



**Arab Amrican University**

**Faculty of Graduate Studies**

**The Role of Palestinian Churches in Maintaining Social  
Peace and Community Development in Palestine during the  
period 1987 -2017. A Critical Appraisal of Visionary  
Approaches and Impact.**

By

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**This thesis was submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
Master's degree of Arts in Conflict Resolution and Development**

**Feb. 2018**

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This thesis was defended Successfully on 13/2/2018

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## **Deceleration**

**I acknowledge that I have complied with all in force regulations,  
instructions, laws and statements of the Arab American University  
and scientific and ethical standards.**

**So I signed: -----**

## **Dedication**

First and foremost, I have to thank God his mighty who gave me the strength and grace to fulfil this work. Gratefully, I thank My Father fr. Toma Dawoud and my mother Jaklin for their love, patience, and precious contributions to my success in life.

To those who waited and tolerated impatiently to see this work done after two years of tiredness and hard work: my darling wife Noor and my daughter Sarah. I sincerely thank you for giving me the hope support and for understanding and encouragement in the moments of crisis.

Profound gratitude goes to my professor Ayman Yousef for his support and advises. And all professors who gave me knowledge in this master. I thank also my colleagues in the Program.

I am appreciative to my friends and brothers who supported me and gave me advises in order to achieve this work.

And finally, huge thanks to those who gave me time to interview them and shared with me their knowledge and experiences.

## **Acknowledgment**

Dear Prof. Ayman Yousef,

Thank you for your time, revisions and advice on my thesis. I do appreciate your willingness to supervise my thesis and to help me graduate in a timely manner. You have been supportive and full engaged in giving me the necessary information in order to finish my thesis in the proper way.

Dear Interviewed fathers and brothers,

You were an example of Love and humbleness, wisdom and kindness. I thank you for your endless efforts towered serving the Church and community. You are as Jesus said: the light of the world and the salt of the earth. With your light you give light to our homeland and hope for us to stay in it.

Dear Dr. Jamal hanaysheh,

I would like to thank you as an internal examiner for the value added and comments made by you to the enrichment of my thesis. I am gratefully indebted to you for your valuable comments on this thesis.

Dear Dr. Rae'd Nierat,

Thank you for the valuable and fruitful comments on this thesis.

## **Abstract**

This research aimed at examining the role of Palestinian churches in maintaining social peace and community development in Palestine during the period 1987 – 2017. It is centered around the Palestinian churches and the efforts they did and still do in order to maintain social peace and development inside the Palestinian community and explored the church's efforts toward enhancing development in Palestine. It explained how churches understand social peace and community development from a biblical perspective and how do they practice it in the Palestinian reality.

The research then went on to show the role played by the churches in bringing about social peace from a church perspective and the obstacles facing churches in engaging in social life at the national level.

Finally, the research ended with conclusions that showed that the church played a humble role in bringing civil peace to the community but more within the confines of the narrow community and in rare cases within society as a whole.

The methodology of the research in the collection of information was through the inspection of books and literature that examine the social peace and community development in addition to the Palestinian church's theology. Global models of church's peaceful intervention in social peace and conflict resolution were reviewed. After taking the information and comparing it with each other, the lessons and conclusions were also drawn on the basis of several interviews with church's men and officials of church institutions, scholars and community expertise.

The research focused on the role of the Churches in building bridges between the Palestinian society's groups and the contributions of the Churches in linking the Palestinian case and the suffering of the Palestinian people with the peoples of the Christian and Western world and the consequent support gained by the Palestinian people in theory and practice.

In the absence of dogmatic unity and historical ties in the relations between them, the Palestinian churches created a state of non-unity towered the Palestinian case. However, in the wake of the outbreak of the Intifada, there began to be unified and approximate movements among the churches that contributed to the unification of



the word and the Christian national testimony of the Palestinian cause, which facilitated the coordination of efforts and sharpened the motivation to serve national issues.

The study consists of five chapters, the first of which is the introduction of the research, the methodology of the research, the objectives and the study questions, in addition to the literature of the study.

Chapter Two discusses the theoretical framework of the study by expanding terminology such as the Church, nonviolent resistance, and a study of global models that succeeded in ending conflicts by peaceful means.

Chapter Three discusses the historical framework, i.e., the deferent political periods in which the Church was shattered throughout the ages, since the foundation of the Church until the establishment of the State of Israel. This chapter referred to Arabism as a reaction to the silence of ecclesiastical voice toward the political events in Palestine.

Chapter Four deepens in the concept of civil peace and the role of the Churches in social peace and the national role that emerged in the period after the outbreak of the first Intifada until our days.

Chapter Five deals with the ecclesiastical meaning of social development and its contribution to societal development. This chapter also reviewed the churches and institutions of the active Churches in Palestine with their developmental goals on the physical, intellectual, or theological level.

The research concludes by reviewing the conclusion and results, summarizing the outputs and enumerating some recommendations for churches and society in order to invest in cooperation and joint action to prevent the emergence of any impediments to social peace and exploitation of energies in sustainable development projects.

It emerged from the interviews' data that churches in Palestine have contributions to the establishment of civil peace at the religion's community level rather than on the social level in general. Churches can be seen as lacking the charismatic field leaders and the best models that will be used to bring about civil peace and community development, which will be the model to be followed by young people who are a large proportion of the Palestinian society.

Churches of Palestine need to work hard and collectively to educate their followers on the importance of social peace and the ways to deal with problems, disputes and conflicts by peaceful and moral means based on biblical religious principles and not on the basis of ruthlessness and intolerance. But the dissemination of good behaviors and examples accepted to be part of the activities of youth and parish.

Churches need to train a charismatic cadre for conflict resolution and development to lead the Church's community message from a conscious and informed scientific perspective within a strategic plan.

I believe that the churches must work hard to develop a strategic plan for their social mission in resolving peace, love and tolerance among people at the communal, ecclesiastical or national community level.

Churches should not work individually but collectively to provide large, effective and useful projects that can provide radical solutions to start real development in Palestinian society. The hospitals, institutions and orphanages of Wyatt, as well as hospitals with special needs and other health institutions have been established. Its establishment in all governorates of the country.

The researcher believes that the Christian spiritual presidencies should establish a council of priestly staff specialized in resolving conflicts in order to intervene immediately in the event of any threat to civil peace or sectarian or community conflict, which will contribute to providing solutions through peaceful means. This can be done by choosing each or every one or two groups to be taught and trained at the Arab American University to resolve conflicts and development, creating an educated and dedicated spiritual cadre with capacities and energies geared towards engaging in reconciliation and conflict resolution.

He suggested to the churches to cooperate with the Ministry of religious affairs in Palestine to establish a research and monitoring center to predict any threat to civil peace and to work out strategic plans to train a cadre based on conflict resolution and development aimed at creating a cadre capable of intervening immediately before the conflict worsens.

## Contents

<b>CONTENT</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Committee's Decision	II
Dedication	III
Acknowledgment	IV
Abstract	V
Content	VII

### **Chapter one: Introduction**

Introduction	2
Research problem	3
Research Questions	4
Research objectives	4
Importance and Justification	5
Methodology	6
Literature review	6

### **Chapter two: Historical background on the Christian existence in Palestine**

Introduction	<b>11</b>
Numbers of Christians in Palestine from 1917 - 2017	<b>13</b>
Demographic distribution of Christians	<b>15</b>
The transition from the Ottoman Rule to the British Rule – Zionism and the Formation of the National Identity	<b>16</b>
Arabism as a way out of the Dilemma	<b>18</b>
Palestinian Christians and the Church against Zionist thought	<b>24</b>
Church's Arabization	<b>27</b>
Palestinian Christians after the Oslo Accords	<b>31</b>

### **Chapter three: Theoretical framework and the study of global models -1**

Introduction	<b>34</b>
State and Religion in context	<b>35</b>
Church and War	<b>38</b>
Religion and Society	<b>41</b>
Nonviolence in the church's Propositions (Culture of social	<b>44</b>

Peace)	
Culture of social Peace in the church	<b>46</b>
International religious models succeeded applying the peaceful approach to achieve freedoms.	<b>49</b>
Universal Church Models: Desmond Tutu and Martin Luther King.	<b>50</b>

#### **Chapter four: The role of churches in social peace**

Introduction	<b>56</b>
social peace	<b>58</b>
Social peace in Palestinian context	<b>61</b>
Security and social peace	<b>63</b>
Community and social peace	64
Culture and social peace	66
Politics and social peace	67
Religion and social peace	68
Economy and social peace	70
Social peace from Palestinian churches' perspective	71
Citizenship from Palestinian churches' perspective	71
The Dispersion and Geographical Fragmentation of the Palestinian people.	72
First Intifada: a general overview to churches situation	75
Manifestation of security Chaos in Palestinian society	77
Creative resistance: 2007 – 2017	79
Obstacles of the church work in the establishment of social peace in Palestine	81
Jerusalem and the Trump Declaration, ecclesiastical view	82

#### **Chapter five: The role of Palestinian churches in community development**

Introduction	85
The role of churches in community development during from 1987- today	85
1-The role of Greek Orthodox Church in Community Development in Palestine	86
2-The role of Catholic church in community development in	87

Palestine	
2.a. World Vision	89
2.b. Caritas Internationalis	89
3.The role of the Lutheran church in community development	90
4.The role of Anglican church in community development in Palestine	91
4.a. Interfaith dialog: Children for peace project	92
4.b. Peace and reconciliation Department: Another activity in the context of interfaith dialogue	92
4.c. Interfaith dialogue Project in the Palestinian context	93
4.1. The Palestinian Bible Society	94
4.2. Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation theology Center	94
5. Armenian Church: The Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem	96
Conclusion, Results and Recommendation	98
Arabic References	102
English References	104
Websites	105
List of Interviews	109
Appendix	110

## **Chapter one**

### **The introduction**

## Introduction:

Many Palestinians do not know how much the churches in Palestine do efforts for social peace and community development at all levels. This research is concerned with exploring and critically evaluating the role of churches in social and domestic peace. its purpose is to explore the implications of the much-discussed concept of social peace as applied to churches and their daily functioning in the holy land. it proceeds from the assumption that the largest churches in Palestine are vital centers of power and decision, and actions of these churches touch the lives of the Palestinians in many points and in many aspects irrespective of their religion or creed.

The basic and central questions considered and raised are: what type of intervention did the churches do in Palestine to bring about solid social peace during the period between 1987 until today? what are the responsibilities to society may churches reasonably expected to assume at the end of the day? what steps might be taken, practically, to give greater effect to the broader social aspects of churches' decisions in connection with communities around? what are other basic ethical issues and moral considerations facing the churches in Palestine today?

Throughout this research, I have sought to interpret the problems of Churches realistically, and to consider their leaders' social responsibilities in terms of the practical and the attainable results achieved on the ground. Churches occupies a strategic role in Palestine. it is a central and influential figure and spiritual component in Palestinian society and one of its cultural symbols and spiritual heritage cannot be ignored.

The decision made by church leaders effect directly the lives of millions of Palestinians despite their religion or social or class or regional backgrounds. When a church decides whether or not to build a hospital, school, housing or organizations etc. in a city or village; that effect immediately the life of the inhabitants of that city and its surrounding villages, also that affects the economy of Palestine in some rate; and the employment of hundreds of youth who desperately seek jobs. Such decision help youth to stay and restricts immigration from the holy land to the Western countries and contribute directly in stopping the brain drain process especially among the youth. When church decides whether or not to be part of Israeli Palestinian conflict then it effect the inclination of Christian youth who is seeking to determine his identity as Christian and Palestinian; whether or not use force and armed struggle; nonviolent or violent protesting; what is crucial, important and what comes secondary in their life. So its role in social peace is considered to be crucial and not negotiable.

When church uses modern telecommunication and social media to spread its values and principles showing its work to the public it may affect our moral and cultural standards. when Palestine's church leaders travel to international religious interfaith or inner faith conferences it may consider as an ambassador of Palestine expressing the Palestinian case internationally; expressing the voice of the peaceful Palestinian people who are open and flexible in debating critical social issues and religious controversies.

Are church leaders by virtue of their strategic position and their considerable decision-making power, obligated to consider social consequences when making their private decisions? private decision mean here decisions about their local churches members only or the members of their religious communities. if so doing they have social responsibilities that transcend obligations to church members and church followers? For example, when a church

expressing its opinion about loyalty of the state of Israel as an interpretation to the bible teachings of apostle Paul who write in his letter to Rome that all authorities are obliged from God; then loyalty to the authorities is loyalty to God himself who established that authority in that specific place and time?

The answer for this is positive. church leaders have huge assumption of social responsibility. it's clear that churches are controlled by competition between them and other social groups inside the society; but also they are controlled by customs and conventional law prevailed in the society context. Everyone has a duty to serve his community and the society in general in his or her own way in lines that match the religious and social roles and parameters. I think we all agree on that, but the question appears here is since when we point view the church to be important part of the society in daily routine life and in the spiritual and moral platforms? do local churches always have had an important role in the progress and prosper of our nation? do local churches were always considered to be local churches? were the Christians of Palestine always be considered part of the Arab nationals and Arab communities lived in Palestine in the last centuries? these questions are crucial to understand the disparity of churches participation in social prosperity and culture during the centuries in Palestine.

But again an answer must be giving to the crucial question: what are the social responsibilities which church leaders in Palestine may be expected to assume? with another words: what constitutes good citizenship for a church leader or church members in Palestine? is there a relationship between good citizenship and church diaconal in the society? do church leader just walk with the current wave of events or can they change the course of actions on the ground? I mean, when the political decision is made and is centered on going to war, then what is Church position on war whether this war with the Israeli occupation or a civil war? when it is resistance by peaceful means then it preach peaceful means of resistance. And that explains the Church position on non-violence and peaceful settlements of disputes??

How is the relation between church and politics in Palestine? how is the relation between the Palestinian authority and the church leaders? what are the element to tent the relation and what are the element to make it bad relation? do they have a correlation? do they have a dialectic relationship? What is the role of the church in settle the divided and the fragmented society between Fatah and Hamas especially after 2007 political division? what is the role of the church in Gaza in social peace under siege and under poverty and miseries? Do churches in Israel, West Bank and Gaza deal with the same issue in the same way and the same teachings? Why the role of the church in Palestine is diminishing to play an important role in social peace and peace building in the Palestinian society the West Bank and in Gaza, or in 1948 territories?

### **Research problem:**

The role of the Churches in Palestine under such difficult circumstances in the Palestinian near history where the Palestinians have and still suffering from the Israeli occupation for more than half century, without having the right of self-defense or determined their way of life, I say the rote of the churches in Palestine is not so clear as it should be. It is a humble role comparing with its ability and its deep root in the history existing and experience.



The church's members are busy in the Palestinian struggle since the very first moment of it. But the church's scholars and leaders who explain the doctrine of the church have done not much effort to explore and express the Christian faith and scriptures to help in solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or the national social problems of Palestine. There are not enough written teachings, meetings, workshops, conferences or other type of tools due which the church can express its faith according to the Palestinian struggle.

The church's Printed books and publications are focusing only on the theological and behavior values of life ignoring the real life of the Palestinians who are in deep depressed under the occupation disadvantaged from their basic human needs. Until Pastor Mitry Rahim doctrine, and Pastor Naem Atiq liberation theology which is an effort in crystallization of the Palestinian Christian doctrine of peaceful resistance there were no much written on the issue.

These efforts are individual efforts and cannot be expressed as the churches efforts, but later on it has been adopted as how it is. For example, the orthodox church did not publish books or letters to explain to its member who are in majority Arab Palestinians its position of the occupation. Its position only its prayer for peace in the holy land. What needed is a position which would express the teaching of the church applying to the Palestinian struggle.

### **Research questions:**

In this thesis, the researcher will raise questions: central and sub question. The main central question is:

What is role of the Palestinians Churches in promoting social peace and enhancing community development in Palestine?

And the sub questions are:

- 1- what responsibilities to society may churches reasonably be expected to assume?
- 2- what type of intervention did the churches of Palestine to bring social peace during the period between 1987 until today?
- 3- What are the facts and elements that restricts and hinders the churches from doing its job perfectly?
- 6- Do Palestinians 'society allow to the churches to activate its mission in Palestine?
- 7- What are the churches stand and attitude from the Israeli occupation of Palestine, and from state of Israel?
- 8- were there any attitude and effort from the churches to resolve the Fatah and Hamas conflict?
- 9- Is there any role of the Church to maintain peace between Israelis and Palestinians?
- 10- what are the supposed responsibilities that churches must carry in Palestine for community development?
- 11- What types and methods of contributions did the Churches achieve development in Palestinian community?

12- Do churches have international ties and partnerships which aim to support its community's development program?

### **Research objectives:**

The research has important objectives to fulfill and these are the following:

First: To demonstrate the importance of social peace in Palestine for a bright future of the next generations.

Second: to demonstrate the paths have been taken from the Church leaders and members to express their implications in social work and social peace to present solution to social problems and to highlight the areas in which the Church had failed to deal with inside the society so that we give suggestion for future efforts to work on it.

Third: to demonstrate the Palestinian nationality and identity of the church in Palestinian and how that effect the life of Palestinians.

Fourth: the researcher aims to give solutions to obstacles that faces the church in Palestine to do its mission better in the future by applying its role in the Palestinian society and social peace according to its values and understanding of peace.

Fifth: the research aims to give a paradigm of church efforts that did change in the society and helped the Palestinians in their struggles to keep their lives and homeland, so these efforts to be taken as paradigm for the leaders of other religious and political groups to face the challenges of our time as a nation.

Sixth: To highlight the paradigm of the efforts have been made by the Churches of Palestine to restore and maintain the unity of the church in the last 30 years that could be an example for the political parties in Palestine to unite their work and efforts against their real enemy.

### **Importance and justifications:**

The reason led the researcher to choose this subject is my conviction that the churches in Palestine is not giving all their best in developing peace in the Palestinian society. according to its mission and values I believe that the church has very sensitive, important and irreplaceable inside the Palestinian society. I aim to discover the incapacity of the church to spread the words of love and understanding, the civilization of tolerance and openness, and forgiveness which are core values of its teachings.

The importance of the research is of the following reasons:

1- the researcher will study and analysis the role of the church- as a civil society's organization very big and inveterate, which works at all levels and for all classes of the society- an organization which is very known for its efforts in working in the field social peace.

2- the researcher has studded theology at Athens University and is active in the life of the local church in Palestine since 15 years and have gathered experience in the field of the role and mission of the church in the society. from this sense he intuited the importance of writing over this issue to explore the real role that the churches in Palestine have to play in accordance of social peace.

3- the researcher see that the duty of the church – leaders and members- is to play very important role in all aspects of Palestinians' life, starting from the deferent civil services which the church provides to all Palestinians despite their affiliations and religious or political identity and ending in establishing and developing social peace in Palestine.

Bellow I address the core axes which encourage me to choose this subject:

- 1- To highlight and address the role of the church in social peace in Palestine.
- 2- To highlight the most effective efforts that have been done by the church in Palestine to bring social peace and to address the most failures of the church in this field.
- 3- To show the role of some of the core leaders and personalities of the church that shined in the field of maintaining and bringing social peace.
- 4- to encourage the church to exercise its duty to serve the society as a religious organization seen as influential and leading body, without which the society is not complete.

### **Methodology:**

The researcher will follow the Qualitative, descriptive, historic and comparative Method by collecting information by interviewing key workers and leaders of the Church, and by using other tools such as telephone, email, and skype. Also by inducting the information from newspapers and websites and by the published magazines and books and the archives of the patriarchates and the other studies which already have been done in this field.

Visits to the Patriarchates and key leaders of the Church in Palestine and the Christian organizations which work in the society in Palestine will be done to investigate and clarify their role in social peace and their understanding of social peace.

### **Literature review:**

There are some writers and scholars who have already written about the Christian presence in Palestine and the diversity of churches and cultures inside the Church in Palestine, its challenges, mission and position inside the society. Indeed, also the relation between the churches and the society and the role it plays inside it.

College of saint Paul for philosophy and theology – Hrisa has published a book called “The history of the eastern church” edited by bishop Yatim and archimandrite Deek in 1957 and republished for the third time in 1991. In this book what is important for our research is to understand Christian structure in Palestine and the efforts and values of the ecumenical movement which established the world cancel of churches which affected a lot the relationship between the Palestinian churches and their relationship with middle eastern churches and their efforts for social peace in Palestine and the Palestinian struggle in general.<sup>1</sup>

The book is touching one of the important element of unity in the churches in Palestine which affected directly their collective efforts towered the Palestinian society.

Father Hanna Saeed Kaldani wrote a book called contemporary Christianity in Jordan and Palestine published in 1991. He explore the history of Christianity and the

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<sup>1</sup> - يتيم. م . و ديك ا. (1991). تاريخ الكنيسة الشرقية و اهم احداث الكنيسة الغربية. المكتبة البولسية.

Patriarchate of Jerusalem of the Orthodox and Latin, and Anglican in Palestine and their relation with each other during history which the book address it as not so good relation, and with the local people of Palestine under the deferent political circumstances.<sup>2</sup>

This book explains the reality of competition between deferent dominations which decrease its role in society and weakness the mission of the church.

In their book “the Christian in the holy Land” Brayer and Teller cover the inner faith conference which held in Cumberland log in England on May 1993 where clerics of churches from the Holy Land and others from England gathered to discuss the issue of Christians in the Holy Land by an invitation and organization of the “World of Islam Festival Trust”. In this book the reader can find information about general history of the church and the Christians in Palestine. The social and economic characteristics and the obstacles facing the Christians in Palestine. The Islamic-Christians relation in Palestine. The Churches in Palestine and their implementation and importance for the Palestinian case.<sup>3</sup>

“The nonviolence resistance in Islam and Christianity “is a book of Sabeel ecumenical liberation theology center in Jerusalem has been published in 2014 to cover the events of the studies and witnesses of Muslims and Christians about nonviolence resistance in Palestine, and give an effort against the propaganda against Muslims in the west. This book shows how Christians and Muslims live peacefully in Palestine and struggle together against the occupation, racism, fundamentalism and other obstacles which could be facing the good relation of Muslims and Christians in Palestine.<sup>4</sup>

This book explores the role of the Christians and Muslims in nonviolence resistance and it give a testament to the role of church in seeking a solution to the conflict by nonviolent means.

