4	Taḥsīn 'Abd al-Wahhāb Afandī	al-Dimmī 'Attā al-Allāh b. Taṭrūs al-Rūmī	2 <i>bayts</i> called Dār al-Ḥalīlī	Maḥallat al-Nasārā	1,100 <i>qirš asadī</i> ²³
5	Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-'Aklīk	Niqūlā b. Ġubrān al-Rūmī	5 <i>qirāts</i> of the <i>dār</i> with one floor, it contains 4 <i>bayts</i> , one <i>istabl</i> (stable) for the animals and one <i>sahriġ</i> (tank) of water	Maḥallat al-Zarā'inah (one of the Christian quarters)	425 <i>zultas</i> ²⁴
6	Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-'Aklīk	Ibrāhīm b. Muhannā al-Rūmī	20 <i>qirāts</i> of the <i>dār</i> with one floor, it contains 4 <i>bayts</i> , two <i>istabls</i> (stables) and two <i>sahriġs</i> (tanks) of water	Maḥallat al-Zarā'inah (in the Christian Quarter)	1,500 <i>qirš asadī</i> ²⁵

²⁰ Archives of the Muslim court of Jerusalem (*siġill*), vol. 282. (18 Ġumādā I, 1215 H. / 7/10/1800), p. 51.

²¹ *Siġill*, vol. 282 (1 Ġumādā II, 1215 H. / 20/10/1800), p. 56.

²² *Siġill*, vol. 285 (*Raġab* 1219 H. / October 1804), p. 92.

²³ *Siġill*, vol. 288 (1 *Safar*, 1221 H. / 20/4/ 1806), p. 47.

²⁴ *Siġill*, vol. 291 (*Du l-Ḥiġġah*, 1222 H. / February 1808), p. 74.

²⁵ *Siġill*, vol. 292 (*Ġumādā I*, 1224 H. / June 1809), p. 117.

From the analysis of the names of the Christian buyers of real estate mentioned in Table 1, we note that they all belong to the same Roman Catholic religious community: members of the other Christian communities living in the same quarter such as the Copts, Abyssinians, Syrians and Latins as well as the Armenians who lived in an adjacent quarter called the Armenian quarter do not appear as buyers or sellers of real estate at that time. This may give the impression that the Roman Catholic community had an advantage of wealth and economic influence. Indeed, this seems to be indicated by the sale and purchase thirty contracts whereby the sellers and the buyers were Christians (where 26 contracts out of 30 exclusively concerned Roman Catholics).

In some cases, members of this community bought properties at exorbitant prices which shows the wealth of some members of this community. For example, at the end of *Dū l-Hiġġah* 1217 / 26 March 1803, Michael and his brother Anthony al-Rūmī bought from Dawwūd's son a share of 15 parts (*qirāts*) of the house known as Dār Aliġali which contains two floors, a number of rooms, a kitchen, an open terrace, two tanks of water and other facilities for the price of 2,500 *qirš asadī*.²⁶ On 15 *Ġumādā II* 1221 / 30 August 1806, the non-Muslim (*ḍimmī*) Ġiryis, Ḥannā al-Rūmī's son, bought from the non-Muslim (*ḍimmī*) 'Īsà, Ilyās al-Rūmī's son, a house (*dār*) located in the al-Ḥaddādīn (blacksmith) quarter (one of the Christian quarters), for the amount of 2,000 *qirš asadī*.²⁷ Another example comes from the end of *Ġumādā I* 1223 / 21 July 1808: Rafā'il and his brother 'Īsà, Sam'an Farrāġ al-Rūmī's sons, bought a house (*dār*) from Ṣalīb, Antwān Farrāġ al-Rūmī's son, located in the al-Ḥaddādīn (blacksmith) quarter for the amount of 1,200 *qirš asadī*.²⁸

By tracking the names of Muslims who bought real estate, we note that some of them bought more than one piece of property. This was the case for Muḥammad and his brother Ḥāġġ Ḥammād, Ḥamdān Fikrī al-Wa'rī's sons, and also for Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-'Aklīk who bought three other pieces of property in the same period. The second table shows that the above-mentioned persons made 6 out of 10 property transactions. This shows the wealth of these two men and their desire to own real estate in the Christian quarter.