An effort of a Christian individual to present the Palestinian struggle to the tourists from all over the world was Rev. Alex Awad who “had a rich experience of speaking to groups both in the Holy Land as well as abroad” about the Israeli-Palestinian struggle expressing the hope that one day all people could live together in freedom and security.<sup>5</sup>

In the absence of awareness about the Palestinian struggle against the occupation and the absence of any role of the western churches in this matter here comes the book of Sezer steven : “the Zionist Christianity a road map to Armageddon” in which he exposes the Zionist media in the western world and the Zionist Christianity’s theology about Israel. This book has been distributed by the “alnoor orthodox co-op for publishing and distributing” and come as a tool for Arabs to understand the Zionist Christianity<sup>6</sup>

Pastor Naem Ateeq's book “struggle for justice – Palestinian liberation theology” published by Dar Alkalima : is an introduction for understanding the Palestinian liberation theology as Ateeq has developed. In his book Ateeq present any one who struggle for justice as he is standing in the side of God and experience the real freedom and liberation. This book has been edited during the first intifada to raise awareness in the western readers so they stand up with the Palestinians in their struggle against the occupation by pressure their governments in the west to stand with the Palestinian people. The book aims to justify the

<sup>2</sup> - كلداني. س. ح. (1993). المسيحية المعاصرة في الاردن وفلسطين. عمان

<sup>3</sup> - براير م. تيلر و. (1998). المسيحيون في الارض المقدسة. امانة التاجر للعالم الاسلامي.

<sup>4</sup> عدة كتاب (2014). المقاومة السلمية في الاسلام والمسيحية. مركز اللقاء ومركز السبيل. اللقاء

<sup>5</sup> - Awad Alex (2001). Through the Eyes of the victims: the story of the Arab-Israeli Conflict. Bethlehem Bible College- Bethlehem.

<sup>6</sup> - سايزر س. (2007). الصهيونية المسيحية، خارطة طريق الى هرمجدون؟ الفريق العربي للحوار الاسلامي – المسيحي. بيروت.

Palestinian struggle and he hopes for peaceful life for the inhabitant of the area and for reconciliation and stability.<sup>7</sup>

In his book “heaven intifada and earth intifada”, Jeris Khouri he talks about the theology of occupation and theology of Intifada and the role of the church in the intifada. Khouri asks in his book very difficult questions about the biblical right of the Jewish in the so called the promised land of Israel and if the Israelis are still the people of God according to the Christian theology. And he states the answer according to the theology of the Intifada saying that “Kafer in God and in Christ is every believer who theologically excuses the religious and national right of Israel to occupy Palestine”.<sup>8</sup>

Another book is “the living stones: The Arab Christians in the holy land” edited by Farah Fouad in Nazareth on 2003. In his book he expresses the importance of the Christians existence and the churches in Palestine as a contact channel between the Palestinians and the western world. in the other hand this book highlight the situation inside the orthodox church of Palestine and the deferent problems between its leaders and the Arab Christians believers about its identity and the role it should play inside the orthodox community and for the Palestinian struggle.<sup>9</sup>

“Transforming Violence” by Robert and Judy Zimmerman Herr on 1998 is a book which present a theology of peace basing on experiences of the groups of Church’s men who worked in peace making and conflict resolution in deferent countries such as Bosnia, Soudan, Somalia and ells where. This book applies the question of how Christians look towered peace? what is their role in stopping the bloodshed in many places in the world? and it provide a national and international strategies for peace making based on those experiences.<sup>10</sup>

The church in Palestine has not just one identity. It is a compensation of deferent theological and ecclesiastical frames which sometimes cooperate and other time do not. In the last few decades a real effort has been done to sharpen efforts of the deferent churches in order to cooperate and express one voice of Christianity about some sensitive and important topics for the Palestinian people such as the Israeli Palestinian conflict and the injustice Israeli occupation. Also to play more role in social peace as they are part of the body of Palestinian hood.

The Church in Palestine plays very important role in social peace. Despite all the deferent obstacles and circumstances that faced and still faces the church whether from the racist Israeli occupation or from the fundamental Islamic groups or individuals; or because of its composition and religious identity inside a Palestinian society with a majority of Arab Muslims; the church, I say, plays its role as a religious organization and as a groups of people who believe in justice and righteous.

So the churches of Palestine despite its division to several communities and its disagreement for many topics, they achieved in the last decades to unite in expressing its mission and role in the right way without hesitation because of the political vicissitudes in the occupied Palestine.

This role has many shapes. Churches have exercised their educational mission by the religious education at its church’s platforms or its church community centers or by building

<sup>7</sup> عتيق ن. (2002). الصراع من اجل العدالة "لاهوت التحرر الفلسطيني". دار الكلمة. بيت لحم.

<sup>8</sup> خوري س. ج. (1990). انتفاضة السماء وانتفاضة الارض، مطبعة واوفاست الحكيم – الناصرة.

<sup>9</sup> فرح ف. (2003). الحجارة الحية: المسيحيون العرب في الديار المقدسة. الناصرة.

<sup>10</sup> - هر ر. و هر ج. ز. (1998). التحول عن العنف: رؤية مسيحية لصناعة السلام ونبذ العنف. دار الثقافة. القاهرة

schools or pressing and issuance books or magazines for religious education reasons. Through which the churches have stop Christians immigration by giving hope to the hopeless and providing work programs for youth and women.

Another shape of Church effort is the health sector practicing its mission in comforting the weeks and sick the churches have built many hospitals and clinics, and by helping Palestinians students to get scholarships to study, specially medicine and nursing.

The most important role played by the churches and its members is its present inside the Palestinian society since it struggles against the Israeli occupation from the first intifada to the second intifada until today. Where the priest and bishops of those churches had effective contact at all levels with groups and leaders of the Palestinian society in order to unite their efforts in their national struggle and the non-violence resistance and movement, especially the boycott of the Israeli products.

The church of Palestine has born many men and women who gave from their education and experience and capabilities to send a message from the prisoner Palestinian people, and they drew the map of the Palestinian struggle and its vision of a free Palestine from the occupation.

The Church of Palestine have reflected its mission inside the Palestinian society though out its members who cooperate with their compatriots in all aspects of life applying love, brotherhood and tolerance with everyone in this land.

## **Chapter two**

### **Historical Background on the Christian existence in Palestine**

## Introduction:

Trying to analyze the course of human history in a land that has been occupied, it always tends to revolve around the land, the people, and the memory. People live on land through spiritual memory; an archive of their achievements, failures, ambitions and obstacles. Without these components, it is not possible to realize the role the church played in contributing in promoting social peace and community development. That is to say that the approach and the capabilities are within accumulated historical influences in context under study.

The rise of the Christian presence in Palestine started from the beginning of the first century AD with a Jewish group that believed in Christ as their Lord and Savior. Those Jewish groups were followed by other ethnic groups that used to live in Palestine and the Mediterranean basin, especially the Greeks and the Romans. Thus,<sup>11</sup> it was characterized by its Jewish and Greek character from the beginning. The Greek language was used as the official language for the religious rites at the Church of Jerusalem as it was the language of the state, the culture, and the science. In addition to that, it was widespread among nations, many of whom visited the Holy places and practiced the religious rituals together in one language during the first Christians centuries. The Greek language gathered them with the people of Palestine at that time, along with Assyrians/Syrians and Arab Christians speaking western Syrian dialects.<sup>12</sup>

After the Church of Jerusalem entry under the Islamic rule in 638 AD, most Christians of Palestine became Arabs. "The Arabic language became a factor of unity between the Christian groups with ideological differences". The Arabic language represented the role played by the Greek language in the ancient Christian world and the monolithic role played by Latin in the West Christian in the Middle Ages<sup>13</sup>. Relations between the country's new masters and the local Christians have been established through covenants of peace<sup>14</sup> and ordinances. Umar's Assurance or al-'Uhd al-'Umariyya was the agreement to hand over Jerusalem to Umar ibn Khattab without a fight by Patriarch Sophronius of Jerusalem. This established a roadmap for relations between the Muslims, the new masters of the country and the Christian people living in Palestine<sup>15</sup>. Christians later lived as a religious minority within the new Muslim society<sup>16</sup>; at times, they were patronized and at other times, they were oppressed<sup>17</sup>. At the beginning of the eleventh century,

<sup>11</sup> حنا سعيد كلداني، المسيحية المعاصرة في الأردن وفلسطين. مطبعة الصفدي. عمان. 1993. ص 1

<sup>12</sup> المصدر السابق. ص 6-7

<sup>13</sup> Khalil " La tradition arabe et la Chretiente de Terre Sainte". In Tantar Papers on Christianity in the Holy Land. Cited from Hanna Said Kaldani Ibid p. 7

وراجع أيضاً انطونيوس عجيبة تاريخ الكنيسة 5 ق م – 2005م (2017) ص 41

<sup>14</sup> ان عقود الصلح التي ابرمها القادة المسلمون لسكان المدن التي فتحت صلحا هي ملهمة من اية التوبة 29 وعقد الصلح الذي ابرمه النبي محمد (صلعم) في العام 631م مع أهالي نجران. وفي معظم عقود الصلح نفس الشروط كان يدفع المسيحيون الجزية ويقدموا الخدمات المتنوعة للجيش المسلم وان تفرض بعض القيود على ممارسة الطقوس الدينية فيكفل بهذا القائد العربي لأهل المدينة التي تعقد صلحا حماية أنفسهم وأهلهم وذرياتهم وأموالهم. راجع انطونيوس عجيبة. تاريخ الكنيسة 5 ق م – 2005م (2017) الجزء الأول ص 498

<sup>15</sup> انطونيوس عجيبة، تاريخ الكنيسة 5 ق م – 2005م (2017) الجزء الأول ص 499

<sup>16</sup> Interestingly, there has been a transformation of the Christian Palestinian people from Christianity as a majority to a religious minority. What are the factors that led to the decline in the percentage of Christians in that period of time since Al Uhd al-'Umariyya granted Christians the safety to stay in their cities full religious freedom?

<sup>17</sup> انظر مثلاً العصر الفاطمي. حيث جرى هدم لبعض الكنائس وتضييق على المسيحيين واجبارهم احياناً على ارتداء سمات مميزة الامر الذي يرتقي الى الإبادة الجماعية. انظر أيضاً، احمد امين "فجر الإسلام" الطبعة العاشرة 1969م ص 92



Christians, their churches, liturgies and patriarchs became of Arabic nature<sup>18</sup>. It was 'a weak fatigued minority's Church'<sup>19</sup>, due to the Seljuk harassments and oppression of Christians<sup>20</sup> and Western Pilgrims as well as Seljuk continuous attacks on the Roman State.

The Western Church in Europe organized the Crusades, which succeeded in the establishment of the Military Monasticisms '*Militaris ordinis*'; it aimed to defend the property of the Franks in the East. The prelates and clergymen were knights who were active and cooperated over the years with many of the local laymen<sup>21</sup>. In addition to that, the Mamluks and the Ottomans endeavored their efforts to "Isolate Christians from the Western world"<sup>22</sup> in order to extort them from that religious expansion.

There have been differences growing between the Christian denominations and sects over the Christian religious attraction sites, especially in Jerusalem. These differences started at the Kingdom of Jerusalem (Crusaders) period and it continued during the Mamluk and Ottoman periods until the Status Quo firman to preserve of the current situation<sup>23</sup> issued on February 8, 1852 by the Ottoman Sultan.

The factors that contributed to the absence of the local church from both the public and political arenas, as it was preoccupied with internal problems and Christian sectarianism. In addition to that, the emergence of the Western Roman missionaries, which emerged along with the Crusader invasion and Protestantism that grew during the British Mandate period. These weakened the Church, undermined its efforts and limited its role to ecclesiastical and internal affairs to defend its existence and its ecclesiastical rights over the Orthodox parishes and sites.<sup>24</sup>

Habib (1986) argues that Christians try to "Find a way to live in the Middle East society, not on the basis of tolerance or protection by the Muslim majority, but on the basis of righteousness and equality among all nations. The Christian communities are deeply concerned about the continuity of their presence in the region." This feeling stems from historical accumulations and events that have been a part of their character. This fragmentation has been fought during building the Palestinian national identity, i.e. since the emergence of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the start of the organized Palestinian liberation project. The churches by then moved to transmit the spirit of patriotism and unity among the Palestinian people.

### Numbers of Christians in Palestine from 1917 - 2017:

The Palestinian Christians are distributed among 15 denominations classified as follows:

<sup>18</sup> نقصد بالكنيسة هنا بالأخص الكنيسة الارثوذكسية.

<sup>19</sup> حنا سعيد كلداني الصدر السابق ص 10

<sup>20</sup> انطونيوس عجينة، تاريخ الكنيسة 35 ق م – 2005م (2017)، الجزء الثاني ص 117-118

<sup>21</sup> ميشيل يتيم واغناطيوس ديك. ص 223

<sup>22</sup> ميشيل يتيم واغناطيوس ديك: تاريخ الكنيسة الشرقية. منشورات المكتبة البولسية. حريصا 1991 ص 288

<sup>23</sup> The status quo was used in churches, especially the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which defined the ownership of the holy places, especially the spaces and areas within these churches, the times specified to use these and how to use, verify and authenticate them even when it is about the hymns or simple readings.

<sup>24</sup> حبيب جبريل، 1986، كنائس الشرق الأوسط – شهادة مستمرة، منشورات مجلس كنائس الشرق الأوسط 4-6 مقتبس من كتاب المسيحيون في الأرض المقدسة لمايكل براير و ولیم تیلر (1998) ص 326

Orthodox Chalcedonian churches<sup>25</sup> (Greek Orthodox), Orthodox Non-Chalcedonian Churches (Armenian, Coptic, Syriac, and Ethiopian churches), Catholics<sup>26</sup> (Latin Catholics, Melkite Greek Catholic, Maronite, Armenians, Syriac, and Chaldean churches) and Protestants<sup>27</sup> (Anglican and Lutheran churches). These churches serve in the same Geographical region (Israel, Palestine and Jordan). The number of the Christian population is about 400,000; half of them are in Jordan and the other half in Israel<sup>28</sup>. There is also a large Russian Christian community in Israel with an estimated population of 400,000<sup>29</sup>, excluding the number of Christians who aren't classified as Arabs, knowing that they are also considered as part of the parish as the Church do not distinguish between Arabs and non-Arabs.

Estimates of the number of Palestinian Christians (Arabs) whether in the (Historical Palestine) 1948 occupied Palestinian territories or (Palestinian territories) the West Bank and Gaza, or all over the world vary. According to an article by Bernard Sabella, a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council as a representative of Jerusalem Governorate and Professor of Sociology at Bethlehem University<sup>30</sup>, the number of Palestinian Christians have reached to 500,000, but more than two-thirds live outside the country, while 50,000 Christian have remained in the occupied territories since 1967. Today, there are 47,000 disturbed in the West Bank and 3,000 in the Gaza Strip.

Churches in the homeland are divided into three categories from a historical point of view; the first is the ancient churches such as the Greek Orthodox churches and the Eastern Orthodox churches such as the Syriac, the Armenian, and the Maronite churches. The second is the medieval age's churches as the Latin Catholic Church and the Melkite Greek Catholic Church. The third is the contemporary world 'modern' churches that, which are the Protestant churches.

The Christian demography in Palestine has witnessed a continual decline since the last ten years of the nineteenth century. In 1894, there were 42,871 Christians or 13.3% of the total population of Palestine, which was estimated at 322,338 people. At that time, there were no more than 40,000 Jews or 9.3% of the population, while the Muslims were the vast majority of the population and with a percentage of 77.4%.

<sup>25</sup> انعقد مجمع خلقيدونية سنة 451م تعتبره الكنيسة الرومانية (الكاثوليكية) و البيزنطية انه المجمع المسكوني الرابع الذي يؤكد عقيدة التجسد الإلهي لكلمة الله بطبيعتين الهية و إنسانية الامر الذي يعبر عنه رافضي المجمع بمصطلح "طبيعة واحدة للإله المتجسد" فنجم عن هذا المجمع انشقاق أدى إلى ابتعاد الكنائس الشرقية (: القبطية والأرمنية والسريانية) عن الشراكة مع الكنيستين الرومانية والبيزنطية. للمزيد عن المجمع مراجعة كتاب "مجمع خلقيدونية- إعادة فحص للاب ف. سي. صمونيل. على الرابط

التالي: [file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/mgm3 5lkidonia 23adt f7s \[christianlib.com\]%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/mgm3%20ad7%20f7s%20christianlib.com%20(1).pdf)

<sup>26</sup> يصف مصطلح الكاثوليكية جميع الكنائس المسيحية التي تقر بسيادة البابا والتي تجمعها شراكة مع الكرسي الرسولي. تعتبر الكاثوليكية أكبر طوائف الدين المسيحية. يقع مركزها الروحي في مدينة الفاتيكان، مقر بابا الكاثوليك، يتواجد أتباعها في كثير من دول العالم وخاصة في جنوب أوروبا وأمريكا اللاتينية.

<sup>27</sup> البروتستانتية هي أحد مذاهب وأشكال الإيمان في الدين المسيحي. تعود أصول المذهب إلى الحركة الإصلاحية التي قامت في القرن السادس عشر بجهود مارتن لوتر وهدفها إصلاح الكنيسة الكاثوليكية في أوروبا الغربية. وهي اليوم واحدة من الانقسامات الرئيسية في العالم المسيحي جنباً إلى جنب الكنيسة الكاثوليكية والأرثوذكسية الشرقية. وتعتبر الكنيسة الأنغليكانية في بعض الأحيان كنيسة مستقلة من البروتستانتية. ويتمسك البروتستانت بالكتاب المقدس بعهديه القديم والجديد ويرفضون التقاليد المقدسة التي تؤمن بقديستها الكنائس الكاثوليكية والأرثوذكسية في العالم.

<sup>28</sup> من كلمة غبطة البطريرك ميشيل صباح بطريرك اللاتين في القدس خلال مؤتمر السبيل الدولي 2006. نعيم عتيق وسيدر دعبس. الحضور المسيحي في الأراضي المقدسة. 2008 ص 21

<sup>29</sup> وفقاً للتقديرات الإسرائيلية يبلغ عدد الروس غير اليهود في إسرائيل بين أربع مائة وخمسة آلاف نسمة وهم اما مسيحيين او من أصول مسيحية. يسعى بعض القساوسة والكهنة تبشيرهم ويسعى كذلك جماعات يهودية الى تهويدهم. كلمة غبطة البطريرك ميشيل صباح. نعيم عتيق وسيدر المرجع السابق ص 21

<sup>30</sup> برنارد سايبلا. 2011 الوجود المسيحي في فلسطين. يمكن قراءة المزيد على الرابط التالي:

<http://palestine.assafir.com/Article.aspx?ArticleID=2020>

In 1948, before the first Arab-Israeli war and the establishment of Israel on Palestinian land, there were 145,000 Christians, which is about 7.6% of the total population, 1908724 in numbers. However, 34,000 Christians remained in what is known as Israel out of 154900 Palestinians (in the 1948 Occupied Palestinian Territories)<sup>31</sup>, while 60 thousand, about 41.3% of Palestinian Christians, turned into refugees. In contrast, the number of Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip before the 1948 war amounted to 51063, meaning that their number was slightly higher than the number of Christians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip today.

As of 1 January 2018, Palestinians population is estimated to be around 13 million. little than half of them (6 million and 590 thousand which is %50.6) live inside Palestine and the rest outside it.<sup>32</sup>

As of 31 December 2017, Israel's population is estimated to be around 8.8 million.<sup>33</sup> The Jew population is about 6.5 million (74.6% of the total population); 1.8 million Arabs (20.9%) and 396,000 others (4.5%)<sup>34</sup>. In 2017, Israel's population growth was about 1.9%, an increase of 82% due to natural growth and 18% due to migration.

About 180,000 children were born in Israel in 2017, and about 27,000 newcomers arrived to Israel. The main countries from which new arrivals came this year were Russia (27.1%), Ukraine (25.5%), France (13%) and the United States (9.8%).

There was an increase of 86% in the Jewish sector due to natural growth, whereas the Arab society witnessed an increase of 94%.

About 170,000 Christians live in Israel. Their percentage in 2016 reached 2% of the total population of the state. 78.6% of these Christians are Arabs and the rest are Jewish Christians who came to Israel with their Jewish relatives from the former Soviet Union, including their offspring born in Israel. Most of the Jewish Christians entered the country during the 1990's immigration wave.

In general, Arab Christians in Israel constitute 7.4% of the total Arab population in Israel. Most Arab Christians live in the north of the country, 70.7% in the north, 13.2% in Haifa and 9.6% in Jerusalem. Nazareth is the city with the largest number of Christians, embracing about 22,000. About 15.5 thousand live in Haifa, 12.5 thousand in Jerusalem and about 10,000 in Shefa 'Amr. This information is correct until 2016<sup>35</sup>.

The situation got worse after what happened in Al Nakba 'Palestinian Catastrophe/exodus' in 1948, were Palestinians lost nearly 77% of their homeland and more than 7 million were displaced, of whom 47,000 were Palestinian Christians. According to the Palestinian historian Sami Hadawi, more than half of Jerusalem's Christians were displaced from their homes in West Jerusalem. It is estimated that 37% of Christians in Jerusalem compared to 17% of Muslims became refugees. This high proportion of

<sup>31</sup> الجهاز المركزي للإحصاء الفلسطيني. على الرابط :

<http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/Rainbow/Documents/Arb%20time%20series%20p.htm>

<sup>32</sup> التقرير السنوي لمركز الزيتونة. نشر بتاريخ 2018/1/8 متوفر على الموقع : <https://www.alzaytouna.net/2018/01/08> تمت

زيارة الموقع بتاريخ 2018/2/2

<sup>33</sup> دائرة الإحصاء المركزية الإسرائيلية. راجع :

<http://www.cbs.gov.il/ts/ID25448faab10f89/>

<sup>34</sup> وتم تصنيف 396 ألفاً كـ "آخرين"، يشكلون 4.5% من عدد السكان، وهم المسيحيون من غير العرب، وطوائف أخرى، وآخرون غير مصنفين.

<sup>35</sup> لمزيد من [http://www.cbs.gov.il/reader/shnaton/templ\\_shnaton\\_e.html?num\\_tab=st02\\_01&CYear=2017](http://www.cbs.gov.il/reader/shnaton/templ_shnaton_e.html?num_tab=st02_01&CYear=2017)

المعلومات مراجعة موقع دائرة الإحصاء المركزية الاسرائيلية

Christians is due to the fact that Western neighborhoods inhabited by a majority of Christians were occupied by Israel in the war between 1948 and 1949. In addition to that, 34% of the land occupied by Israel in West Jerusalem was owned by Christian churches, which received no compensation.<sup>36</sup>

In the period of dispersion and loss, the Christians felt that it was time for a collective national Christian movement. Christian institutions were engaged in the rescue and aid of the refugees and the relief of the victims. The Pontifical Mission for Palestine was erected on 18 June 1949. The Lutheran World Federation (WLU) has informed Augusta Victoria Hospital to assist and provide relief for the victims and launched a large-scale relief campaign. The World Council of Churches established a special program to assist refugees. Certainly, this role played by these institutions at that time is considered aid and assistance from ecclesiastical (non-Palestinian) institutions supported by the internationals. This correlation between the institutions and their international relations with the homeland has contributed to strengthening the role played by the Church in community development in Palestine and contributed to the building of new strong international relations between the Palestinians and other nations around the world.

### Demographic distribution of Christians

Most of the Christians in the West Bank dwell in the cities of Bethlehem (Beit Sahour and Beit Jala), Jerusalem and Ramallah, in addition to Birzeit and Taybeh. Most of the Palestinian cities are inhabited by Christians, as in Jericho, Nablus, Tulkarem (one household), Sebastia (one household), Jenin, Tubas. Qalqiliya, Salfit, Hebron and Beer Sheva are not inhabited by Christians for a long time. This is noteworthy subject that calls to track the reasons behind Christians not inhabiting these big cities. Christians live in villages such as Al Zababdeh, Burqin, Jalameh and Kafr Qud in Jenin governorate, Aboud, Ein 'Arik and Jifna in Ramallah and Al-Bireh governorate and in Rafidia, Nablus.

In the Gaza Strip, the number of Christians is estimated at only 1250<sup>37</sup>. However, in the Palestinian towns of 1948, Christians are distributed in the Upper Galilee, the Central Galilee and the north of the Mediterranean coast<sup>38</sup>.

If two-thirds of Palestinian Christians today live in Diaspora, the greatest danger to Palestinian migration lies in the city of Jerusalem. There are 11,000 Christians according to the highest estimates; which means 4.4% of the total Palestinian population, estimated at 250,000 in Arab Jerusalem. Christians in the Holy City follow more than 10 churches. According to Israeli academic sources, the number of Christians in Jerusalem reached 29350 in 1944, which means that the number of Christians in Jerusalem today is 37.5% of that in 1944, about seven decades ago. This means that the number of Christians in Jerusalem should have reached 60,000 in 1979, according to a simple statistical equation based on Christian population growth of 2%, which should have risen to 120 thousand in 2014, according to the same statistical equation. However, the existing reality in Jerusalem indicates that the Christians in Jerusalem have gradually disappeared due to the continued Israeli occupation and the social, economic and political policies of the Israeli government,

<sup>36</sup> برنارد سايبلا. 2011 الوجود المسيحي في فلسطين. يمكن قراءة المزيد على الرابط التالي:

<http://palestine.assafir.com/Article.aspx?ArticleID=2020>

<sup>37</sup> مؤتمر الحضور المسيحي في فلسطين والشتات: إحصائيات، تحديات، آفاق. دار الندوة الدولية بيت لحم: الدكتور حنا عيسى، أمين عام الهيئة

الإسلامية المسيحية لنصرة القدس والمقدسات، لقراءة المزيد <http://www.abouna.org/node/1437>

<sup>38</sup> يتم التحدث عن هذا الموضوع في الفصل الرابع بالتفصيل

its various ministries and the Israeli Jerusalem municipality against the Arab population of Jerusalem<sup>39</sup>.

### **The Transition from the Ottoman Rule to the British Rule - Zionism and the Formation of the National Identity**

After World War I, the Palestinians faced a two-way dilemma, which brought them into an internal struggle to determine their national identity. The question revolved around identity; are they classified by their sectarian affiliation or are they Arabs like the rest of the Muslim-majority who live in the same region? The Ottomans loss of the war and the consequent commitments and geographical withdrawals, including the Ottoman withdrawal from Palestine, caused this dilemma. This Ottoman rule was replaced by the British administrative and economic Mandate over historic Palestine and East Jordan.

As soon as the Ottoman rule ended and the British Mandate took over Palestine according to the Sykes-Picot agreement<sup>40</sup>, international and local initiatives began to reach a final solution to the Palestinian issue, which by then was threatened by Western Zionism. Religious minorities were vital in that transitional period to ensure the religious rights of all communities living in Palestine. The Arab Christians considered that any British guarantees to them as a minority sect in Palestine could threaten their presence by the Arab-Muslim majority, which would look at them with suspicion and doubt<sup>41</sup>. This was evident in the Balfour Declaration of 2/11/1917 that stated that Britain is willing to establish a state for the Jews on the land of Palestine, providing guarantees for religious minorities, especially Christianity in Palestine<sup>42</sup>.

The change that took place in the political system from an Ottoman Islamic regime to a British capitalist system aiming at "establishing a homeland for the Jews in Palestine" contributed to the revival of religious minorities, especially Christianity, on the one hand and changed, over time, the dominant lifestyle. The men and women dressing style change is an example. Another example is the renovation and rebirth of culture, arts, printed newspapers as well as the establishment of scout groups, clubs and the rise of education, which was particularly contributed by the Western Protestants and Anglicans' missionaries as well as Catholic missionaries that preceded them.

To understand this change we have to take a step back to realize the nature of the relationship that was imposed between the Millahs' Liturgies<sup>43</sup> and the ruling Sultan during the time of the Ottomans, especially in the last hundred years. The two parties shared a mutual interest relation, namely the interests of the weak "Millahs" and the strong protector "The Sultan" or the Ottoman rule. The Ottomans relied on Islamic law 'Sharia' to control the

<sup>39</sup>الأمم المتحدة، مكتب تنسيق الشؤون الإنسانية. الأراضي الفلسطينية المحتلة: مخاوف إنسانية أساسية. المستندات حتى كانون الثاني/ديسمبر 2012. لقراءة التقرير على الرابط :

[https://www.ochaopt.org/sites/default/files/ocha\\_opt\\_Jerusalem\\_FactSheet\\_December\\_2012\\_Arabic.pdf](https://www.ochaopt.org/sites/default/files/ocha_opt_Jerusalem_FactSheet_December_2012_Arabic.pdf)

<sup>40</sup>الوثائق الرئيسية في القضية الفلسطينية، المجموعة الأولى 1915-1946م، جامعة الدول العربية، القاهرة، الوثيقة رقم 23، ص 84-86.

<sup>41</sup>مذكورة من عيسى البندك، باسم المسيحيين العرب الفلسطينيين، إلى السلطات البريطانية ورؤساء الوفود العربية إلى مؤتمر المائدة المستديرة 1939/1/20. يمكن قراءة المذكرة على رابط مركز الدراسات الفلسطينية. [http://www.palestine-studies.org/ar\\_index.aspx](http://www.palestine-studies.org/ar_index.aspx)

<sup>42</sup>راجع نص وعد بالفور على الرابط التالي: <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/text-of-the-balfour-declaration>:  
<sup>43</sup>نظام الملل العثماني: الملة جماعة تتألف من المواطنين المحليين لا من الأجانب خاضعة للباب العالي، لها ديانة محددة، ولا تنتمي إلى أصل عرقي واحد، وتكون وحدة سياسية اجتماعية مستقلة. راجع حنا سعيد كلداني المصدر نفسه ص 10

relationship between the Sultan and the denomination in what is known as Ahl Al Dimma, so that Christians are second class citizens of the Islamic state protected by Muslims as long as they pay the Jizya Tax<sup>44</sup>. As the Lebanese Christian President Bashir Gemayel said, "A Christian...is not a full citizen and cannot exercise political rights in any of the countries which were once conquered by Islam"<sup>45</sup>.

There were a relationship by fermans and special rules to govern Millahs 'denominations'; these fermans and rules are to regulate the relation between the ruler and the ruled as well as the Christian communities with each other<sup>46</sup>. The Church isolation from its social and political reality negatively affected its ability to influence the people and its determination to stand up against injustice. Moreover, believers were denied a national affiliation and were treated by the ruling authorities as a sect with rights not equal to Muslims. There was a religious discrimination that connected the loyalty to a nation with religion, which caused the Christians to be isolated as they are non-Muslims. This governance approach led to the isolation of the church from the state affairs; knowing that the church and the state were complementary to each other in decision-making and legislation during Roman-Byzantine rule.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the old empire failed to address the subject of sects by making a shift from a parish-based system to equal-citizens-in-rights-and-duties system. The development of the Capitulations of the Ottoman Empire, which later allowed the intervention of European states to protect the religious minorities, was further complicated by France's protection of Catholics, Russia's protection of Orthodox and England's protection of Protestants<sup>47</sup>. The nationalist movements began to emerge, some with the support of Russia, which contributed to the Arabization of the Greek Orthodox Church from the "Greek ecclesiastical rule"<sup>48</sup>, which began to take shape after the Ottoman occupation of Palestine.

The Orthodox patriarch of Constantinople represented the orthodox denomination in the Ottoman Sultanate. The Constantinople Patriarchate, through which the Greek clergy, controlled all Patriarchates that were under the Constantinople Patriarchate jurisdiction. Thus,<sup>49</sup> Grecizing the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. The Greek Patriarchs and Bishops replaced the Arabs<sup>50</sup> through the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulcher<sup>51</sup>, which was renewed in that period. It is also possible to say that the matters in the Patriarchate returned to their previous status, the Arab-Islamic conquest of Palestine where Greek was the dominant language for Christians in Palestine uniting them with the rest of the Greek Orthodox Christians in the

<sup>44</sup>Bat Ye'or, *Islam and Dhimmitude: Where Civilizations Collide* (Teaneck, NJ: Fairleigh Dickenson University Press, 2002), p. 41

<sup>45</sup>Bashir Gemayel, *Liberte et Securite* (Beirut, 1983), pp. 37-38, cited in Bat Ye'or, p. 248.

<sup>46</sup>النظام الملي أو (نظام الملل) تقليد عرفي نشأ بين الطوائف غير الإسلامية في الأقاليم التي كانت تحكمها الدولة العثمانية وبين السلطات الحكومية، وبمقتضى هذا العرف أصبح لكل طائفة دينية أو مليّة حق استعمال لغتها الخاصة واتباع طقوس مذهبها الديني، ورعاية مؤسساتها الدينية والتعليمية مع حق التقاضي أمام محاكم خاصة بها وجباية الضرائب المقررة على أفراد الطائفة وتوريدها للخزانة العامة.

<sup>47</sup>حنا سعيد كلداني. المصدر نفسه ص 11-10

<sup>48</sup>المصدر نفسه ص 12

<sup>49</sup>يوننة Hellenization: اصطلاح تاريخي يعني في تاريخ فلسطين تثبيت دعائم الحكم اليوناني الكنسي وإضفاء الصبغة اليونانية على الثقافة والليتورجيا وفعاليات الكنيسة الأرثوذكسية العربية. راجع حنا سعيد كلداني المرجع السابق ص 17

<sup>50</sup>انظر: خوري، شحادة "خلاصة تاريخ كنيسة اورشليم الارثوذكسية". القدس 1925 مطبعة بيت المقدس ص، 117 وايضاً حنا سعيد كلداني المرجع السابق ص 17-23

<sup>51</sup>أخوية القبر المقدس هي جماعة الرهبان القديمة التي كانت موجودة في الأماكن المقدسة منذ تأسيسها، وتدعى جماعة رهبان (spoudaei) ومهمتها الأساسية الاشراف على الأماكن المقدسة وارشاد الحجاج. وهم مؤسسو أخوية القبر المقدس المعروفة الى اليوم والتي تشكل المجمع المقدس (السينودوس) في بطريركية الروم الأرثوذكس والتي يُنتخب البطريرك. راجع moschopoulso: La Terre Sainte. P, 329

Byzantine Empire<sup>52</sup>. However, the separation between the Greek language and the people, which has been Arabic in its entirety for hundreds of years, has created this imbalance in the communication infrastructure between the spiritual presidency and the Palestinian Orthodox people; the language. In addition to the Greek tendency to control the episcopate in the Patriarchate<sup>53</sup>.

The Arab parish and its priesthood were marginalized and religious education was diminished. In this period, there were many quarrels and disagreements between the Greek Orthodox and the Catholic Latin<sup>54</sup> regarding the holy attractions and proselytizing among the Orthodox to convert them to Catholic Latins and Protestants; this weakened the Church and marginalized the Orthodox parish, which is the numerical majority among the Christian minorities in Palestine<sup>55</sup>. Add to this the danger confronted by Eastern Christianity, represented by the Orthodox Church, by the innovations and heresies as Jehovah's Witnesses and Zionist innovators who are considered to be the strongest supporters of the State of Israel and its occupation of Palestine<sup>56</sup>.

### **Arabism as a way out of the Dilemma:**

The relationship between the Ottoman Empire and the Christians began to crystallize after the conquest of Constantine in 1453, the capital of the Byzantine Christian Empire. The Orthodox denomination was the largest non-Islamic religion in the Ottoman Empire. Its followers were divided into several churches, most notably the Greek Orthodox, Armenian, Coptic, Bulgarian, Serbian and Syriac churches. These Churches followed *Corpus Juris Civilis* in matters of personal status. The Orthodox Christian Ottomans were given a number of privileges in politics and trade, sometimes this was attributed to the Orthodox allegiance to the Ottoman Empire<sup>57</sup>.

The Ottomans organized the relationship between the state and the Christians of great numbers in their state. Mehmed II, commonly known as Mehmed the Conqueror, introduced the system of Liturgy 'Millah' to guarantee to the Christian citizens their religious rights within the empire. This system applies to all Christians in the Ottoman Empire. Palestine joined this system after the Ottoman occupation of Palestine in 1516. The system of Liturgy follows the Quranic education in the organization of the relationship between Muslim and Ahl Al Dhimma countries controlled by Muslims<sup>58</sup>. Orthodox Christians (Roman, Armenians, Copts, Serbs, Russians, and Bulgarians), who were considered Christians majority, had the freedom of worship and religious rights, represented by the Orthodox Patriarch before the Ottoman Sultan<sup>59</sup>.

<sup>52</sup> Ostrogorsky George . History of the Byzantine State. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. 1969, pp. 105–107.

<sup>53</sup> خوري: المرجع السابق ص 18-19

<sup>54</sup> برترام، أنطون: تقرير اللجنة. تعريب وديع البستاني. القدس. (1925-1926). ص 35

<sup>55</sup> حنا سعيد كلداني. المرجع نفسه ص 25

<sup>56</sup> عيسى الياس مصلح "التنديد ببدعة شهود يهوه". بيت ساحور. حزيران 1991

<sup>57</sup> "The Divinely-Protected, Well-Flourishing Domain: The Establishment of the Ottoman System in the Balkan Peninsula", Sean Krummerich, Loyola University New Orleans, The Student Historical Journal, volume 30 (1998–

<sup>58</sup> نوح فيلدمان، سقوط الدولة الإسلامية ونهوضها، ترجمة طاهر بوساحية، الشبكة العربية للأبحاث والنشر بيروت لبنان، ط 1، 2014، ص 152.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Udo Steinbach, "Christen im Nahen Osten," Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, 2008, № 26, 3-7, in: <http://bpb.de/publikationen/4WX84M>



The relationship between the state and the Christians was characterized by neutrality; the Christians were subjected to the Ottoman Empire and they did not resist it, but were loyal<sup>60</sup>. However, this system disparaged the civil and legal rights of Christians and thus diminished the chances of their integration as citizens with equal rights and duties.

The Ottoman rule collapsed and voices calling of Arab nationalism as an alternative to submission and subordination to the colonial states and their hegemony has risen. In addition, the Arabs desire to liberate their society from the futile past to start a Renaissance society similar to the Western one, "which adopted the idea of nationalism in its beginnings to lay the ground for the idea of Patriotism and citizenship<sup>61</sup>" was witnessed.

Therefore, Prominent Palestinian and Middle Eastern Christian figures emerged to answer the questions, who are we? What is our identity? and where are we going? It is the Oriental 'Eastern' Christians who are able to understand and bridge the Western and Eastern cultures<sup>62</sup>.

In this period, Palestinian male and female youth - particularly the inhabitants of coastal cities and large cities such as Haifa, Acre, Nazareth and Jerusalem - engaged in a huge scientific and cultural battle to achieve a cultural leap in time, modernity and science that the West in general and the Zionist movement in particular possessed. Therefore, Sectarianism has become a religious phenomenon, not a political one<sup>63</sup>. citizens of the empire sought and aimed to reverse the Ottoman policy, which rejects the ideas of democratic rule, liberalism and the equality of citizens in rights and duties, as to crystallize a Palestinian national state that fulfills these human aspirations and outlines the features of the Palestinian people aspiring independence.

The people living under the Ottoman occupation wanted to keep up with European education and modernity at all costs. They were influenced by democratic systems of governance, liberalism, science, rationalism and secularism in Europe, but they tried to possess these without clashing with the Ottoman state - or its remnants, which adopted the idea of "Islam is a religion and a state"<sup>64</sup>.

In this apparent contradiction between the rule of the Islamic religion of the state and the "secular" Arabists, the concepts of democracy were stabilized, thus undermining the rule of the Sultan. Secularism that abolishes the rule of religion and modernity that establish rationalism against sacred ideas of totalitarianism have entrenched.

Many Christian scholars found themselves involved in this intellectual struggle to find solutions that gather and reunite the Arab nations in a non-religious and non-reactionary framework. They resorted to secularism and rationalism in the name of Arabism rejecting

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"[The Divinely-Protected, Well-Flourishing Domain: The Establishment of the Ottoman System in the Balkan Peninsula](#)", Sean Krummerich, [Loyola University New Orleans](#), *The Student Historical Journal*, volume 30 (1998-99)

<sup>61</sup>دوقاني محمد الأمين، تصورات المواطنة في الفكر العربي الإسلامي، مجلة الحوار الثقافي، تصدر عن مخبر حوار الحضارات، التنوع الثقافي وفلسفة السلم بجامعة مستغانم، الجزائر. عدد 9 ربيع وصيف 2016 ص 27  
<sup>62</sup>الاب نبيل حداد. من يحرض المسيحيين في الشرق على الهجرة الى الغرب؟ مقابلة تلفزيونية على قناة rt الروسية. يمكن مراجعة المقابلة على الرابط : <https://arabic.rt.com/prg/telecast/916440> من يحرض-المسيحيين في-الشرق-على-الهجرة-الى-الغرب/  
<sup>63</sup>المرجع السابق: مدل ايست اون لاين: <http://www.middle-east-online.com/?id=214816> 2016-01-04  
<sup>64</sup>المرجع السابق: مدل ايست اون لاين: <http://www.middle-east-online.com/?id=214816> 2016-01-04



connecting religion and Arabism. A number of scholars as Zaki Al Arsouzi<sup>65</sup>, Sate' Al Husari<sup>67,66</sup>, Anton Saadah<sup>68</sup>, Michel Aflq<sup>69</sup>, Constantine Zureik<sup>70</sup>, George Habash<sup>71</sup> and others as well as dozens of scholars who contributed to the formation of a national thought and inspired it are good example.<sup>72</sup> In contrast, Muslim writers strived to show a comprehensive correlation between Arabism and Islam<sup>73</sup>. Dr. Naji, known for his book "The Authenticity of Arab Civilization", stated that, "An Arab, if radicalized in Arabism, is closer to Islam. The Muslim, if radicalized in Islam, is closer to Arabism, but is an Arab." In the same book, he also adds, "Anyone who supports and advocates Islam is called an Arab." In Dr. Mohammed Kamel's book, "Islam and Arabism", he asserts that, "all Arabs who converted to Islam and spoke Arabic, without regard to their ethnic affiliation, becomes an Arab." These scholars connected Arabism with Islam isolating Christians. Furthermore, Reverend Father Nabil Haddad sees that there is institutions and religious influential persons who promote to connect religion and the state, thus canceling the "other" Eastern<sup>74</sup>.

In addition, the Maronite political experience in Lebanon, which emerged in the late 1970s as a reflection of the closure and sectarian arrogance, expressed its total separation from Arabism despite all the contributions that Christians contributed to the Arab culture and Civilization. They, however, perceive this as a loaned contribution to the Arabs that did not stem from the Maronite sincere Arab affiliation<sup>75</sup>.

Based on these assumptions, the Christian intellectuals find themselves trapped in their trench defending their existence. Those Christians do not consider themselves Christian Zionists or Arab Muslims, but in the middle; for that they found themselves adopting secularism, meaning leaving religion aside as a personal interest.

The unleashing of private schools and the openness to Western scientific schools contributed greatly to the emancipation and liberation from the Ottoman rule. This benefited the Christian churches in Palestine knowing that they are institutions of universal human rights and they have relations and religious affiliations with great powers such as Russia, France, Italy, Britain and other countries. For example, the Latin Catholic Church in Palestine reference is the Church of Rome in the Vatican, the Coptic reference is Egypt, the Palestinian Armenians reference is the Church of Armenia.

<sup>65</sup> زكي نجيب إبراهيم الأرسوزي (اللائقية، يونيو 1899 - دمشق، 1968)، مفكر وعربي سوري ومن أهم مؤسسي الفكر القومي العربي. كان ينادي بالعدالة وحق العربي بالحرية وإلغاء التمييز بين الناس من كل شكل ونوع وأخلص للعروبة ونادى بالدفاع عنها وحمايتها وأخلص لوطنه سوريا

<sup>66</sup> ساطع الحصري (1880 - 1968) مفكر سوري وأحد مؤسسي الفكر القومي العربي، وهو أحد الدعاة والمصلحين القوميين الذين زخر بهم المشرق العربي ممن تبنا الدعوة إلى القومية العربية.