²⁶ *Siġġill*, vol. 284 (29 *Dū l-Hiġġah*, 1217 H. /26/3/1803), p. 5.

²⁷ *Siġġill*, vol. 288 (15 *Ġumādā II*, 1221 H. /30/8/1806), p. 89-92.

²⁸ *Siġġill*, vol. 292 (28 *Ġumādā I*, 1223 H. /21/7/1808), p. 12.

Table 2. Contracts of Sale and Purchase between Muslims and Christians (1800-1810) (the seller is a Christian and the buyer is a Muslim)

N.	Seller's Name	Buyer's Name	Real Estate Type	Real Estate Location	Price
1	ʿUrām b. al-Ḥūrī Ḥannā al-Hurš al-Rūmī	Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAklīk	5 <i>qirāts</i> of the <i>dār</i> with two floors, containing 3 <i>bayts</i> , two <i>iṣṭabls</i> (stables), one <i>sahriḡ</i> (tank) of water and a <i>sāhah samāwīyyah</i> (open terrace)	Maḥallat al-Zarāʿinah (one of the Christian quarters)	255 <i>qirš asadī</i> ²⁹
2	Ḥannaā b. Ṣālih al-Ḥaddād b. Farrāḡ	Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAklīk	19 <i>qirāts</i> of the second floor of a <i>dār</i> containing 3 <i>bayts</i> (rooms) and one <i>sahriḡ</i> of water	Maḥallat al-Zarāʿinah (one of the Christian quarters)	1210 <i>zultas</i> ³⁰
3	Yaʿqūb b. al-Ḥūrī Malāhim al-ḍimmī al-Rūmī	ʿAbd al-Ġanī al-Sabbāḡ al-Dimašqī	¼ of 6 <i>qirāts</i> of the <i>dār</i> with two floors containing one <i>bayt</i> , one kitchen and one <i>sahriḡ</i> of water	Maḥallat al-Zarāʿinah (one of the Christian quarters)	450 <i>qirš asadī</i> ³¹
4	Al-ḍimmī Faransīs b. Ġiryīs al-Ifranḡī al-Naḡḡār	al-Ḥāḡḡ Muḥammad Afandī al-Budīrī	One <i>dār</i> containing many <i>bayts</i> and one <i>sahriḡ</i> of water	Maḥallat al-Nasārā	800 <i>zultas</i> ³²
5	al-ḍimmī Sulaymān b. Salīm al-Rūmī	Maḥmūd and his brother al-Ḥāḡḡ Ḥammād b. Ḥamdān Fikrī al-Wārī	4 <i>qirāts</i> of the <i>bayt</i>	Maḥallat al-Ġawāldah (one of the Christian quarters)	200 <i>zultas</i> ³³
6	al-ḍimmī Sulaymān b. Salīm al-Rūmī	al-Ḥāḡḡ Ḥammād b. Ḥamdān Fikrī al-Wārī	18 <i>qirāts</i> of the <i>bayt</i>	Maḥallat al-Ġawāldah (one of the Christian quarters)	350 <i>zultas</i> ³⁴

²⁹ *Siġill*, vol. 282 (7 *Rabīʿ I*, 1215 H. / 29/7 1800), p. 18-19.

³⁰ *Siġill*, vol. 282 (*Du l-Ḥiġġah*, 1215 H. / May 1801), p. 151-152.

³¹ *Siġill*, vol. 285 (*Awāḥir Safar*, 1219 H. / 8/6/1804), p. 5-6.

³² *Siġill*, vol. 286 (15 *Rabīʿ I*, 1218 H. / 4/8/1803), p. 48.

³³ *Siġill*, vol. 287 (*Awāḥir Ġumadā I*, 1220 H. / 23/8/1805), p. 72.

³⁴ *Siġill*, vol. 287 (*Awāḥir Ġumadā II*, 1220 H. / 22/9/1805), p. 86-87.