<sup>67</sup> تيخونوفا، ساطع الحصري رائد المنحى العلماني في الفكر القومي العربي، دار التقدم، موسكو، 1985، ص 14.

<sup>68</sup> أنطون سعادة، مؤسس الحزب السوري القومي الاجتماعي. ولد في بلدة الشوير في جبل لبنان. نشر خلال عامي 1922 - 1923 عدة مقالات طالب فيها بإنهاء الاحتلال الفرنسي واستقلال سوريا، واستشرف مشروع الحركة الصهيونية وخطره على سوريا الطبيعية رابطاً بين وعد بلفور بوطن قومي لليهود في فلسطين وبين اتفاقية سايكس بيكو التي قسمت سوريا الطبيعية إلى خمسة كيانات. أعدمته الانتداب الفرنسي في العام 1949 لنشاطه السياسي الوطني.

<sup>69</sup> ميشيل عفلق (1910 - 1989)، مفكر قومي عربي كان له الدور الأكبر في تأسيس حزب البعث الذي أصبح فيما بعد حزب البعث العربي الاشتراكي. ولد في دمشق وأكمل دراسته الجامعية في باريس.

<sup>70</sup> د. قسطنطين زريق (1909 - 2000) مؤرخ سوري أرثوذكسي وأحد أبرز دعاة القومية العربية أطلق عليه أكثر من لقب، بينها: شيخ المؤرخين العرب، المُرَبِّي النمذجي، مُرشد الوجداني، داعية العقلانية في الفكر العربي الحديث.

<sup>71</sup> جورج حبش (2 أغسطس 1926 - 26 يناير 2008)، مناضل فلسطيني ولد في مدينة اللد، يعتبر مؤسس الجبهة الشعبية لتحرير فلسطين وأحد أبرز الشخصيات الوطنية الفلسطينية، شغل منصب الأمين العام للجبهة الشعبية حتى عام 2000. وهو المؤسس لحركة القوميين العرب

<sup>72</sup> رياض نجيب الريس، المسيحيون والعروبة. رياض الريس للكتب والنشر. المملكة المتحدة 1991 ص. 9

<sup>73</sup> رياض نجيب. نفس المرجع ص 31

<sup>74</sup> الأب نبيل حداد. المرجع السابق.

<sup>75</sup> رياض نجيب. نفس المرجع ص 64-65

The Orthodox Church in Palestine is, of course, administratively independent, but it is associated with the Orthodox churches around the world, especially in Greece and Russia in the last two hundred years. As for the evangelical churches, they entered the country with the British Mandate and have special subordination with the Anglican Archbishopric in Canterbury, Britain. The emancipation of the churches from the Islamic religious rule of the state gave it space to promote, grow and rebel in an atmosphere of ecstasy for freedom and the manifestation of religious identity in a society that is described as traditional religious with many remnants of the Ottoman state and its religious thought. In this historical context, the Church found itself of a limited possibilities and abilities to intervene and participate with the ruler in the affairs of the state and participate in the formation of a national identity.

The sectarianism that was fed by the Ottoman regime flourished and risen after its collapse. During the period between the First World War, the Second World War, and the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, sectarianism was strengthened and reinforced. The goal was to diminish Christian cohesion as an active and refreshing force for the new society that was being formed and to disperse the national force of both Christians and Muslims. Thus, churches, as separate sects, each started working their own way to establish their religious and political "rights" on the land of Palestine, based on the great powers that also support their own goals in their own way.

The support given by external forces to support ethnic and sectarian identities in the region has created a somehow an isolationism and disintegration in Palestinian society for two reasons:

The first is the emergence of the Jewish-Christian Zionist forces on the one hand and the emergence of national Christian forces opposed to Jewish-Christian Zionism on the other. In spite of the fundamental difference between Jewish Zionism and that Christianity, they agreed on not supporting the return of the Jews to Palestine or the establishment of the State of Israel as a state of the Jews. Jewish Zionism seeks to find a homeland for the Jews of the world to protect them and enable them to live in safety and peace in response to the Jewish question<sup>76</sup>.

The goal of the Zionist Christians was to bring the Jews to Palestine "to be liquidated or converted to the Christian faith"<sup>77</sup>. This may have been one of the most important reasons behind missionaries arriving Palestine, especially under the British mandate of Palestine, with the main goal of preaching Palestinian Jews Christianity<sup>78</sup>.

Second, the emergence of revolutionary thought supported by the Islamic religious discourse as a religious reaction against the British mandate (Zionist-Christian) and the characterizing of the revolution with Islamic religious goals such as the liberation of the Arab-Islamic countries from the Jews and the Christians; the Zionists and the British. These revolutionaries are supported by the remnants of the Ottoman thought, which calls for connecting religion and state and cannot see the state isolated from the Islamic religion<sup>79</sup>.

<sup>76</sup>المعضلة الصهيونية المعبر عنها بكلمات هرتسل مؤسس الصهيونية تقول "اننا (أي اليهود) شعبٌ غير مرغوب فيه" وان "الاغيار" لن يستوعبونا" وان العالم سيقدم لليهود بديلان فقط هما اما الاندماج بتبعاته من خسارة للهوية والانحراف عن اليهودية الحقيقية، او البديل الثاني وهو المجازر و الابادات كما حدث مع اليهود في روسيا و اوروبا فعلاً.

<sup>77</sup>نعيم عتيق وسيدر دعبس ومورين توبين " الصهيونية المسيحية، نشأتها -مخاطرها -مجابعتها" 2008 ص 18

<sup>78</sup>نعيم عتيق وسيدر دعبس 2008 ص 105

<sup>79</sup>حسني أدهم جرار الشيخ عز الدين القسام - قائد حركة وشهيد قضية 1886م - 1935م، دار الضياء، ط1، عمان، 1989

This contributed to isolate and deprive Christians and non-Muslims from the right to live in this country. To dodge this, Christian scholars and intellectuals should have been freed from this shell to find solutions to the issue (sectarianism and nationalism)<sup>80</sup>.

In the dangerous triangle the three Abrahamic religions intertwine, there is little intellectual struggle between the three extremes. Jews are fighting both Palestinian Christians and Muslims on the one hand, and Palestinian Christians face Jewish and Christian Zionists on the one hand, and Islamists pressure on the Jewish and Christian existence on the other. One might see by this that Palestinian Christians have sovereign political ambitions in Palestine through which they want to achieve the lion's share in the division of the country<sup>81</sup>. (As if Maronite political experiment in Lebanon in the seventies of the nineteenth century did set an example.) On the other hand, Palestinian Muslims denied the Christian existence as a Palestinian cultural and emotional force and they denied Christians national historical rights in the land on an equal basis with Muslims (As If Population is of Muslims and Christians). This triangle shows that the Zionist Jew and the British Zionist-Christian colonizer are the key beneficiaries of this Christian-Christian and Islamic-Christian division in Palestine, because such a division weakens the challenge, steadfastness and resistance of the Palestinian people in crystallizing their identity as a distinct Arab people.

Muslim and Christian Palestinian rationalists took several steps to correct the situation, as a reaction and to address the consequences of this religious hegemony over the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The national Arabism united speech began to rise, crystallize and move in an organized institutional manner under the name of the Palestinian Liberation Organization 'PLO', which consisted of Palestinians from all over the world under a liberal public framework.

The Church maintained the no-interference relation with the events at homeland, as usual. For a long time - from the Arab conquest until the end of the Ottoman Islamic rule - the Church was not able to express its views on matters of "homeland". Church dissolution became inevitable. The Church as a spiritual and political leadership in the homeland has a homogenous character. It found itself limited and isolated in matters of governance and the governor. It seemed to be an orphan in terms of depriving it from political power limiting it to sectarian, communal and ecclesiastic authority in a different, sometimes non-peaceful, religious environment. The patriarch became only an ecclesiastical leader while he had both political and ecclesiastical authority in the Byzantine era. This separation, isolation and confining of the Patriarch role within the walls of the Patriarchate; religious affairs, rituals and worship within the temples and shrines, created an abysmal gap between the Patriarchate as a spiritual presidency and the parish as followers on the one hand and the concerns of the citizens living in this country under Islamic rule on the other hand.

The peaceful neutrality is the basic character that can be seen from the observation and monitoring of the behavior of the Church leadership in Palestine, which rejects violence and fighting and considers it evil. This peaceful nature of resistance to violence has been adopted by the churches in Palestine since the first Jewish immigration wave to Palestine until the first Intifada. However, few clergymen took these historical events in Palestine

<sup>80</sup> جورج قرم. تعدد الأديان وأنظمة الحكم. رسالة دكتوراه. باريس 2011

<sup>81</sup> منذ العام 1845 طالب المسيحيون الموارنة ان يعين حاكم مسيحي عليهم وليس درزي مما أشعل نار الفتنة في لبنان لأسباب طبقية معززة بمشاعر الطائفية ومدعومة من قوى غربية (فرنسا دعمت المسيحيين وبريطانيا دعمت الدروز والعثمانيين قسموا منطقة جبل لبنان ما بين الدروز والمسيحيين مما زاد وفاقم المشكلة) أدى ذلك الى مقتل 20000 مسيحي وتدمير 380 قرية مسيحية و560 كنيسة. راجع:

Lutsky, Vladimir, Lika Nasser, and Robert Daglish. Modern history of the Arab countries. Progress, 1969.

seriously, as they helped to transfer arms to the Palestinian resistance or supported violent resistance in various ways, including funding. An example of this is the Bishop Hilarion Capucci, who spent years in the occupation prisons<sup>82</sup> as well as Father Ibrahim Ayad<sup>83</sup>.

The role played by the churches in Palestine – starting from that period, to Al Nakba, Al Naksa 'the setback' until reaching the first Intifada and the historical events in the Palestinian cause 'milestones' such as the establishment of the Palestinian Authority over parts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip - is a positive role. This role, whether on the internal ecclesiastical or national Palestinian level, is, in spite of all the conventional obstacles the Church faced from its surroundings, is positive. The national leadership represented by all the revolutionary forces active in the field did not engage the ecclesial spiritual leadership in taking national decisions, whether fateful or structural struggle decisions. The church leadership was also never asked to organize themselves as members of the Palestinian body to be active in the popular struggle at the outbreak of the first Intifada.

The Church has never been an advocate of armed resistance and of ever-violent popular struggle. It did not actually intervene in the national affairs of the Palestinians when the British Mandate first started or when the State of Israel was established. The Church did not declare civil disobedience and did not call for protests or even declare war or encourage believers to stand by their Muslim brethren to fight. It seems that the Palestinian Christian resistance fighters were involved in the popular resistance out of a national motivation without the church's encouragement; they were influenced by their social not by their ecclesiastical reality. What contributed to this tendency was the Palestinians, Christians included, belief, later to be deceived, that the United Nations would be fair in solving the Palestinian issue, whether as the one secular Palestinian state that the Jews would live with the Arabs with equal rights or in the partition resolution, which of course was rejected by the Arab side.

For example, the Catholic Church in America denounced the Zionist plan to control Jerusalem and Palestine to be under Jewish sovereignty. In May 1897, the Church noticed that the intentions are to ultimately control Palestine under Christian religious grounds, so it stated, "The reconstruction and rebuilding of Jerusalem to be the center of the Israeli state contradicts the prophecies of Christ himself, who told us that Jerusalem will be trampled by the public until the end of time<sup>84</sup>." In 1917, Pope Benedict XVI commented on Balfour's declaration "no for the sovereignty of the Jews on the Holy Land<sup>85</sup>." This statement did not necessarily mean that the right of sovereignty over the Holy Land is to Palestinians. The Second Vatican Council<sup>86</sup> (1962-1965) decision that absolved the Jews of Christ's blood faced Christian and Arab dissatisfaction in the East in general and in Palestine in particular,

<sup>82</sup> هيلاريون كابوتشي (2 مارس 1922 - 1 يناير 2017م) هو رجل دين مسيحي سوري، ولد في حلب. أصبح مطرناً لكنيسة الروم الكاثوليك في القدس عام 1965. عُرف بمواقفه الوطنية المعارضة للاحتلال الإسرائيلي في فلسطين، وعمل سراً على دعم المقاومة.

<sup>83</sup> ولد في بيت ساحور وتوفي في العام 2005. كان رئيساً للمحكمة الكنسية اللاتينية في كل من القدس وبيروت وعضواً في بلدية القدس واللجنة القومية فيها، ورئيساً للجنة الفلسطينية للمنظمات غير الحكومية في إطار منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية، ومستشاراً لرئيس اللجنة التنفيذية لمنظمة التحرير الفلسطينية الراحل ياسر عرفات. وقد لعب الأب عياد دوراً حاسماً في إقناع الفاتيكان بأن يكون المطران في فلسطين فلسطينياً<sup>84</sup> محمد عبد العاطي، الكنائس المسيحية المعارضة للصهيونية.

الجزيرة. <http://www.aljazeera.net/specialfiles/pages/184b6246-5fef-4294-b9d3-d38dca5c1c13>

<sup>85</sup> محمد عبد العاطي. المرجع السابق

<sup>86</sup> المجمع الفاتيكاني الثاني عقد بهدف الإصلاح الكنسي ويهدف لإحلال السلام والتفاهم والمحبة بين الناس والانفتاح الكنسي الكاثوليكي على غير المسيحيين وفيه تم تبرئة اليهود من دم المسيح وطالب المجمع المؤمنين قائلًا "ليحذر الجميع، سواء كان في تعليم الدين أو في الوعظ أم في الحديث اليومي، أن يتكلموا على الشعب اليهودي كأنه أمة منبوذة، وأن يقولوا أو يفعلوا أي شيء آخر من شأنه أن يزج الأفكار في جانب اليهود. ليحذروا أيضاً أن يلصقوا بيهود اليوم ما وقع في الأم المسيح". انطونيوس عجينة، تاريخ الكنيسة الجزء الثالث ص 136

as it appeased and eased the tensions before the Israeli colonization of Palestine and attempted to create a non-hostility to the Jewish immigrants to Palestine according to the protesters<sup>87</sup>.

It is noted that the Church, as a spiritual leadership, did not see itself in the position of national responsibility before the Palestinian people in general and the Palestinian Christians in particular, as the Church was marginalized and isolated for many years and confined to the sectarian issue. This led the church to draw into the shell of sectarianism and sometimes to adopt neutrality towards the national issue. The Christians were motivated by their own personal national convictions and they collectively chose to resist the occupier and participate in the battles or even resist by peaceful protests. Let us not forget that most of the spiritual presidencies of the Palestinian Christian churches are presidencies of non-Arab nationalities. In this context, they will not have the same fear and emotional anxiety as the Palestinians in general and the Christians in particular.

In this sense, the Church refuses to call for fighting or violent resistance of all kinds, considering that the message it carries is a message of God's love to mankind and a message of peace to the world. How can peace go in line with war or hatred with love? As for the oppression Palestinian people face, the Church answers by means of peace and may only denounce and advise the two parties to lift injustice, accept the other and live together in Palestine<sup>88</sup>. This speech was made clear only after the signing of the Oslo agreement between Israelis and Palestinians, which calls for a two-state solution.

The Christian in the Arab Mashreq reality forces them to live two exiles: the first is of a religious character and the second of a temporal character. The churches are disjointed and divided into sects that belong to "different civilizations from the ancient Syria, Mesopotamia, Arabian Peninsula, Byzantium, Rome and Greece. Christians also live in temporal exile under regimes that sometimes contradict their religious principles and human rights. Thus, they struggle as they fluctuate and swing between loyalty to Caesar and belonging to the universality of Christ as well as between their human capacity and their theological capacity<sup>89</sup>." Sometimes a Christian is fully and wholly belonging and devoted and other times they retreat to their exile or take neutral stand, which is the Churches' in Palestine stand in general.

### **Palestinian Christians and the Church against Zionist thought:**

Since the destruction of Jerusalem by Roman Titus during the suppression of the Jewish revolution in 70 AD, Jews dealt and responded peacefully to their oppressors and did not fight battles or wars. Jews dispersed and scattered all across the earth from east to west and from north to south seeking home among the people of the earth. They faced the most brutal treatment from Christians for decades and the worst was during World War II when Jews were subjected to the Holocaust<sup>90</sup>. These massacres created a kind of chronic guilt among the Christian communities, whose grandparents were thought to have made an

<sup>87</sup> المرجع السابق ص 139-142

<sup>88</sup> نعيم عتيق و سيدر دعيبس. 2008 ص 24

<sup>89</sup> جوزيف أبو نهرا. كنيسة العرب. المرجع السابق

<sup>90</sup> Malamat, A., Tadmor, H., Stern, M., Safrai, S., & Ettinger, S. (1976). A history of the Jewish people (pp. 254-256). H. H. Ben-Sasson (Ed.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

important contribution to spreading a culture of hatred and anti-Semitism in Europe in particular and the Christian world in general<sup>91</sup>.

This, however, does not justify their harsh and violent actions against the Palestinians in their just case. Despite the declared peace in the Jewish religion, their treatment of the Palestinians on the ground does not reflect peaceful values and lofty religious morals. On the contrary, they reflect brutality, revenge, hatred and war as a means of repression, subjugation and domination against the Palestinians. This Zionist policy is reinforced by the extreme racist Jewish religious discourse that refuses to accept the slightest right of any non-Jew in Palestine. Zionism is belonging to the project of building the Israeli state on the land of Palestine as a home for the Jews<sup>92</sup>. In this sense, it is very difficult to separate Judaism and Zionism in Palestine. Every Israeli Jew who loves (his homeland) Israel is a Zionist, but not every Zionist is a Jew. There are non-Jewish Zionists; some of them are Arabs, Western Christians and all loyalists and supporters of the Israeli occupation state. "All the work done by Israel is led by God, and it must be supported, and even praised by all of us"<sup>93</sup>, said Grace Halsell summarizing the Zionist Christian mission.

However, this does not apply to non-Zionist Jews who stand against Zionism and its principles that call for looting and stripping the land of Palestine to establish a Jewish state. In Palestine, Jews, especially in Jerusalem, reject Israeli citizenship, identity and Zionist state policies. They also reject Jewish Israel, that is, a state founded on a religious basis, and they distinguish true Judaism and Zionism<sup>94</sup>.

However, in 2007 leaders of the churches of Palestine issued an announcement declaring their rejection to Zionism. In 2008 they also issued an announcement which has the name "Kairos- a stand for justice"<sup>95</sup>

Rev. Alexander Keith may be the first one from the Scotland Church to declare the sentence "<sup>96</sup> land without people to people without land" which is known as a sentence of Israel Zangwill.<sup>97</sup>

Ahad Ha'am<sup>98</sup> resisted the literal interpretation of the Bible on the pretext of settling the Jews in Palestine and realized that the indigenous Palestinians should be treated by the Zionist leaders who would move to Palestine with respect and rationality.<sup>99</sup>.

The Orthodox Church in Palestine considers Christian Zionism and those who support Israel and stand against the Palestinians violating God and the Bible. That is God "in the Book of Deuteronomy" asserts that him choosing the Old Testament Jews was intended to have a specific purpose: Yeast for the salvation of all peoples, as the Christ the Savior was to come among them. Thus, it was not for any good they have done, or a privilege they were granted, but "for you were the fewest of all peoples." (Deuteronomy 7.7) They were

<sup>91</sup>Bruckner, P. (2010). The tyranny of guilt: An essay on western masochism. Princeton University Press.

<sup>92</sup>نعيم عتيق وسيدر دعبس ومورين توبين "الصهيونية المسيحية نشأتها-مخاطرها-مجابعتها. 2008. ص 15-20

<sup>93</sup>Grace Halsell, "Israeli Extremists and Christian Fundamentalist: The Alliance", Washington Report, Decmber (1988), p. 31

<sup>94</sup>Shohat, E. (1988). Sephardim in Israel: Zionism from the standpoint of its Jewish victims. Social Text, (19/20), 1-35.

<sup>95</sup> انظر [www.kairospalestine.ps](http://www.kairospalestine.ps)

<sup>96</sup> تقرير الكنيسة الاسكتلندية المرجع السابق ص 10

<sup>97</sup> إسرائيل زانغويل " العودة الى فلسطين": المجلة الليبرالية الجديدة عدد 1901 ص 627 مقتبص في روجيه غارودي المرجع السابق ص 49

<sup>98</sup> ناشط يهودي عاش في نهاية القرن التاسع عشر وبداية القرن العشرين.

<sup>99</sup> تقرير الكنيسة الاسكتلندية المرجع السابق ص 10

chosen so that the glory of God may appear as a purely divine product, not a human, civilized, philosophical, or even religious one<sup>100</sup>?" Bishop Atallah Hanna believes that those who support Israel "invade our country, under different names, in order to break up the Eastern Church and eliminate it<sup>101</sup>."

Palestinian Christians signaled the danger of Zionism. This is evident in the large number of books, articles and sermons that have addressed this sensitive subject, on both religious and national levels. In 1905, Naguib Azoury<sup>102</sup> wrote a book on Arab nation vigilance and called for the establishment of a single Palestinian national Arab church away from sectarianism<sup>103</sup>. The sectarianism was then permeated and manifested in the walks of life dividing Christians and promoting division by sectarian hatred. In his book on Zionism in 1911, Naguib Nassar<sup>104</sup> wrote about the dangers of Zionism to the future of Palestine. He rejected and fought sectarianism, describing it as the other side of colonialism.

During the 1967 war, the first ecumenical theological document "A Theological Perspective on the Arab-Israeli Conflict" was written by Father Jean Corbon, Father George Khadr, Mr. Albert Lahham, Rev. Samir Qafaiti, Mr. Gabriel Habib and others. Where this document was a response to the Christian Zionist thought, which sees the occupation of Palestine and the West Bank in particular, as a victory from God.

In this era, Melkite Greek Catholic Church Bishop, Gregarious Hajar<sup>105</sup> attacked the British project in Palestine, indicating its danger and the danger of Zionism on the future of the region. Many other figures, such as Issa Al Issa<sup>106</sup> and Rev. Elias Marmora<sup>107</sup>, who founded a Palestinian national movement, that have been aware on an early stage of the Zionism and European penetration threat and have taken steps to fight sectarianism and colonialism in all its forms.

During the three-year-old Palestinian strike (1936-1939), a group of national Christian figures sounded the alarm in Palestine and in international arenas against British policy that aimed to hand Palestine over to the Jews through systematic migration and

<sup>100</sup>المطران عطا الله حنا. الصفحة الرسمية لسيادة المطران عطا الله حنا /

القدس facebook:<https://www.facebook.com/ArchbishopAttallahHanna/posts/1741887332550184>

<sup>101</sup>المطران عطا الله حنا. المرجع السابق نفسه

<sup>102</sup>نجيب عازوري هو كاتب، وسياسي، ومفكر قومي عربي. ولد في قرية عازور في جنوب لبنان، والتحق بمدرسة الفرير في بيروت، وتابع دراسته في معهد الدراسات العليا في باريس، حاصلاً على اللقب الأول في العلوم السياسية. تبوأ منصب مساعد حاكم القدس عام 1898، واعتزله في 1904 ليتفرغ للعمل السياسي حيث دعا إلى استقلال سوريا والأقطار العربية عن الدولة العثمانية

<sup>103</sup>نجيب عازوري، بقطة الأمة العربية، تعريب وتقديم: د أحمد بو ملحم، المؤسسة العربية للدراسات والنشر-بيروت 2006

نجيب عازوري، تعريب وتقديم: د. أحمد بو ملحم

المؤسسة العربية للدراسات والنشر - بيروت

<sup>104</sup>الموسوعة الفلسطينية، نجيب نصار (1865 - 1948) للمزيد على الرابط <https://www.palestinapedia.net/> -نجيب نصار-

<https://www.palestinapedia.net/> 1948-1865

<sup>105</sup>المطران حجار بذل كل ما يستطيع من جهد، قولاً وفعلاً، من أجل قضية فلسطين. وقد ذهب إلى القدس في 1940/10/30، وقابل المندوب السامي، وسعى بمناسبة عيد الفطر إلى العفو عن بعض من حكم عليهم بالإعدام والسجن من مناضلي الثورة الفلسطينية، ثم قصد، بعد أن نجح مسعاه، إلى الحرم الشريف، ونقل أخبار العفو عن هؤلاء المكومين إلى ذويهم وإلى الموجدين في الحرم، فهتف هؤلاء له، وحيوا مطران العرب.

للمزيد حول المطران حجار راجع الموسوعة الفلسطينية على الرابط التالي: <https://www.palestinapedia.net/> -غريغوريوس حجار-

<https://www.palestinapedia.net/> 1940-1875

<sup>106</sup>عيسى داود العيسى صحافي فلسطيني ولد في مدينة يافا عام 1878، درس في كلية الفرير وكان يتقن أربع لغات حية. واصل دراسته في الجامعة الأمريكية في بيروت. أصدر جريدة فلسطين اليومية في مدينة يافا عام 1911 مع ابن عمه يوسف العيسى. فكانت أول صحيفة يومية فلسطينية تصدر بانتظام وأطولها عمراً وكانت وهي وزميلاتها من الصحف الفلسطينية تدعو إلى مقاومة الاستعمار البريطاني والصهيوني. نفي إلى الأناضول بسبب دعوته الدولة العثمانية إلى عدم الانخراط في الحرب العالمية الأولى. توفي في بيروت عام 1950 ودفن فيها

<sup>107</sup>فواز عودة نعيمات: نصارى القدس في فترة الانتداب البريطاني 1917-1948. مركز دراسات الوحدة العربية.



political and military empowerment<sup>108</sup>. For example, the great Palestinian ethnographer Tawfiq Canaan<sup>109</sup>, who in that period published his book "The Palestine Arab Cause", which was first published in English and then translated into Arabic by the well-known secular Arabic Renaissance scholar Salameh Musa in 1963.

Canaan described the importance of the Arab-Islamic conquest of Palestine in the seventh century and how the Palestinians quickly and structurally turned to Arabs. He also described how their Arab and Islamic identity formed and how it was consolidated and strengthened along with subsequent foreign invasions (Crusader, Ottoman and Western). This identity, however, did not lose its first formative basic elements (Canaanite, Aramaic, Hellenic, etc.). The Orthodox priests condemned the British colonization and Zionism and held masses and prayers for the comfort of the souls of the Palestinian martyrs in Jerusalem, of them is the late Nicola Khoury, who called to hold a public meeting of all the Christian communities in Palestine, it was held in Jerusalem in 1936<sup>110</sup>.

Many Lutheran pastors, such as Pastor Hanna Bohoth, As'ad Abbud and Shadeed Baz Haddad, who preached in the churches against the danger of Zionism and called for national positions and stands warning against the misuse of biblical texts in the name of Zionism to occupy Palestine. Certainly, the Protestant activity of that period must have been affected by a conscientious reaction to Protestant brothers in Britain and the United States who developed a theology supporting the resettlement of Jews in Palestine, which embarrassed the activity of the Protestants in Palestine. Christian Palestinians were cautious and demanded clarification from Protestants.

The hopes of the Palestinians to realize their rights depended on two tracks. The first is the armed military resistance track and the second is the political diplomatic track. Since the 1930s, Islam has been the main theme and character of the armed struggle, and the diplomatic political struggle has been characterized by the nationalist, non-religious Arab character. Christians found themselves creative in the political diplomatic approach away from revolutionary violence. Christian Palestinians - academics, intellectuals and clerics - played an active role in this struggle in a personal way that reflected their personal affiliation with the national cause and the Arab identity. However, a shift emerged following the Naksa in 1968, when the political struggle turned into a military struggle that equals the political track and sometimes even tops it. Then, the Palestinian National Liberation Organization (PLO) was formed as a legal body, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people until independence. Justice and Peace in the Middle East document by the World Federation of Christian Students, was the first theological document issued by a Christian institution that recognizes the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

On the other hand, the Christian role was not limited to relief programs for refugees and internally displaced persons in the homeland and diaspora, but they were involved in the establishment of armed resistance movements such as George Habash and Wadie Haddad, who founded the Arab nationalist movement. They considered that the armed resistance was the optimum solution to resist the Zionist enemy at this stage after the Nakba on the basis that what was taken by force can only be restored by force. This is what Jesus said when

<sup>108</sup> وكان اغلب هؤلاء اما علمانيين عربيين او رجال دين انجلييون او بروتستانتيون. أي من الكنائس جديدة التأسيس في فلسطين. والتي استغلت غياب رجال الكنائس المحلية العريقة عن الساحة السياسية للوطن للأسباب التي تطرقنا إليها سابقاً. أضف الى ذلك ان الكنائس الانجيلية والبروتستنتية لاقت انتقادات ووضعت في موضع الشك لأنها كانت امتداد للكنائس البروتستنتية الصهيونية في الغرب.

<sup>109</sup> توفيق كنعان، مسيحي دافع عن هوية فلسطين الإسلامية. 2008/6/18. يمكن قراءة المزيد على الرابط: <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/cultureandart/2008/6/18/توفيق-كنعان-مسيحي-دافع-عن-هوية-فلسطين-الإسلامية>

<sup>110</sup> فواز عودة نعيمات. نصارى القدس في فترة الانتداب البريطاني. المرجع السابق ص 137



Saint Peter, one of the twelve apostles, took his sword to defend Jesus, whom the soldiers came to arrest. Jesus told him, 'Put your sword back in its place' and said to him the famous saying, 'for all who draw the sword will die by the sword.' Jesus was non-violent to his opponents at that incident and asked his followers not to resist his capture by force. Thus was the peaceful diplomatic resistance and condemnations by intellectuals and heads of churches. It is certainly a great disappointment for the Christians not to hear any revolutionary discourse from the leaders of their churches and not to see any of them as warlords or political leaders. This frustration led to a new discourse different from that of religion; a communist secular discourse inspired by the Soviet system.

### **Church Arabism:**

The ecclesiastical presidencies in Palestine since ancient times were mostly non-Arab. The Arabization of the church leadership began in the middle of the twentieth century. The reason behind this was the growing sense of the importance of building the national identity of the institutions representing the spectrum of the Arab Palestinian people; since Arab nationalism is the unifying framework of these spectrums. Thus, it was vital to take steps to Arabize the spiritual presidencies of the Church.

Church's Arabism means "culture that outbalances and transcends religious or ethnic affiliation to the language, history and common destiny. In Christian thought and on the ground, the word "Arab" cannot be synonymous with "Muslim" as long as there are non-Muslim Arabs<sup>111</sup>." Thus, language was used as unifying character of the Arab people, not religion, which excludes Christians from the right to full citizenship.

Therefore, it is clear that the Church Arabism in Palestine is a reflection and a reaction to the historical developments in the temporal context the formation of the Palestinian identity went through. Church Arabism is not a rooted historical heritage but a nature that fluctuates according to circumstances. The Catholic Latin Church in Palestine founders are the crusaders from Italy, the founders of the Lutheran Church are the Germans and the founders of the Anglican Church are the British. The Orthodox Church, on the other hand, is the mother church of all of Christendom and its founders were the followers of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Several nations of the people in the region joined them in the formation of the first Church. The Christians in Palestine are the descendant of these Christians as well as those who joined this religious body from all the people of earth without regard to their ethnic or national backgrounds. Today, all the Christian Palestinians, Arabs and non-Arabs, form this Christian spectrum of Palestine without excluding anyone.

Public speeches and demands, by the emergence of Arab nationalist thought, were heard calling for the Arabization of the Church, which was seen as a foreign object from the contemporary concept of Arabism. As an attempt to bridge the gap between the Islamization of Arabism and the secularism of Arabism, it was necessary to demonstrate the Arabism of the Church as a representative body of Christians in Palestine. This was first perfected within the Catholic Latin Patriarchate. Father Mansour Jallad from Jaffa was ordained as the first assistant bishop of the Latin Patriarch in 1947, followed by Hanna Khaldani, the Jordanian, as another assistant bishop of Nazareth in 1964<sup>112</sup>. As for the Orthodox Church, despite the several failed attempts to call for an Orthodox meeting, Arab Orthodox efforts

<sup>111</sup> جوزيف أبو نهرا. كنيسة العرب: ارث الماضي وتحديات الحاضر. جريدة النهار. الاحد تشرين الأول 2014 يمكن الاطلاع عليها في الرابط [http://www.kobayat.org/data/documents/spirituality/nassim\\_kastoun/kanissat\\_arab.htm](http://www.kobayat.org/data/documents/spirituality/nassim_kastoun/kanissat_arab.htm) :  
<sup>112</sup> متري الراهب. الايمان-الصمود-المقاومة المبدعة في الفكر المسيحي الفلسطيني المعاصر. مقال: على الرابط التالي: <http://www.kairospalestine.ps/index.php/component/content/article/12-arabic/213-2016-12-27-10-32-55>

have succeeded in establishing an Arabism ideology within the Palestinian arena<sup>113</sup>. The first Arabic Archbishop, the late Najib Qabain, was also ordained. The first session of the Evangelical Lutheran Church Synod was in 1959, where the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan was officially recognized. Zaid Odeh, the Pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Beirut of a Palestinian origin, rose to prominence.

This sequence of events of loss of land, loss of humans, the wide-scale migration of Christians, the absence of Christian political and religious leadership on the one hand, and religious Christian Zionism and Islamist movements on the other paved the way and enriched the ground to convert the church leadership from non-national to national leadership. This granted the Church national legitimacy and ruled out the accusations of the Church being suspicious Western-based institutions.

Those who follow the stages of the development of Palestinian Christian engagement, especially in the intellectual and revolutionary resistance, will notice that it was a reaction to the local, regional and international events. The Arabization in the Church was a result of the advancement of Arab thought at the beginning of the twentieth century, where sectarianism was weakened by Arabism. This is evidenced by the transformation of many Palestinian Christians from Arabism to communism, Marxist, Leninist and Maoist, in line with the emergence and the widespread of these movements in the mid-1960s,<sup>114</sup> especially after the defeat of Gamal Abdel Nasser, the symbol of Arabism, in the 1967 war. This could be seen as a shift from the double-polarization that was evident between the Second World War and the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. National Christians wanted to ally with a strong opponent to America, the main supporter of Israel after World War II and the guardian of its security and survival.

Christian secular leaders<sup>115</sup> have engaged in planning, organizing and participating in decision-making, reporting recommendations and organizing conferences that aimed at establishing a legal body representing all segments of the Palestinian people. As Ahmad Al Shukairi said, so that "the people of Palestine will become a functioning national force that will contribute to the liberation of Palestine and carry peace for its liberation by the hands of those capable." This organization aims to "mobilize the Palestinian people's energies on the military, political and media levels, in a Palestinian-fought battle"<sup>116</sup>. Ezzat Tanous, born to a Palestinian Protestant family, is an example of leaders who contributed to the formation of the PLO. He was appointed by the Supreme Arab Authority (the highest political authority representing the Palestinian people during the British Mandate) to represent it at the General Assembly of the United Nations. He was later chosen by Ahmed Al Shukairy as the Director of the First Foundational Conference of the PLO, held in Jerusalem in 1964<sup>117</sup>. PLO's headquarters were moved to Beirut after the Naksa in 1968 as the PLO and the Palestinian intellectual's HQ.

<sup>113</sup> يرى الباحث ان الفكر التعريبي للكنيسة الارثوذكسية هو بعيد عن الواقع التاريخي الكنسي للمسيحية في فلسطين. حيث ان المسيحيون في فلسطين هم خليط من الامم ومن الخطر بمكان خلط الأوراق القومية والدينية في بوتقة الهوية الفلسطينية ليتم حصرها في القومية العربية. فهو يرى ان الهوية الوطنية الفلسطينية هي ما تجمع أطراف الشعب الفلسطيني وليس القومية العربية بمفهومها العرقي او الديني.  
<sup>114</sup> متري الراهب. الايمان – الصمود – المقاومة المبدعة في الفكر المسيحي الفلسطيني المعاصر. المرجع السابق

<sup>115</sup> العلماني في المفهوم الكنسي هو المسيحي الذي لا ينخرط في السلك الكهنوتي  
<sup>116</sup> وفا: نشأت منظمة التحرير الوطني الفلسطيني. يمكن قراءة المزيد حول احمد الشقيري الذي اختير خلفاً لأحمد حلمي، رئيس "حكومة عموم فلسطين"، ليكون مندوب فلسطين لدى جامعة الدول العربية الى حين اختيار الشعب الفلسطيني من يمثله. يمكن قراءة المزيد حول هذا الموضوع على الرابط. وفا: <http://info.wafa.ps/atemplate.aspx?id=3748>  
<sup>117</sup> وفا: نشأت منظمة التحرير الوطني الفلسطيني. المرجع السابق.

In this period, The Middle East Council of Churches 'MECC'<sup>118</sup> has held dozens of conferences on the Palestinian case, human rights, equality and citizenship in the Middle East. Many Catholic forums, such as the Justice and Peace Committees and Cyril Center, have issued dozens of statements calling for the justice and recognition of the Palestinian case. Rafiq Khoury and Bishop Lutfi Lahham headed this movement.

The emergence of Christian Zionist movements led to a reaction by the Palestinian Christians, who found themselves, on their own, expressing their national position towards the Israeli occupation, which interpreted his existence from the religious point and documented its ideology by the Old Testament written verses, believed by all Christians around the world on the one hand. On the other hand, Christian realized the existence of millions of renewed Zionist Christians who support the establishment of the State of Israel supported by religious discourse founded in the Old Testament. Thus, the reaction was reflected by the Christian national thought as it was for the larva to hatch into a colorful butterfly. Christians gradually freed themselves from sectarianism and were characterized by Arabism as a general and appropriate attribute of their national position.

Thus, it seemed like the Church in general had an effective political role in this conflict, even if it was a peaceful, non-violent role. This Arabization of the Christian identity of the Palestinian Christians contributed to the Arabization of most of the local churches, except for the Orthodox Church, the oldest church in Palestine, which remained under the leadership of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate. The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate believes that the Arabization of the Church has nothing to do with its national identity. The Orthodox Church is the original Palestinian Church, the first and the mother of all churches. The role of its spiritual leadership in the Palestinian popular struggle and the spread of civil peace in Palestine must be carefully studied in order to avoid unjust or ungratefulness to this ancient Palestinian institution.

The Arab identity of Palestine and the religious identities of its inhabitants must be distinguished. In Palestine, Jews lived with along Muslims and Christians before the British Mandate and the subsequent Israeli occupation. The Palestinians are the citizens who live together on this land. Arabism as a national legitimacy and as a shield for sects to integrate into the Arab Palestinian people is an attempt that may be clever but may not be appropriate for the Orthodox Church, which has a special concept of its presence in Palestine and its mission in the world. The Orthodox Church is the local church that invites all peoples to join, as it is a university church of an ecumenical nature, i.e., its activity is not confined to a specific geography and its borders is the human presence. This first Christian church appeared in Palestine under Greek culture, civilization and Roman rule. Its first national identity emerged under Byzantine rule when the church and state converged to build the nation. Thus, it acquired its Greek-Roman character, the ethnocentric nationalism that characterizes the church and a source of pride to its followers, Arabs being the vast-majority included.

In their quest to prove their Arabism, Christians in the Middle East and in Palestine in particular, renounced their cultural affiliation to the Mother Church, the Greek Orthodox Church of Jerusalem, and buried their roots as a mixture of peoples in Palestine. This detachment distanced Christians from their culture, art and religious language and colored

<sup>118</sup> مجلس كنائس الشرق الأوسط، مقره في بيروت، العاصمة اللبنانية، وهو هيئة دينية تضم العائلات الكنسية الأربع في الشرق الأوسط أي الأرثوذكسية والأرثوذكسية المشرقية والإنجيلية والكاثوليكية. غاية المجلس هو العمل على تعزيز روح الوحدة المسيحية بين الكنائس المختلفة في المنطقة، وذلك من خلال توفير سبل الحوار فيما بينها ومن خلال إقامة الدراسات والأبحاث المشتركة التي تشرح تقاليد الكنائس الأعضاء، وإقامة الصلوات المشتركة لاسيما أسبوع الصلاة من أجل وحدة الكنائس المسيحية.

them with the Arab-Islamic civilization. This separation was intense that it made them bury their past in Palestine since pre-Islamic times. The inherent problem between the spiritual and religious leadership and the parish lies in the parish detachment from the Church as a cultural and national force to which they belong as well as the religious leadership (Naturally not Arab) neglecting and distancing themselves from the Arab parish. This internal conflict at the core of the Christian presence may be one of the most prominent obstacles facing the Orthodox Church, especially in playing a political or developmental role in historic Palestine.

Father Corbonne says, "The church here should be the communion of God with Arabism and the secret of this communion is the Church mystery of building a humane world. In fact, sectarianism is a form of social inferiority and is contrary to the communion, the divine form of openness ... and An Arab Church is not a nationalization of churches, but a liberation of man in Christ<sup>119</sup>."

### **Palestinian Christians after the Oslo Accords:**

The situation of Christians has improved under the rule of Palestinian authority and nationalism due to the promotion of citizenship and equality among all Palestinians guaranteed by the Constitution and the imposition of the law that contributed to the promotion of civil peace. However, this equality and citizenship was not adopted by the Palestinian Islamists who continued to explain the Christian-Muslim relationship according to the historical legacy of the Dhimmi-Muslim relationship<sup>120</sup>. The absence of the national culture of peaceful coexistence in Palestine, the adoption of the Palestinian Constitution, which undermines the foundations of democracy and freedom of belief in the future state<sup>121</sup>, as a source of legislation causes a continuing state of chaos in relations, a sense of insecurity and lack of belonging to many Christians. The absence of a deterrent against any religious discrimination against Christians by individuals or institutions, public or private, as well as extremists attacks on whenever the situation between Israelis and Palestinians worsens, as happened in Gaza in 2000 when Muslims attacked Christians, according to Father Raed Abu Sahleh, the Latin Patriarchate in Jerusalem advisor are another set of examples.<sup>122</sup> Moreover, whenever there is a problem related to respect of religions, as in Jyllands-Posten Muhammad cartoons controversy that caused an Islamic outcry in Palestine led that caused some to threaten and incite against international facilities such as those of the European Union in Gaza or the Norwegian mission in the West Bank<sup>123</sup>. Another example is that when the Pope addressed the topic of the spread of Islam by the sword in a lecture at a German university, it caused widespread resentment and attacks on churches and buildings belonging to the Church in Palestine

The Christian Churches in the Middle East affirm their adherence to the legality of the separation of religion and state and public affairs in the Constitution of the country, so that "everyone is equal in rights and duties, regardless of religion or sect. This is a condition

<sup>119</sup> جوزيف أبو نهرا. كنيسة العرب. المرجع السابق

<sup>120</sup> U.S. Department of State, International Religious Freedom Report: Israel and the Occupied Territories, October 26, 2001.

<sup>121</sup> Palestinian Authority Ministry of Information, December 1997, as reported in <http://www.lawsociety.org/Reports/reports/1998/crz4.html>.

<sup>122</sup> Margot Dudkevitch, "Church Denies Christians Fleeing PA Areas," Jerusalem Post, October 26, 2000

<sup>123</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/arabic/world\\_news/newsid\\_4675000/4675638.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/arabic/world_news/newsid_4675000/4675638.stm)

necessary for Christians and other small components in our country to be assured and feel safe<sup>124</sup>."

Dr. Elias Iseid denied that there were any harassment or attacks against Christians in Palestine, but stressed that the freedom and good treatment accorded to Christians by the Palestinian National Authority 'PNA' is better than that enjoyed by Muslims themselves.<sup>125</sup> However, the relationship between Christians and the PNA since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in the Oslo Accords has been good and has had positive effects. Since 1993, many Christian figures have been involved in the Palestinian diplomatic, political and military service. Thus, occupying significant and important posts in the country.