Table 2 (cont.)

N.	Seller's Name	Buyer's Name	Real Estate Type	Real Estate Location	Price
7	Hilānah al-Karkaġi al-dimmiyyah	'Abd al-Wahhāb Afandī	One <i>dār</i> called Dār al-Ḥalīlī	Maḥallat al-Nasārā	1,520 <i>qirš</i> <i>asadi</i> ³⁵
8	al-dimmiyya Ritā b. Yāqūt al-Ġallād al-Ifrabġi and al-dimmiyya Maryām b. Anṭwān b. Faransīs al-Ifrabġi	'Abd al-Ġanī Ġalabī	One <i>dār</i> with two rooms	Maḥallat al-Ġawāldah (one of the Christian quarters)	3,000 <i>qirš</i> <i>asadi</i> ³⁶
9	dimmi Miḥā'il b. Ġatās al-Ḥaddād al-Rūmī		5 <i>qirāts</i> of the <i>dār</i> containing 4 <i>bayts</i> , one <i>matbaḥ</i> (kitchen), one <i>iṣṭabl</i> (stable) and one <i>sahriġ</i> of water	Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-'Aklīk	425 <i>zultas</i> ³⁷
10	Ḥanna b. Anṭwān b. Miḥā'il		10 <i>qirāts</i> of the <i>dār</i> , it contains 2 <i>bayts</i> , and <i>sāḥah samāwiyyah</i> (terrace)	Maḥmūd and his brother al-Ḥāġġ Ḥammād b. Ḥamdān Fikrī al-Wārī	765 <i>zultas</i> ³⁸

We note from the first table that Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-'Aklīk had sold some of his real estate to Ibrāhīm, Muhanna al-Rūmī's son, for an amount of 1,500 *qirš asadi* in 1224/1809: we also note that he had bought this same real estate at an earlier time (1800, 1801, 1807) as Table 1 indicates. This may be explained by the fact that this person was a real estate trademan. Through the description of the house, of which he sold his share, as well as its location in the al-Zarā'nah quarter, we can note that it is the same house that he had bought in 1801 for an amount of 1,210 *zultas*, a very small sum compared with that for which he sold it eight years after the initial acquisition. With this amount, 1,210 *zultas*, Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-'Aklīk bought a share

³⁵ *Siġill*, vol. 288 (*Awāḥir Muḥarram*, 1221 H. / 16/4/1806), p. 46-77.

³⁶ *Siġill*, vol. 289 (*Safar*, 1222 H. / April 1807), p. 50.

³⁷ *Siġill*, vol. 291 (*Ša'ban*, 1222 H. / October, 1807), p. 32-33.

³⁸ *Siġill*, vol. 292 (15 *Raġab*, 1223 H. / 6/9/1808), p. 21.

(19 *qīrāṭs*) of the house and after only eight years, he sold approximately one third (7 *qīrāṭs*) of the part of the houses which he bought for 1,500 *qīrṣ*. This reveals a large profit which he obtained out of this transaction.³⁹

The contracts for the sale and purchase of real estate between Muslims also reveal that Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-‘Aklīk not only conducted transactions with Christians but also with Muslims where these contracts refer to the purchase of real estate, many of which were owned by Muslims. Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-‘Aklīk conducted five real estate transactions out of the 29 that took place between Muslims during the period 1800-1810 concerning the sale and purchase of real estate in the Christian quarter. On 16 *Rabī‘ I* / 7 August 1810, he bought a share of 6 *qīrāṭs* in a shop located in the street of Bāb al-‘Āmūd for the price of 160 *zulfas*.⁴⁰ Moreover, Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-‘Aklīk also bought a share of 10 *qīrāṭs* from Muḥammad, al-Ḥāḡḡ Mustafā’s son, in the house located in al-Zarā’na quarter which includes four rooms (*bayts*), an open terrace, two tanks to collect water and two stables for 670 *zulfas*.⁴¹