The PNA allocated six seats in the eighty-eight-seat Legislative Council, which is higher than the actual representation of Christians. However, this Council had no real clear tasks regarding self-determination or societal change since its establishment.

The changes that took place by Christians and Muslims intermingling and mixing, especially in the towns of Bethlehem, Beit Sahour and Beit Jala due to the attaching refugee camps and Bedouin Ta'amira surrounding them, which changed the demographics in those towns that were then of Christian majorities<sup>126</sup>. These changes have created a state of anxiety among Christians who found themselves a minority in the areas where they were majority.

Christian Palestinians today play an active role in various social, political and economic aspects. Christians run a number of schools, social activity centers, hospitals and universities. Palestinian Christians are considered the most educated religious community<sup>127</sup>, and their socioeconomic status is better than that of the rest of the population<sup>128</sup>. An opinion poll conducted by Dr. Iseid<sup>129</sup> in a study entitled "Palestinian Christians, Facts, Figures and Trends" (2009), said that "60% of Palestinian Christians define themselves as Arab Palestinians, and only 30% define themselves by their religious affiliation<sup>130</sup>".

"A simple comparison between the high unemployment rates in Palestinian society and the employment rate among Christians reveals a big difference between the two: 30% of Christians work in private companies, 30% in church organizations, 13% in official bodies of the Palestinian Authority, Non-governmental organizations and 9% in international organizations<sup>131</sup>."

The number of Christians in the occupied territories has been plunging, especially since the outbreak of the second Intifada in 2000, as 32% of them say that they were forced to migrate in search of security and stability, 26% to improve their financial situation, while

<sup>124</sup>البيان الختامي للمؤتمر الخامس والعشرين لمجلس بطاركة الشرق الكاثوليك – الديمان  
<http://ar.radiovaticana.va/news/2017/08/11/> الديمان

<sup>125</sup> مقال: <https://www.swissinfo.ch/ara/> 7450334/أقلية-الوطن-وليسوا-مجرد-أقلية-7450334  
<sup>126</sup>Daphne Tsimhoni, "The Christians in Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip," Middle East Quarterly, Winter 2001.

<sup>127</sup>مسيحيو البلاد: كيف لا الكم، بطرس وبولس، 14 نوفمبر 2011.  
<sup>128</sup>المسيحيون العرب الأكثر تعلماً في إسرائيل موقع معارف، 25 ديسمبر 2011. (بالعبرية)  
<sup>129</sup>الدكتور إلياس إسعيد طبيب أسنان فلسطيني مسيحي، وهو رئيس الجمعية الخيرية ببيت ساحور، وأمين سر مجلس المؤسسات الأرثوذكسية في فلسطين، وعضو مؤسس في شبكة المؤسسات المسيحية في فلسطين، وهذه الشبكة عبارة عن تحالف بين جميع المؤسسات المسيحية العاملة في الأراضي الفلسطينية، وفي إطارها تجتمع تلك المؤسسات لتضع السياسات والاستراتيجيات للعمل المشترك بينها.  
<sup>130</sup>إلياس إسعيد، المرجع السابق  
<sup>131</sup>إلياس إسعيد، المرجع السابق

others justified this by looking for opportunities to educate their children in Advanced Scientific Institutions. The rate of those forced to emigrate due to religious discrimination is only 0.8%<sup>132</sup>.

Despite the importance of all migration reasons, Dr. Elias Iseed stresses that stopping Christian migration requires "promoting political awareness and broad participation in the Palestinian public life. In addition, encouraging transparent bilateral dialogue between Muslims and Christians, bridging the gap between the Church and the younger generation and working shoulder to shoulder with all Palestinian spectrums to end the occupation."

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<sup>132</sup>الياس اسعيد، المرجع السابق

## **Chapter three**

### **Theoretical framework and the study of global models**

## **Introduction:**

To understand the Church's practical role in the community and to evaluate its work properly, we first have to clarify the meaning of the Church and its fundamental role, why it was established and what is its founding message. We must distinguish between the Church as an Organization and the Church as a community of believers. We should also differentiate the global concept of collective formation from the Church's clerical formation, especially when we define the geographical space of the Church's work and activities, as in the case of our study.

The Church as an Organization is the organizational administrative organization aimed at achieving a specific goal set by the Church for itself. That organization can do and state things. It also has its own voice as an organization seeking to achieve its goals and plans. It has its offices, employees and managers, and most importantly a message. It carries this within its environment, its mission and responsibilities frameworks towards the course of events around it. The founding Church parallels other institutions in society such as government, schools, etc. To work for the Church makes the person a Church employee and the work assigned to the person by the Church is the work of the Church. However, not every work done by a Christian is the work of a Church!

On the other hand, the concept of the Church can be seen in a partnership sense, that is, the group of believers, members who are joined together in the body of Christ, the Church. The difference between the two terms is that the partnership Church is the core of the Church's organizational body. The organizational Church is the spiritual administration of this body and its guidelines. The partnership Church is a group of believers, not an association or organization. In the Partnership-Church, every individual takes decisions according to their own personal knowledge and freedom rather than on a collective decision as in the organizational Church where the councils or the legal bodies representing those churches and organizations take the decision. Every believer is a person who has a legal entity within the Church, has a purpose in life, and has a message in the plan of God. Every person has a career and work in life as well as a mission. One can be a carpenter, teacher, engineer, doctor, politician or of any other profession that in which one achieves self-realization and accomplishes their mission as a Christian believer.

Having clarified the difference between the organizational Church and the Partnership Church we now have to distinguish the Church work carried out by the Christian employee 'Cleric' in the organizational Church, and that work carried out by the Christian believer whose work is a subordination to the Lord, i.e. faith.

The basic message of the Church is to preach people about the divine justice and the need for repentance and faith in Christ for salvation. The Church's main duty work is to tell people that God showed His righteousness through Jesus Christ. The Church should not address social justice and political matters, for example, to take the side of a certain policy of the State or to favor a political party over another because the previously mentioned are personal choices of believers who can distinguish and chose what serves their interests the most.

In addition, we must first emphasize the ecclesiastical concept of the Palestinian Church identity, where it is not confined to a particular people or nation. Since the establishment of Christianity in Palestine, the Church's ecumenism and universality have



been emphasized<sup>133</sup>. In other words, the First Christian Church is an inclusive and universal Church for all the peoples in an equal manner in religious rights and duties. The Church of Jerusalem or the "Mother of all Churches" is a Universal Church of a mix of different ethnic groups that have become "the one body of Christ".<sup>134</sup> It is the beating heart of the first missionary movement in the history of Christianity, where this first group spread religion.

The Church of Palestine is not limited to the Palestinian Arab Christians. However, we mean all the Church's sons of different nationalities who lived and live today in Palestine as a continuation of the first Christian Church founded 2000 years ago in Jerusalem. Armenians, Greeks, Copts, Syrians, Ethiopians and many others who have never ceased to exist in Palestine since the first Christian centuries as well as every Christian living in historic Palestine are an integral part of the Church of Palestine. The Church is not limited to any specific group but welcomes and embraces all peoples. The term "Palestinian Church", indicates the Church of all those residing in historic Palestine as their homeland. This is the only way to understand the Christian existence in historic Palestine since its establishment to this ethnical and political-complex day context.<sup>135</sup>

### State and Religion in context

Religion has often been blamed for terrorism and violence.<sup>136</sup> These accusations are seen in religious speeches used in ancient times and still used by Clerics especially those involved in political or social-religious conflicts. Religion has been used as a pretext of armed conflicts, especially in the twentieth century. Take conflicts in Northern Ireland, the Balkans, Sri Lanka, India, Nigeria, Sudan and the Philippines as an example<sup>137</sup> of ethnic and religious ethnic groups seeking to control the government, state and money sources by excluding others.

Religion, in fact, is the system that organizes community members' relationships with one another, draws their relationships with their Creator and determines their morals and beliefs. Religion existed before the state even since ancient times. It was almost 2000 years ago when the state and religion first connected and religion was politicalized. States' adoption of a religion is mainly for the interests and political accounts of governments' politicians and religious leaders and masters interests intertwined and intersected.<sup>138</sup> Resulting in this confluence and convergence of interests where religion is a facilitator of government policies. For example, this is the case for the Crusades of the Levant, and is also the case of Europe in the Middle Ages. Where kings utilized the clergy to pass their policies, reinforce, and strengthen their thrones. At the same time, the religion 'the clergy' took advantage of political men and influential people to support the stabilization of their

<sup>133</sup> Patriarch Theophilos III, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, said during his speech at the Sabeel International Conference 2006 that "Christian churches have been entrusted with an apostolic mission, local and ecumenical." Naim Ateek and Sider Daibes. *Christian presence in the Holy Land*. 2008, P.19

<sup>134</sup> Naeem Ateek and Sider Daibes. *The Christian presence in the Holy Land is an evidence of loyalty*. Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center. EMEREZIAN EST. Jerusalem

<sup>135</sup> للمزيد حول شمولية كنيسة فلسطين في معناه المسيحي انظر إعلان كايروس فلسطين. (2: 3)

<sup>136</sup> *Address of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to Al-Azhar and Muslim Council of Elders' Global Peace Conference*. <https://publicorthodoxy.org/2017/04/30/religions-and-peace/>

<sup>137</sup> Hans Küng. Religion, violence and "holy wars". *International review of the Red Cross* Volume 87 Number 858 June 2005. P. 253.

<sup>138</sup> Robert J. Barro and Rachel M. McCleary. "WHICH COUNTRIES HAVE STATE RELIGIONS?". Harvard University. 2005.p. 2. Can be found at [https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/barro/files/state\\_religion\\_08-05\\_revised.pdf](https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/barro/files/state_religion_08-05_revised.pdf) visited on 6/11/2017

religious belief. It is almost the same regarding the initial events founding of the Zionist movement<sup>139</sup> where Jewish Zionism merged with Christian Zionism under an existing colonial political framework. Colonists and the capitalists' exploitation of religion has become crystal-clear.

In general, Christian church always gave hand and formed the governments which usually supported the church. For example, let us take the case of the Roman, Byzantine and Carolingian Empires who supported the church and thus were supported by the church. More clear example is the Papacy<sup>140</sup> which became a political force with its own rights beside the emperor. This has led to cohesion and integration of interests, as well as integration and involvement in the political affairs of the state. This way it became difficult to distinguish the difference between the powers of the bishops of those of the prince or the ruler anymore.

In the fourth century, Christianity became the religion of the Roman Empire and the Church adopted the administrative system of the empire. The Church and the state became dependent on each other and partners in power.<sup>141</sup> The Church possessed political force that it was not able to possess during the first three centuries of its establishment, where the Church was oppressed by the Jews and the Romans. Thus, the missionary campaigns to make the Jews Christians succeeded in and several hits were directed at the Jews power.<sup>142</sup>

In reality, however, this partnership is, according to some, a distortion of the spirit of Christianity that is based on peacefulness and impartiality. We see Leo Tolstoy say that Christianity "in its true sense puts an end to the state. It was so understood from its very beginning, and for that Christ was crucified."<sup>143</sup> Since its inception, Christianity has not been subject to colonial objectives or financial interests or to authoritarian purposes, but it is clear that its followers are subject to the laws of their states and the Sultanates. In this context, the Apostle Paul writes, "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which is from God. The authorities that exist have been appointed by God." He also affirms, "Consequently, the one who resists authority is opposing what God has set in place, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves"<sup>144</sup>.

As in the case of Christianity and the state in the Roman Empire and as in the Jewish religion in the Israeli rule of Palestine, the Muslim rulers strengthened Fundamentalism as a

<sup>139</sup> Christian Zionism emerged years before the establishment of Israel as a religious phenomenon that spread in certain Protestant and evangelical circles in Britain first and then in the United States. In the context of a fundamentalist interpretation of texts from the Bible, especially the prophetic (an interpretation outside its original historical context), Christian Zionism aspire to the end of the world, foretold in the Bible, considering that the return of the Jews to Palestine is one of the Second Coming of Christ and the end of the world signs. In their opinion, the Jews are the central player in God's plan to save mankind. To read more about Christian Zionism, I recommend reading the book "Challenging Christian Zionism: Theology, Politics and the Israel-Palestine Conflict" Editors: Naim Ateek, Maurine Tobin, Cedar Duaybis Rimal Publications, Cyprus, 2008. وكتاب سايزر سفيق

"الصهيونية المسيحية، خارطة الطريق إلى هرمجدون؟". الفريق العربي للحوار الإسلامي - المسيحي. بيروت 2007

<sup>140</sup> Papacy is the government of the Roman Catholic Church under the leadership of the Pope of Rome.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid. p.9

<sup>142</sup> روجيه غارودي "إسرائيل بين اليهودية والصهيونية" ص 17

<sup>143</sup> Tolstoy, Leo. *A Confession and Other Religious Writings*. Translated by Jane Kentish. London: Penguin, 1987. Coted by Alexandre Christoyannopoulos in " **Tolstoy the peculiar Christian anarchist** Available on [https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/barro/files/state\\_religion\\_08-05\\_revised.pdf](https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/barro/files/state_religion_08-05_revised.pdf) visited on 5/7/2017

<sup>144</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: الرسالة إلى رومية 13: 1-2

power in their hands to assert government legitimacy. Religion became a means and a tool to tame peoples and to subject them to the master, the Sultan and the ruler.

In Palestine today, it is no different from this course except that Christianity, Islam and Judaism no longer govern. The one who governs is the world capitalist Zionist regime. Religion, nevertheless, remains exploited to ignite strife, splits, differences and conflicts, and it remains a creative tool to fuel the conflict.

Zionist Judaism as a religious spirituality was aspiring to return to the land of Palestine and to live in peace with the advent of the Savior, Jesus Christ. Zionist Judaism differs from the concept of political Zionism drafted by Herzl in 1882 in Vienna. Thus, Judaism, in its selective fundamentalist sense, was recruited to serve political Zionism. Herzl does not consider Judaism a religion but a nation where the Jews are dispersed in several countries in the world and that people cannot be integrated into the country in which they live, which subjected them to suffering and oppression.<sup>145</sup>

Christianity, on the other hand, is divided against itself, as some of them support the establishment of Jewish Israel on the historic Palestine and is called Christian Zionist. The later spatializes both Christianity and Judaism to confirm the legitimacy of Israel and the occupation of the Palestinian territories.<sup>146</sup> Finally, Islam is largely adapted to the political and the social perspectives, in general, to fuel the conflict and give legitimacy to the Palestinians as Muslims and Arabs as well as to confirm that Palestine is the land of Islamic Waqf. Palestine Sharia Chief Justice, Tamimi, said, "The Miracle of Isra and Maraj is to confirm that the Palestinian blessed land is an Islamic waqf and part of the Islamic Doctrine Islamic until God reclaims it and everything on it."<sup>147</sup>

In between, Palestinians Christians find themselves lost on the Intellectual, emotional and national manners. On the intellectual aspect, they must overcome the dilemma of Christian Zionism and confront it. Moreover, they should escape and confront the dilemma of the intellectual and social Islamization of Palestine as to find as owners of land and of historical right, a safe and viable place for development, growth and natural integration.

Many Palestinian Christian intellectuals have resorted to secularism and communism, which gives them an existential space away from religion as a means to escape and confront both the Zionist Israelization and Arab Islamization of Palestine.<sup>148</sup> They rejected Zionism, renounced Christianity and Islam to find themselves devoid of religion influenced by non-religious ideologies, models imported from the Soviet Union. These ideologies faced several problems existing in religion-ruled Palestine. However, the Communist discourse disintegrated by the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989 while the Intifada was at its peak. Christians again found themselves in new intellectual and realistic context that urged them to innovate once again.

Religion, culture and identity have become important components of peacemaking. Popular and non-governmental organizations have been involved in mediating to resolve existing conflicts<sup>149</sup>.

<sup>145</sup> روجيه غارودي، "إسرائيل بين اليهودية والصهيونية" ترجمة حسين حيدر. دار التضامن. ط 1 بيروت (1990) ص 11-12 pdf on the web. 27 June 2017

<sup>146</sup> الصهيونية المسيحية نشأتها-مخاطر-مجابعتها. تحرير: نعيم عتيق وسيدر دعبس ومورين توبين. منشورات الرمال. قبرص 2008  
<sup>147</sup> وكالة معاً الإخبارية. بتاريخ 21/7/2009 متوفر على الرابط <http://www.maannews.net/Content.aspx?id=213564> تمت زيارة الموقع يوم 2017/11/10

<sup>148</sup> See Naim Ateeq, "The Struggle for Justice" 1 (2002) p. 66

<sup>149</sup> روبرت هر وجودي زيمرمار هر "التحول عن العنف رؤية مسيحية لصناعة السلام ونبذ العنف" دار الثقافة ط 1998 ص 20

This time, the spiritual leadership of the Church had its opportunity for spiritual leadership,<sup>150</sup> which took a major role in the national political discourse starting from the Protestant and Lutheran Churches through Latin Catholicism and Greek Orthodoxy. The ecclesiastical discourse was transformed from its pure interpretive liturgical interpretation of the Bible into a political-religious discourse and interpretation of the Palestinian cause and the suffering of the people. The Jewish Zionism and the Islamic fundamentalism were confronted by a peaceful and open discourse was seen as a basis to demand a secular state not a religious democracy, both in the State of Israel or in the envisioned Palestinian state. The aim is to guarantee the full rights of Christian citizens, apart from their religious or sectarian affiliation, where full citizenship is achieved.

### Church and War:

Since its foundation, the Church has taken three positions of war, Peaceful, just, and holy wars. The Church derived its first position from the teachings of Jesus in the sermon on the mountain<sup>151</sup>, which affirms the nonviolent method recommended by Jesus to resist evil. For example, he says, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God,"<sup>152</sup> "Love your enemies,"<sup>153</sup> and "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."<sup>154</sup>

In these verses, Jesus is not asking only not to resist the evil but to meet evil with love and goodness. Jesus perspective on Peace and war rose above that of human beings. The war is caused by selfishness, hatred, tyranny and pride, while peace is the common goal of living and stability. Jesus asks what is deeper than that. Give up all war causes of needs and properties as not to fight against the oppressor and cause conflict.<sup>155</sup> Jesus asks the believers to sell all that they have and distribute it to the poor, carry the cross, and follow Jesus.<sup>156</sup>

This means that the believers are asked to deny themselves and assume their social and human responsibilities towards the society to help the needy and spread love and justice. Jesus also says, "Whoever compels you to go one mile with him, go with him two miles,"<sup>157</sup> "and "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth."<sup>158</sup> Jesus asks his followers the perfection in love to reach enemies, oppressors, and sinners<sup>159</sup>. Jesus expressed a different view on revenge where he changed the Old Testimony verse "Eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth"<sup>160</sup> to "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And whoever wants to sue you and take your coat, leave for him also your cloak."<sup>161</sup>

Liberation theorists, Romero, Boff and others say, "religion cannot be neutral when the life and death of human beings is at stake"<sup>162</sup> religion is associated with love, solidarity,

<sup>150</sup> نعيم عتيق وسيدر د عيبس 2008

<sup>151</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: إنجيل متى 5 - 7

<sup>152</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: إنجيل متى 9: 5

<sup>153</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: إنجيل متى 44: 5

<sup>154</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: إنجيل متى 39: 5

<sup>155</sup> راجع مثلا الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: إنجيل مرقس 21: 10

<sup>156</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: إنجيل مرقس 21: 10

<sup>157</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: إنجيل متى 41: 5

<sup>158</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: إنجيل متى 16: 6

<sup>159</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: إنجيل متى 44: 5

<sup>160</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد القديم: سفر الخروج 25 - 23: 21

<sup>161</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: إنجيل متى 39-42: 5

<sup>162</sup> نعيم عتيق وسيدر د عيبس 2008 ص 121

hunger and thirst for justice, as Apostle St. James teaches that faith without deeds is of no use.

Peace remained the basic line adopted by the Church until the end of the fourth century when the freedom of worship was given to Christians and the relationship began to grow between the Church leaders and the political presidencies of the Roman Empire. The Church's position shifted from peaceful to "Just war" giving a rise to Church teachings that agree and bless Just War in accordance with the Augustine's concept (St. Augustine of Hippo 354-430 AD) who gave the answer to the question of Christians entering wars without sinning.<sup>163</sup> This paved the way for the integration of colonialism with Christian preaching and decreed that all that is not Christian should be preached and governed by Roman Catholic rule<sup>164</sup>.

After that, there were peace movements within the Church during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that sought to reduce the tragedies of the war and its aftermath, to determine the days of war permitted and to identify the persons to be allowed to wage war against them under certain conditions. Thomas Aquinas (1225- 1274) stated that must three elements of the war should be provided in order to be considered a just war, Prince's power, just cause and goodwill<sup>165</sup>. In my opinion, the Christian concept of peace has continued to decline to the extent that Christianity has been associated with the state and its system. Christianity has contributed to civil legislation and civil laws when its Godly message was associated with that of the state.

In addition to the Peaceful and limited war, the Church has created the concept of Just War to justify the rulers' political activities and to win their hearts. However, it is worth mentioning that the religious discourse encouraged to obey the rulers emerged at the early years of Christianity. Apostle Paul in his epistle to Titus said, "Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work."<sup>166</sup> Politicians to justify war have blatantly exploited this verse. Justice is good and here the war was associated with good and it became a Christian duty with the blessings of the spiritual presidencies of the Church, but within the conditions of justice and without the enjoyment of murder and anger.<sup>167</sup>

By exploiting the just war, the Catholic Church launched the Crusades under the pretext of "Just" to liberate Jerusalem and the Christian holy sites in Palestine from the hands of Muslims,<sup>168</sup> who was accused by the Church of insulting the country's Christians (Orthodox Christians) and pilgrims.<sup>169</sup> Of course, these wars can be classified as holy wars rather than just wars. These wars goal was religious Economic objectives and expansionist colonial goals at the expense of Muslims and Romans.<sup>170</sup>

<sup>163</sup> ديفيد فيشر: الأخلاقيات والحرب. هل يمكن أن تكون الحرب عادلة في القرن الحادي والعشرين؟ ترجمة: عماد عواد، سلسلة عالم المعرفة، العدد 414، الكويت: المجلس الوطني للثقافة والفنون والآداب، يوليو 2014، ص 10 - 105 مقتبس من حمدي الشريف، نظرية الحرب العادلة بين اليوتوبيا والأيدولوجيا. مؤمنون بلا حدود 18 أبريل 2016. يمكن إيجاده على الرابط-<http://www.mominoun.com/pdf1/2016-02/youtoubia.pdf>

<sup>164</sup> جورج قزم، تعدد الأديان وأنظمة الحكم، 1979 دار الفارابي بيروت لبنان ص 169-167

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., Pp. 106-107

<sup>166</sup> راجع الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: تيموثاوس 1: 3

<sup>167</sup> ديفيد فيشر: الأخلاقيات والحرب. هل يمكن أن تكون الحرب عادلة في القرن الحادي والعشرين؟ Translations عماد عواد، سلسلة عالم المعرفة، العدد 414، الكويت: المجلس الوطني للثقافة والفنون والآداب، يوليو 2014، ص 105-06 (1)

<sup>168</sup> ميشيل يتيم واغناطيوس ديك المرجع السابق ص 218

<sup>169</sup> ميشيل يتيم واغناطيوس ديك "تاريخ الكنيسة الشرقية" منشورات المكتبة البولسية. حريصا 1991 ص 114-213 و ص 218

<sup>170</sup> ميشيل يتيم واغناطيوس ديك. المرجع السابق ص 220-117

The violence that was waged during the Crusades against Muslims and against Orthodox Christians (the Christian majority of the population of Palestine at that time) confirms the brutality of the political exploitation exercised on the Church and its Catholic leadership.<sup>171</sup> The princes and kings depended on the bishops and the Pope to justify these wars in an exchange for support and extension of the Pope's authority. The Pope had religious and land control during the reign of the reformer Pope Gregory VII, who started the era of papal leadership (1073-1303).<sup>172</sup>

The majority of modern Christians today support the idea of war as a necessity but within the rules and limitations of a just war. Today's ecclesiastical peacefulness is limited to positions taken by a few followers of the great Western Churches and institutions (such as the Roman Catholics, the Church of England, and the Methodists, etc.) The Quakers,<sup>173</sup> Mennonites<sup>174</sup> and the Amish<sup>175</sup> are a perfect example of peaceful Churches of peaceful beliefs and traditions.

Tolstoy criticizes the Churches' approach of consolidating relations with the state and he asserts that the teachings of Jesus were revolutionary. Jesus introduced new, radical and thoughtful styles and methods to resist evil. This is the desired behavior when treated with injustice, not to resist evil, but to respond to the hatred with love, forgiveness and generosity.<sup>176</sup> Tolstoy was prophetic in his interpretation of Jesus' teachings, especially within the Palestinian Christian context. Christian Churches over the past 20 years emphasized the role of nonviolent and peaceful resistance in bringing justice and peace to Palestine peoples.

In this peaceful context of the traditional and contemporary teachings of the Church, the relationship between peaceful Churches and violent occupation is strained. The Church finds itself in a double challenge. On the one hand, it is not hostile towards anyone whether it is a friend, relative or even an enemy. The golden rule is explicit, "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."<sup>177</sup> The commandment is clear: "But I

<sup>171</sup> من المعروف ان الكنيسة كانت الراعي الأول للحملات الصليبية وقد باركت هذه الحملات واعطتها الشرعية الدينية. الا ان البابا اينوسنت الثالث (1198-1216) عارض الحملة الصليبية الرابعة التي هدفت الى غزو القسطنطينية. انظر تاريخ الكنيسة الشرقية للمطران ميشيل يتيم والأرشمندريت اغناطيوس ديك (1991) ص ص (227 – 217) و (ص 246)  
<sup>172</sup> ميشيل يتيم واغناطيوس ديك. تاريخ الكنيسة الشرقية (1991) ص 246

<sup>173</sup> The Quakers, a Protestant, is part of the Churches of Peace that take the advice of the mountain to Jesus Christ as a source of its teachings. Their lives are a common life and the Quakers have known their opposition to the war and abstain from alcoholism and the right-wing allies, and have sold in charitable efforts, including abolition of slavery, prison reform and projects in the development of social justice.

<sup>174</sup> While they called themselves "Anabaptists" in the 1500s, others nicknamed us the "Mennonites" after one of their early leaders, Menno Simons, a Catholic priest who aligned himself with the Anabaptists in 1536. They are neither Catholic nor Protestant, but they share ties to those streams of Christianity. They call for the re-baptizing of Christians for renewing their life. LINK: <http://mennoniteusa.org/who-we-are/> visited on 6/7/2017

<sup>175</sup> Amish, a Christian sect that broke away from the Protestant monnaeite, fled Europe in the Middle Ages due to religious persecution and settled in the United States in 1720. Today, they number 249,000 people, living in seclusion in their own settlements and live in their own way of life, rejecting technology and adhering to the teachings of their community in all aspects of life. They speak in a language close to German in homes and villages but in English in schools. Photography, music, alcohol, health insurance and pre-marital sex are prohibited).

See <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/amish> visited on 6/7/2017

<sup>176</sup> Tolstoy, Leo. *A Confession and Other Religious Writings*. Translated by Jane Kentish. London: Penguin, 1987. Coted by Alexandre Christoyannopoulos in " **Tolstoy the peculiar Christian anarchist** " can be found online at [http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist\\_Archives/bright/tolstoy/chrisanar.htm](http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist_Archives/bright/tolstoy/chrisanar.htm) visited on 6/7/2017

<sup>177</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل لوقا، 31: 6



say unto you which hear, love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you." <sup>178</sup> "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."<sup>179</sup>

In addition, "But Love your enemies, do good to those who mistreat you." <sup>180</sup> On the other hand, the sectarian identity crisis has emerged again, "Who are we?", "What is our identity?"<sup>181</sup> "What is our position in this conflict between Jews and Arabs?" and " as a religious group; to which nationality do we belong?"

The submission to the ruler was the result<sup>182</sup>. The ruler turned from a British to an Israeli and from Ottoman to British. Peacefulness, in its Christian character, was neutral and avoided saying the truth or declaring its positions. For example, the transition period from the Ottomans, to the British mandate reaching the Israeli occupation was characterized by an extreme silence by the heads of the Churches who preferred not to express their opinion against the Israeli occupation.<sup>183</sup> This submission has changed in the last twenty years when Churches began to act positively towards each other and towards their surroundings, whether Islamic or Jewish, to address everyone in a peaceful spirit supportive of justice.

### Religion and society:

When Christ established the Church, he blessed it with divine power, the power of the Holy Spirit, to be able to fight conflicts, make peace and other miraculous healing things distinguishing it from any global institution with human capabilities. The Church is a reflection of God's justice and love for humankind. In this sense, the Church cannot act neutral against injustice, but it should intervene in peaceful ways.<sup>184</sup>

The Church since its beginning faced many internal disputes and conflicts that called the attention of the apostles in charge. The apostles brought peace and addressed conflicts with appropriate solutions for each case inspired by the Spirit of the Bible <sup>185</sup> establishing justice and equality among the community.

The Church has shown great interest in providing solutions to the basic human needs of combating poverty, disease, destitution and homelessness. This was one of the most prominent advantages of the first group of believers 'the early Christianity'. <sup>186</sup>

The Church's peace-making process is not a means of bringing peace with others but it is a daily lifestyle of linked to the spiritual growth of the believing community. It is a reflection of their faith and their application of biblical text in this context,<sup>187</sup> which later reflects on their dealings with others.

The revival and prosperity of the Church are achieved through the building of a culture of peace among the believers reflected in their believing and non-believing communities. This peaceful culture is a mixture of positive beliefs, values and behaviors that surround us and gather us as human beings in the image of God. This needs enthusiasm about the Bible, a peace theology, and pastoral not-authoritarian leadership, commitment in

<sup>178</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل متى، 44: 5

<sup>179</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل متى، 9: 5

<sup>180</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل متى، 44-45: 5

<sup>181</sup> نعيم عتيق وسيدر دعبس 2008 ص 132-138

<sup>182</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل لوقا، 27-28: 6

<sup>183</sup> نعيم عتيق " الصراع من أجل العدالة: لاهوت التحرر الفلسطيني " ط (2002) ص 66

<sup>184</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: اعمال الرسل 2: 14-Mar-47

<sup>185</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: اعمال الرسل الإصحاح 6، 9، 11 والرسالة الأولى إلى أهل كورنثوس 15 والرسالة إلى غلاطية 5: 15

<sup>186</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: اعمال الرسل 42-47: 2 والرسالة إلى افسس 11: 2

<sup>187</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: اعمال الرسل 42-47: 2 والرسالة إلى كولوسي 12-14: 3

mutual relations, and mutual responsibility among all.<sup>188</sup> A world that rejects the culture of peace is a wicked world. The world tends to reject the culture of peace<sup>189</sup> for the world is wicked and evil.

The Church believes that the culture of peace in society results in great blessings<sup>190</sup> that affect different areas and aspects of life such as marriage, friendships and strong social relationships, resulting in less divorce and separation cases, less torn friendships and fewer work losses. Peace and Reform result in "a glorious healthy Church of Jesus Christ with strong testimony and good Church growth."<sup>191</sup>

This is reflected positively in the community, the first beneficiary of this magical antidote to its problems. The role of the Church is not limited to worship and religious rituals, i.e., it is not confined to the relationship of the believer with his Lord only, but in his relationship with others around him. The teachings of the Christ called on Christians to serve as role models for others "the salt of the earth and the light of the world"<sup>192</sup> to guide people to love, tolerance and peaceful living. In this context, the activities of the Christian Churches in Palestine, whether political or social level and moderate attitude towards the authorities and governments over the centuries and in the last twenty years can be viewed. The activities of the Christian ecumenical movement calling for the unity of Christian sects in the Christian faith have multiplied. This movement is of a peaceful objective only to resolve disputes and conflicts around the world.

The role of the Church in society today is the same as it was in the society of the first century and as it has been at all times since its foundation. Yes, today we have more devices, we have more tools and means, we live in the postmodern age, we have more ideas and programs, but the role of the Church is still the same because the needs are the same. Every society needs God, Christ, and the grace of the Holy Spirit. Every community needs to the Bible, needs the salvation and forgiveness of sins, every society needs to help the Church to implement its mission which lead into the good common.<sup>193</sup>

Expectations of the Church's role in society have not changed. Its role is to glorify the name of God through deeds and sayings.<sup>194</sup> This role has been played by the Church in all ages, especially in our time with the help of electronic means of communication. It is unreasonable that a well-established institution as widespread as a Church has to be without a role in today's society, without a message of action and accomplishment. The role of the Church is divided into three categories, Evangelization of Christ, Discipline, i.e. practicing the teachings of Christ and Good work. Any role the Church is trying to play in society must revolve around these three Church roles.

In every community, the Church has a role in education, discipline, encouragement, guidance and reprimand<sup>195</sup>. In every society, there are vulnerable people, who need to be strengthened, and those who need consolation, and the poor who are in need of direct help and continued assistance<sup>196</sup> and attention of the Church as a group of believers in Jesus

<sup>188</sup> (Acts 2:42-47; Col. 3:12-17), cited on: PEACEMAKING MINISTRIES, Transforming relationships with the power of Gospel. LINK: [www.peacemaker.net](http://www.peacemaker.net)

<sup>189</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: الرسالة الأولى الى اهل كورنثوس 3: 1-3 :

<sup>190</sup> Bible, New Testament: رسالة يعقوب 3: 18

<sup>191</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: اعمال الرسل 2: 47

<sup>192</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل متى 14- 13: 5

<sup>193</sup> مقابلة مع الاب توما داود. الزبابة. 2018/1/10

<sup>194</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: اعمال الرسل 2: 42-47

<sup>195</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: الرسالة الثانية الى تيموثاوس 3: 16

<sup>196</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل متى 11: 26



Christ. The Church has a role in changing and improving societies and it shall not itself change to conform to society. There are things in the Church should not be changed or adapted to the world, for example, the eternal word of God in the Bible is for any time and place as well as the Church's Prayers and goal.

The role of the Church can be summed up in four words, Faith, love, action and responsibility.

Faith in the word of God and the God of the Word, and the fulfillment of the mission that Jesus entrusted to the Church to complete. The Church will not be able to complete the message before it without relying on the lord. The Church will be faithful to teach and baptize and will continue to teach the baptized<sup>197</sup> and protect them from evil. Many people are on the edge of wrongdoing or destruction in their lives as today's human problems are many and tragic, such as drug addiction, alcoholism and abortion, family problems and the spread of the unnatural trends and religious perspectives of blind imitation of others.

Love was mentioned 385 times in the Bible. It is a central word in the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Christian faith. Jesus asks in the Gospel of Matthew "If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that?" Christian love for others is not conditioned by the love of others. The help of the Church to the oppressed, the needy and the poor is unconditional and does not require the love of those vulnerable persons to Christians, their Church or their religious symbols, because "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." This is the message of the Church in today's society, the love of God and the preservation of His commandments. Love gives, serves, seeks the best for its purpose, love drives believers to act and serve.

Act, this concept is based on the deeds of mercy and goodness by the human to others around him, especially those in need of shelter, food, drink and dress, and those sick and prisoners.<sup>198</sup> That is acts of love towards the needy, to care, to express solidarity, sympathy, encouragement, support and participation. These deeds are the main message of Jesus, who said, "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free," The Church acts to serve. Service and actions are the basis on which every person is to be judged. The Christians' actions and deeds are a mission towards the homeless, sick, orphans and displaced children, to the needy, to those unable to work, to the person with disabilities and people with special needs, to refugees and also to those who are facing predicament or despair and hopelessness.

Responsibility, The Church feels that it has a great responsibility towards the believers and the community in which it operates. This responsibility is towards the Word of God, its interpretation and its implementation. A reformist responsibility towards the way it operates, the way it perceives itself and others.

A responsibility towards those in need, the poor and the orphans. Responsibility for teaching the law of God about marriage and divorce. Responsibility towards itself as the institution of God on earth that spreads God's word and objects what displeases him. The church is a beacon for those who are disturbed by storms of life. Young people are revived and re-energized by God's will in their lives. It also makes good for everyone and along with everyone<sup>199</sup>. The Church shall not fail to bear the responsibility entrusted to it by acting like

<sup>197</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل متى 20-19: 28

<sup>198</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل متى 46 - 21: 25

<sup>199</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: الرسالة الى غلاطية 10: 6

the world, taking its footsteps or adopting its values because if a blind leads a blind, they both will fall into a pit.

The role of the Church in society is to treat others not in the manner the world treats them, not with contempt, disregard and rejection, but with love, solidarity and participation. It should set good ideals and examples.

The Church is the presence of Christ among people. This presence grows and manifests through holiness, righteousness and devoutness in Christ. The Church lives today present without forgetting its past. It lives and acts for the present and future generations "to have a life and have a better."<sup>200</sup> Church members' individual and collective work in their societies is within the framework of the primary purpose of the Church's role in society, which is to glorify the name of God and to follow the Christ's lead.<sup>201</sup>

### **Nonviolence in the Church's Propositions (Culture of social peace):**

Church's Sacred Tradition is acts, effort and work, a continuous transformative process. The Church Sacred Tradition means the experience the Church had built throughout the history, the experience that we received and the experience that is being built as a process of comprehending experiences and delivering it to the following generations. Sacred Tradition is to practice faith in continuity; it is the way of life, the life of Christ on earth. It is the reflection of spirituality on earth.

This faith is reflected through the Holy Scriptures, the achievements of the Fathers and the Ecumenical Councils, the secrets and the liturgy, the drawing of icons, Churches' laws, hymns, prayers, theology and many others. The Church functions in its spiritual life and reflects in its daily-life dealing with its natural and social surroundings, tolerating, rationalizing and participating in the life of the society in which it participates. This is the core of the apostolic faith and its social approach. From this perspective, the Church reflects its faith and religious practices within the humanitarian and social context in homeland or abroad, whether by individual or group actions.

However, the Church in the Holy Land was subjected to many pressures throughout history, especially after the seventh century AD by the Muslim rulers who tried to reduce the Church's social and popular sovereignty and restricted them to religious rituals. The isolation of the Church from its social and political reality has negatively affected its ability to influence the people and its ability to stand against injustices.<sup>202</sup> This changed following the liberation of the Church from the Ottoman rule. The Church began taking slow steps towards participating in the development of the new identity of the Palestinian people who seek self-determination and liberation. The Church also started stepping out of the circle of fear it was raised into during the previous centuries, that fear which kept the Church chained, suppressed and unable to freely express its opinion on community matters.

The Church is based on its rejection of violence against Sacred Traditions.<sup>203</sup> The Christian Scriptures call for tolerance, forgiveness and love. For the Church, any resistance

<sup>200</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل يوحنا 10: 10

<sup>201</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: رسالة بطرس الأولى 2: 21

<sup>202</sup> مقابلة مع الاب فراس ذياب، كاهن كنيسة القديس جوارجيوس للروم الملكيين الكاثوليك، الزبادة 2018/1/16

<sup>203</sup> يقصد بالتقاليد المقدسة تلك الطقوس والأخبار والخبرات المتناقلة بين المسيحيين الأوائل عبر الأجيال التي تم تدوينها لاحقاً ويعتبرها المسيحيون الشق الثاني الأساسي المكون للإيمان المسيحي أسوة بالكتاب المقدس. وهي قريبة من مفهوم التاريخ الشعبي ويدخل بها الموسيقى والفن والشعر والرسم واللباس والزي.

must be nonviolent, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."<sup>204</sup> The Church also rejects to justify the use of violence for liberation.

The term 'overcome evil with good' is at the heart of the teachings of Jesus Christ, the founder of the Christian Church. Nevertheless, the Church in Palestine did not adopt nonviolence as means of resistance against injustice and evil. The Church perspective on fighting evil opened a path for understanding and comprehending the resistance against the enemy. Jews expected Jesus Christ to be a religious, national, liberation and political leader against the Roman colonial enemy. However, Jesus showed absolute neutrality regarding this subject and an explicit submission to the ruling regime in his country, even if it was an occupier, the Roman regime. Accepting taxes payment is submission, non-objection to the system and a call to love the enemy. The approach that Jesus followed throughout his life towards the "enemy" was not revolutionary or resistant, rather a peaceful and negotiation approach. It seems that he saw it as an opportunity for spreading the word of God to all nation throw Greeks and Romans.

The ecclesiastical interpretations may be different in this matter, but they are consistent with the peaceful resistance advocated by Jesus. Jesus, unlike Gandhi, did not see injustice in the Roman rule and showed no displeasure. Jesus did not even mention the ruling regime during his travels and preaches. On the contrary, he stressed on loving one's enemies and praying for the oppressor. He demanded his followers not to resist evil with evil but with good, which made many of his followers leave him and stop believing that he's the Messiah (according to the Jewish faith). Jesus's disciple named Judah was a nationalist Jewish;<sup>205</sup> the first to betray him because of this. Judah handed him to the chief priests of the Jews, the Rabbis. These, in turn, quarreled with the Roman governor and demanded the crucifixion of Christ as he corrupts the people and claims to be the king of the Jews - the long-awaited Messiah - and that he blasphemes God and the teachings of Moses.<sup>206</sup> One of the most important factors that led to the Jews converted to Christianity being oppressed by the Jews is Jews belief that Christians betray their people when they call for the love of the enemy; not being loyal to their national.

In these religious and political contexts, the Church found itself unable to express its rejection of forms of injustice and violence. Sometimes it stood silent and other times it denounced injustice and violence and offered advice. Moreover, it maintained a balance in the relations between the national leaderships and the leaders of the occupation forces, especially in Jerusalem, which was occupied by the Israelis in 1967, the headquarters of patriarchy and ecclesiastical presidencies. Thus, the church found itself compelled to deal with the occupation in order to continue its ecclesiastical and social work.

Gandhi, on the other hand, led the peaceful struggle effectively through the application of his teachings on the ground against the occupier who exploited the resources and the capabilities of the Indian people. He was also able to attract millions behind his teachings, turning him into an icon of non-violence resistant. In this context he said, "to resist the evil with violence is apparently good, however, this a good that does not last, unlike the evil."<sup>207</sup> Gandhi turned his peaceful theory into an actual action through which he achieved victory against the worst and most immoral forms of colonialism.

<sup>204</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: الرسالة الى رومية 12: 21 وانجيل متى 5: 29

<sup>205</sup> يهوذا كان غيور للوطن والشعب اليهودي فكان من اتباع الفكرة الثورية ضد الاحتلال الروماني لفلسطين وكان من الذين اعتقدوا بان يسوع هو المسيح المنتظر الذي سيحرر البلاد ويؤسس مملكة اليهود في فلسطين.

<sup>206</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل يوحنا 18

<sup>207</sup> WORLD RELIGIONS: WAR AND PEACE, website. Available on [http://www.ppu.org.uk/learn/infodocs/st\\_religions.html](http://www.ppu.org.uk/learn/infodocs/st_religions.html) visited on 2/7/2017

To understand the teachings of Jesus, the approach followed by the Churches, these teachings should be looked into through the historical, religious and temporal contexts. Jesus was a Jew and a resident of historical Palestine. In order to understand his teachings on peaceful resistance, the concept of peaceful resistance as well as peace and war must be addressed in the Jewish context.

The Jewish concept of peace is in fact linked to Messianic time, i.e., the presence of the Messiah. Shalom, 'Peace', in Hebrew has a wholeness and completeness connotation. In the Bible Shalom 'Peace' means "to be okay" or "prosperity" not peace in the sense of absence of war.<sup>208</sup>

Judaism understands peace as a state of perfection, which will be fulfilled by the coming of Messianic time, i.e. the presence of Christ. When the Messiah comes, eternal peace will be presented in its fullest meaning.<sup>209</sup>

Yes, Christ came, but the Jews did not receive the kind of peace they wanted. Thus, they rejected him. He assured "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."<sup>210</sup> He, therefore, advises his followers to follow him and his teachings and affirms that he is the Messiah, that is, he expresses in his teachings the concept of the Absolute eternal Jewish peace, which began to be complete in the presence of Jesus Christ among humans. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."<sup>211</sup>

This preaching is at the core of the rabbinic concept of Jewish tradition and Talmudic books, which is based on a trinity basis - governance, justice and peace<sup>212</sup>.