It should be noted that Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-‘Aklīk was in competition with the trader Sulaymān Quttīnah (the largest real estate trader in Jerusalem during this period) in buying real estate, but he was different from him in overcoming the sectarian dimension in his transactions. Through sale and purchase contracts, we note that the trader Sulaymān Quttīnah conducted most of his transactions with Muslims and not with Christians unlike Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-‘Aklīk who did not distinguish between a Muslim and a Christian in this respect.⁴²

The sale and purchase contracts of real estate also reveal that the properties included in these contracts were concentrated within the Christian quarter and its sub-quarters like al-Zarā’nah, al-Ġawāldah, al-Ḥaddādīn and Aqbat al-Batīḥ. More than half of the real estate mentioned in the seventy-five contracts was near the Church of the Holy Sepulcher where the number of contracts was forty while the rest of the real estate was distributed among the other Christian quarters. Most of these properties mentioned in the contracts were focused in the al-Zarā’nah quarter (in relation to

³⁹ *Siġill*, vol. 282. (*Du l-Ḥiġġah*, 1215 H. / May 1801), p. 151-152; *Siġill*, vol. 292 (*Ġumādā I*, 1224 H. / June 1809), p. 117.

⁴⁰ *Siġill*, vol. 282 (16 *Rabī‘ I*, 1215 H. / 7/8 1800), p. 25.

⁴¹ *Siġill*, vol. 286 (15 *Rabī‘ I*, 1218 H. / 5/7 1803), p. 29-30.

⁴² See for example: *Siġill*, vol. 294 (*Ġumādā I*, 1225 H. / 12/6 1810), p. 22; *Siġill*, vol. 294, p. 49 (*Ġumādā II*, 1225 H. / July 1810).

14 contracts), followed by al-Ġawāldah quarter (11 contracts), followed by Aqbat al-Batīḥ (6 contracts) and finally al-Ḥaddādīn quarter (4 contracts).

It should be noted that the contracts made between Muslims or between Muslims and Christians did not include any property in al-Ḥaddādīn quarter. The four contracts made pertaining to al-Ḥaddādīn quarter were carried out among the Christians themselves. This explains why there were no Muslims in this quarter; in other words, it was an exclusive Christian quarter. The four contracts had a member of the Roman Catholic community as one of their parties.⁴³ As previously mentioned, most of the real-estate transactions conducted with Muslims had been with the Roman Catholic community. In contrast, contracts made in the quarter of Aqbat al-Batīḥ were between Muslims themselves.⁴⁴ This quarter was not mentioned at all in the contracts conducted between Christians or between Christians and Muslims which perhaps explains why most of the residents in this quarter were Muslims.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we can say that political conditions which hit Jerusalem during the period 1800-1810 and which impacted relations between Muslims and Christians did not affect the real-estate market during that period and, in particular, the real-estate market in the Christian quarter where the deals of selling and purchasing real estate did not stop whether among Muslims and Christians or between Christian-Christian or between Muslim-Muslim. The difference in the number of transactions that took place between Muslims and Christians or within each religious group explains the presence of the real-estate regardless of its weakness or strength.

The question raised here is whether these transactions continued or stopped despite the political circumstances that prevailed during 1800-1810. It is natural that transactions were more widespread among individuals of the same religion compared with those done between persons of different religions. The main motive for these transactions as we have seen was the economic element and not the religious dimension. Most of

⁴³ *Siġġill*, vol. 282 (*Rabīʿ I*, 1215 H. /August 1800), p. 26; *Siġġill*, vol. 283 (15 *Safar*, 1216 H. /27/6/1801, 1800), p. 8.

⁴⁴ *Siġġill*, vol. 286 (15 *Raġab*, 1218 H. /31/10/1803), p. 79-80; *Siġġill*, vol. 288 (13 *Šaʿbān*, 1221 H. /26/10/1806), p. 123.

these transactions were motivated by material motives led by senior real estate traders. Those transactions were not religiously based which could presumably prevent economic relations between individuals from different religions.

Hence, we see how these transactions contributed towards building a network of economic and social relations between Muslims and Christians in Jerusalem which surpassed sectarian boundaries. These relations were controlled, in reality, by common interests and neighbourly relations.