Judaism, nevertheless, embraces holy war as a means of self-defense from enemies and to survive<sup>213</sup>. Self-defense is legitimate and just but to take revenge from the enemy and unjustified cruelty are condemned in the Jewish teachings.

### **The Culture of civil peace in the Church:**

Jesus says in his teachings about interfering in the affairs of others and their mistakes, "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye"<sup>214</sup> and "Disregard them! They are blind guides. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit."<sup>215</sup>

The Church to be the ideal and the ultimate model it must have well-defined qualities and approaches towards civil peace starting with its believers, then the community at the state level. For example, the Church of Peacemaking in the United States<sup>216</sup>, which trains Churches for renewal and internal reform so that the Church can testify to its faith and reflect it in the society in which it is active, can be a good example for the local churches of Palestine. After the rehabilitation of the local Church and once it regained its confidence and self-knowledge, it should, for example, carry out an internal reform as well as to forgive and

<sup>208</sup> Jewish Ideas of Peace & Nonviolence. available on <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/jewish-ideas-of-peace-nonviolence/> visited on 2/7/2017

<sup>209</sup> Ibid

<sup>210</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل يوحنا 14: 27

<sup>211</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل متى 2: 3

<sup>212</sup> Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel. [https://www.sefaria.org/Pirkei\\_Avot.1.18?lang=bi](https://www.sefaria.org/Pirkei_Avot.1.18?lang=bi)

<sup>213</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد القديم: التثنية (15-10: 20)، (20-19)

<sup>214</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل متى 5: 7

<sup>215</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل متى 14: 15

<sup>216</sup> The Peacemakers Ministries. Available on <http://peacemaker.net/the-peacemaking-church/> visited on 5/4/2017

be renewed for the interest of the parish. Thus, the Church renews and sharpens its forces to launch a clear vision towards the desired peace in society.<sup>217</sup> Furthermore, a proper training based on biblical texts of Church members and leaders to resist the conflicts that confront them in their lives should be carried out<sup>218</sup>. If individuals could not solve their personal problems themselves, they can resort to specialists in the Church who can provide advice to the conflict parties on the family, the Church or the community levels. Those members can provide the necessary solutions as finding work for the head of household, providing a job for the unemployed, delivering the necessary skill-based training or providing the necessary legal services.<sup>219</sup> In addition, as marriage is the core nucleus of a cohesive and integrated society, the Church can play the role of a family or social counselor in cases of marriage or relations conflicts.<sup>220</sup>

The Church, on the other hand, should actively contribute to the dissemination of a culture of peace, coexistence, tolerance and love by following-up the believers individually and collectively to be sure that they are applying the Bible's teachings in this regard.<sup>221</sup> in this manner Jesus the ideal example for the believers says : "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me"<sup>222</sup>. Church leaders must play this important role, building a cohesive and concrete parish and ending the internal divisions, in order to shape a body of strong and moral community members capable of giving advice and solutions to the problems of divisions based on experience and not on guessing<sup>223</sup>.

The established relationship between the shepherd and the parish, the Church leader and the individuals, increases the cohesion in the relations between the Church as a spiritual leader and the Church as faithful individuals on the one hand and between them and the other members of the Palestinian community on the other hand. This social stability is required at all levels of society; the Church can offer a lot in this regard.<sup>224</sup> This way, the Church can actually provide a living testimony to their faith in Jesus Christ, the King of Peace.<sup>225</sup> It is the duty of the Church individuals, leaders and groups to carry out its ecclesiastical duty, which will inevitably reflect positively on society as a whole.

A direct step to carry out Church's internal reform is the Church involvement in the religious surroundings, participating in interfaith dialogue for humans affairs and peace. The relationship between community members and groups is built and flourished through communication, understanding and dialogue. Communication, starting with Christian-Muslim relations to Christian-Jewish-Muslim relations, would strengthen understanding, detect the imbalance and trouble in the Arab-Israeli conflict and give opinions in the formulation of strategic plans to break the political deadlock that negatively affects the Israeli-Palestinian society.

<sup>217</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل لوقا 6: 27-36 ، انجيل يوحنا 13: 35 ، الرسالة الأولى كورنثوس 10: 31 ، الرسالة الى كولوسي 3: 12-14 ) .

<sup>218</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد) : انظر الرسالة الى غلاطية 19-21: 5 ، انجيل لوقا 40: 6 ، الرسالة الى افسس 24-26: 4 ، الرسالة الى

تيموثاوس الأولى 15-16: 4 و الرسالة الى طيطوس (10-1: 2

<sup>219</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد) : انظر انجيل متى 16: 18 ، الرسالة الى رومية 14: 15 ، الرسالة الاولى الى كورنثوس 8-1: 6 ، الرسالة الى

غلاطية 1-2: 6 ، الرسالة الى كولوسي (16: 3

<sup>220</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد) : انظر انجيل متى 16-12: 18 ، الرسالة الى رومية 18: 12 ، الرسالة الى افسس 3-1: 4 ، انجيل متى 9-1: 19 ،

الرسالة الأولى الى كورنثوس (11-1: 7

<sup>221</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد القديم (12-11: 3. See note 3. انجيل متى 20-12: 18 ، الرسالة الأولى الى كورنثوس 1-5: 5

رسالة يعقوب (20-19: 5

<sup>222</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد: انجيل يوحنا 14: 10

<sup>223</sup> نعيم عتيق وسيدر دعبس 2008

<sup>224</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد) : انظر الرسالة الاولى الى تيموثاوس 15: 4 ، والرسالة الى العبرانيين (25: 10

<sup>225</sup> الكتاب المقدس، العهد الجديد) : انظر انجيل متى 9: 5 ، انجيل يوحنا 34-35: 13 ، 20-23: 17 ، رسالة بطرس الأولى 2: 12 ، (16-3: 15

All political negotiations between the parties to the conflict exclude the religious element of the negotiations, although the religious places are at the heart of the dispute today between the Israelis and the Palestinians in general and Muslims in particular. Al-Aqsa Mosque, Al-Buraq Wall/western wall and Ibrahim Al-Khalil Mosque in Hebron are of the most important dispute points in the 1967 occupied territories.

Palestinian Jewish, Muslim and Christian clerics and priests meeting bring viewpoints together to resolve the conflict. This initiative has been given a try in order to create a religious discourse supportive of political action in peacemaking and negotiations. This experience was led by the Kenyan priest Andrew White, who gathered religious leaders from Israel and Palestine.<sup>226</sup> Although the initiator is not a Palestinian, this experience was crucial to pursue communications between people. The Israeli Minister of Social and Diaspora Affairs, Rabbi Mikhail Milckheor, said that all negotiations lacked religious legitimacy.

This is why leaders from the three religions, Islam, Judaism and Christianity, from Israel and Palestine met in Alexandria, Egypt, in 2002 to promote religious peace in the presence of the Chief Rabbi of Israel and the most important Imams in Palestine, as well as the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem. The aim of the meeting was to materialize an obligation to spread peace and oppose violence and terrorism. The meeting was held with the approval of the then Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. The meeting was attended by Archbishop of Canterbury George Kerry and Imam of Al-Azhar Sheikh Mohammed Sayed Tantawi. Negotiations lasted for hours in order to reach a draft of the Convention. The meeting concluded the following day resulting in the Alexandria Convention. For the first time, representatives of religious communities in Israel and Palestine sign an agreement in which they demand an end fighting, violence and accusation of the other.<sup>227</sup>

The general pastoral plan of the Catholic Churches in the Holy Land, published in 2000, on page 157, emphasizes the importance of tripartite dialogue between Christians, Muslims and Jews in the Holy Land, and that none of these three elements should be excluded. This means that Christian relationship should not be with the Muslims at the expense of the Jews or with the Jews at the expense of the Muslims, but good relations with both parties should be established.<sup>228</sup>

Believing that people change is one of the most important elements to promote peace. The church role in society must not end on the believer's matters but also to those who are far from Christian faiths and believes. The challenge set before the Church is to promote peace among those who do not even believe in peace. This challenge requires the Church to be ready for it. The Church, therefore, has to stand up to this challenge and cooperate with all key parties involved in peacemaking to create a wall in the face of the promoters of wars and conflicts at homeland. This wall is the human base that believes in peaceful and non-violent end of conflict as well as field commanders who influence decision-making to use violence from both sides.

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<sup>226</sup> David R. Smock, Religious Contributions to Peacemaking: When Religion Brings Peace, Not War, UNITED STATES. 2006. Pp 17-20

INSTITUTE OF PEACE, Washington, 2006. Available on <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/PWJan2006.pdf> visited on 19/1/2018

<sup>227</sup> David R. Smoch. Op.cit.

<sup>228</sup> نعيم عتيق وسيدر د عيسى 2008 ص100

Hans Kong, president of the Foundation for a Global Ethics, says, "If there is no peace between religions, there can be no peace among peoples"<sup>229</sup>. Here lies the need for interfaith dialogue, rapprochement and defining the humanitarian goals that all religions seek to achieve in the land of peace and the city of peace, Jerusalem. Christian Churches in the Holy Land adopted this approach and deemed it the only acceptable approach.<sup>230</sup>

### **International religious models succeeded applying the peaceful approach to achieve freedoms:**

John Galtung and Ho-Won Jeong concept of peace<sup>231</sup> raises the dilemma of the broad meaning of peace explained by politicians, teachers, activists and intellectuals who, in their individual explanations, have made it clear that peace can be understood in two ways: Passive Peace and Positive Peace. Passive Peace is the absence of direct violence (Physical, verbal and psychological) between individuals, communities and governments. This definition has direct side effects such as the use of war and the use of weapons<sup>232</sup>. The second way to understand peace according to Galtung concept is Positive Peace based on reconciliation and reform through conflict transformation. Positive Peace is just more than the absence of the concept of violence and war, it is particularly the existence of social justice through the availability of equal opportunities, fair distribution of power and resources, equal and just protection of individuals and interests and law applicability on everyone. This can be achieved by reducing the causes of war, violence, injustice and by boosting efforts to build a concrete society<sup>233</sup>. As Pope John Paul II once said, "No peace can be achieved without justice, no reconciliation without tolerance."<sup>234</sup> These are all goals the Holy Land Churches seek to achieve by unifying their vision and their theology on the meaning of peace, justice, reconciliation and tolerance in the now-lived reality in the Holy Land.

Religions have different views to justify or prohibit violence, wars and fighting. The first view is peacefulness, which assumes that all violence and killings are fundamentally wrong. The second view is that the war is fair. Some believe that wars happen to bring justice, so the laws of justice must be followed. The third view is the belief in the Holy War. This war occurs because of the belief that God in that religion commands his followers to wage war against non-believers or those who threaten believers.

The prevailing belief among people is that religion is a tool of peace. This belief may be true and may be wrong. The interpretations depend mainly on the interpreters of religion and their interests. The religion interpreters and explainers adopt what benefits them the most for the period they are living. Religious verses can be interpreted as to be encouraging violence and wars and it can also be interpreted to be calling for peace. Today, the three monotheistic religions are accused of having tendencies to use force and violence more than non-monotheistic religions, non-divine religions or even atheistic beliefs.<sup>235</sup>

To face and fight injustice, there are only two ways; the first is by violent means, i.e. by using harmful weapons. The second is by non-violent means. The three Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) have a theoretical approach and a practical

<sup>229</sup> Hans Kung, "Christianity: Essence, History, Future. Continuum, (1996)

<sup>230</sup> نعيم عتيق وسيدر د عيسى 2008 ص 100

<sup>231</sup> Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," Journal of Peace Research 6, no. 3 (1969): 167-191.

<sup>232</sup> Jeong, 23-30.

<sup>233</sup> Galtung: 167-193

<sup>234</sup> نعيم عتيق وسيدر د عيسى 2008 ص 130

<sup>235</sup> Vexen Crabtree, Religion, Violence, Crime and Mass Suicide. available on [http://www.humanreligions.info/violence\\_and\\_crime.html](http://www.humanreligions.info/violence_and_crime.html) visited on 19/1/2018



approach. Theoretically they call for peace, practically they call for using violence. What they truly need is a stable peace oriented interpretation of their holy scriptures which will institute for coexistence and freedoms.

We will study examples of prominent religious figures who have had outstanding contributions to reversing the theoretical faith to a peaceful revolutionary act and challenging oppressive regimes in their societies in peaceful ways that have changed the lives of their peoples for the better: India's independence, equality and social justice in South Africa and the United States.

To delve deeper into the subject, samples were of outstanding religious figures and brilliant leaders who succeeded achieving social change and national independence through nonviolent or peaceful popular resistance, as the Indian Model Mahatma Gandhi, (Martin Luther King) African-American, South Africa's Desmond Tutu and (Abdul Gaffar Khan) Indian/Pakistani Muslim.

### **Universal Church Models: Desmond Tutu and Martin Luther King**

Certainly, they are wonderful international models to embody the role the ecclesiastical leader is supposed to play in society, especially when this society is under an oppressive and racist regime, as in South Africa and the United States of America. This is confirmed by the liberation theologians, for example, Romero and Boff, who argue that religion cannot be neutral when human life is at stake or in danger.<sup>236</sup>

Desmond Tutu<sup>237</sup> fought nonviolently a struggle against the forms of violence, hatred, and racism prevailing among the South African people, whites and blacks. He worked to combat apartheid<sup>238</sup> in South Africa, which was imposed on the people by the National African Party from 1948-1994, by all means available to him as a cleric at the South African Church Leadership Center. He raised the peaceful tolerance religious discourse, which calls for reconciliation and the opposition of the racist regime. He once said, "I am the marginal man between two forces, and possibly will be crushed. But this where God has placed me, and I have accepted the vocation."<sup>239</sup>

Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Rev. Martin Luther King insisted<sup>240</sup> to use non-violent means to fight and confront injustice and racism in their respective countries. Guided and influenced by the teachings of Jesus, they risked their lives, fought using nonviolent means and unrivaled courage they defeated the apartheid and racial systems in their countries and won. King insisted on using terms of love and coexistence between blacks and

<sup>236</sup> نعيم عتيق وسيدر دعبس ص121

<sup>237</sup> ديزموند توتو، كبير أساقفة جنوب أفريقيا السابق الحائز على جائزة نوبل للسلام العام 1984 توتو انتخب أول السود في جنوب أفريقيا الإنجليكانيه كبير اساقفة كيب تاون، جنوب أفريقيا، ورئيس للكنيسة مقاطعة جنوب أفريقيا.

<sup>238</sup> 1-Apartheid, the Great "Separateness," was a system of racial segregation separating the white Afrikaner minority from the colored citizens in South Africa. See Anthony lowstedt, *Apartheid: Ancient, Past, and Present*. Wien, 2014. P 46

2- Apartheid (an Afrikaans word meaning "separateness") is a system of ethnic separation in which persons were classified into racial groups according to the colour of their skin. The main groups were black, white, coloured (persons of mixed racial descent), and Indian. These race groups were separated from one another geographically.

<sup>239</sup> Desmond tutu peace foundation <http://www.tutufoundationusa.org/blog/>

<sup>240</sup> Martin Luther King Jr. Born on January 15, 1929, was assassinated on April 4, 1968, was an African-American leader and humanitarian political activist, demanding the end of racial discrimination against blacks in 1964 won the Nobel Peace Prize,



whites in the United States of America "whether they like it or not"<sup>241</sup> which helped him win the sympathy of many Americans, including white people, from all over the USA.

Desmond Tutu nonviolence struggle is a personal choice. He used to say, It is not easy to convince the revolting angry youth to avoid violence on the road to freedom. Personal choice is not imposed on anyone. The struggle with a strong hating racial enemy with a nonviolent means is if as you say to a realistic person to go to achieve a fantasy goal. This was Desmond Tutu's analysis of the conflict in South Africa. How similar is that today in the unequal Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian-Palestinian conflict (Fatah-Hamas)? What is the role played by the Church leadership in Palestine to transform the conflict and to find realistic solutions in this unequal conflict? Can the church inspire young people and for future generations?

Martin Luther King made his nonviolent style the cornerstone of his philosophy of the practical application of popular movement. Non-violence, for Desmond Tutu is a belief, as his books "Crying in the Wilderness" and "Hope and Suffering" show the prophecy and enthusiasm for reconciliation and negotiations. Nevertheless, the content of the books of 62 sermons, preaches and articles do not address the theory and the application of non-violence, they are only mere teachings. For King, on the other hand, Nonviolence is a weapon and a strong political strategy. King was a politician, but Tutu was only a clergyman who, with his energy and movement, wanted to provide leadership for those who lack it in prison or in exile. We are between two wings, a theoretical and an application wing. The first emerges from the religious approach and the other is based on the practical political approach.

For Tutu "nonviolence requires a moral level"<sup>242</sup> and when this level exists, "the nonviolent method succeeds." The oppressed community must have a moral sense, "which is not available here" in South Africa. Tutu says, in violent conflicts and uprisings, strong and tough men are always ahead of weak and friendly men. In the case of the revolution, how can the flexible and tender men bring down the tough ones and how can the weak advance that the strong steps down? Does friendly, tender and weak win unequal tyrants and systematic violence? Can you non-violently convince a fierce intense power of no morals or nobility that you are right and it is wrong? How can the friendly, weak, tolerant and mystic ascetic Church and clergy confront and face politicians and men of war seeking power, sovereignty, domination and materials? Desmond Tutu had to answer these questions in order to find the ground for his peaceful struggle against violent power.

Nonviolence fuel is the shyness and modesty that makes nonviolence succeed in its mission. In America, King succeeded. In South Africa, nonviolence has not succeeded because the ruling regime is an immoral system based on racism, exclusion, arrogance, looting and exploitation, on the one hand, and on the absence of political and social leadership in prisons and exile on the other. In America, the situation is different because the non-violent revolutionary leader exists, the atmosphere allows the change, and the ruling regime claims to be democratic for all citizens, except the African Americans who face discrimination and racism. It was easy for African Americans (who are a minority in the United States) claim equality in a democratic state. In South Africa, colored Africans were the majority; however, their rights were ignored and their sources were stolen. After a long struggle and peaceful negotiations and concessions, Clark, the South African President, agreed with Nelson Mandela, the leader of the revolution, on the holding of democratic elections and ending of the apartheid system in 1994. Mandela won the presidential

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<sup>241</sup> Chernus, Ira. American Nonviolence: The History of an Idea. Markynoll, NY:Orbis, 2004. P. 177

<sup>242</sup> Desmond tutu peace foundation <http://www.tutufoundationusa.org/blog/> visited on 14 September 2017

elections to become the first black president of South Africa to rule and unite the country.<sup>243</sup> From the beginning, Nelson Mandela suggested that all South Africans should unite to solve their problems.<sup>244</sup>

Desmond Tutu helped bringing the conflicted parties together 2007. He chaired the Truth and Reconciliation Commission until 2013. Furthermore, he is one of the world's most well-known figures promoting peace and reconciliation. One of his contributions was his visit to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories to promote justice and peace in the Middle East.<sup>245</sup> Has been likened the apartheid in South Africa and the practices of the Israeli occupation in the Palestinian territories.

The lesson learned from South Africa and the United States models is the oppressed Africans demanding their human rights. Africans in their home, South Africa demanding their rights as equal citizens with Western colonists in control of South Africa, a majority demanding their rights from a minority. In the United States, Africans were living in a democratic political system that claims equal rights for all citizens, turning a blind eye to the rights of African Americans, and discriminating against race and class covered by law. King used this humane democratic basis to demand full social and political rights and to change things in favor of African Americans by legally equating them with White-color persons. King became a symbol of peaceful struggle not only in the United States but also in Africa, where he was considered an example of the struggle against racism and colonialism.<sup>246</sup>

The researcher assumes that the Palestinians in Israel (Arabs of Israel) have been aware of this issue when they engaged in the political struggle within the Israeli entity, demanding their political and civil rights within the State of Israel as equal citizens. Yes, they have recognized Israel's sovereignty over them, but they are being realistic fighting to stay at home under a foreign sovereignty, Israeli sovereignty.

As it seems that conflicts in the Middle East described as sectarian or religious, they are more political in content. The Middle East conflicts are over identity, interests and sources such as land, oil, water, and other natural resources<sup>247</sup>.

The Christian Churches in the Holy Land views today meets with that of Desmond Tutu. Churches believes that the solution must be peaceful and justice for both parties. Churches are not to take one party's side against the other, but equals parties and asks for prosperity and human decent living for both parties. It does not only ask for political peace but a deep popular social reconciliation, real heartily peace, which in my view is an unrealistic Utopia is unrealistic and difficult to achieve nowadays. Perhaps the South African experience paves the way to the Palestinian and the Israeli peoples to experience and think outside the box rejecting violence and hatred and adapting love, forgiveness and renewal. What is the effort required from religious leaders in Palestine and Israel to achieve this? Is it possible? Is this a popular demand, as is the case in South Africa?

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<sup>243</sup> Ross, B. and Pritz E. "Peace Workers: Palestinian Youth Study Non-Violence . p.164

<sup>244</sup> Biography of Nelson Mandela."African Success (July 2010). Available on <https://www.biography.com/people/nelson-mandela-9397017> visited on 25 june 2017.

<sup>245</sup> Desmond tutu, the elders. Available on [http://theelders.org/sites/default/files/desmond\\_tutu\\_-\\_june\\_2015\\_0.pdf](http://theelders.org/sites/default/files/desmond_tutu_-_june_2015_0.pdf) visited on 25 June 2017

<sup>246</sup> See King encyclopedia, available on <http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/primarydocuments/Vol4Intro.pdf> visited on 26 June 2017

<sup>247</sup> Barber Nigel. "Is Religion Better at Making Peace or Making War?". Psychology today. 2012

The meaning of peace is bringing justice, equality, equity, protection, and harmony within the society on the bases of love, coexistence and sound social, economic and political relations on the brotherly basis, which reflects respect for the will of God in humankind.

Some thinkers believe that Churches can play an important role in the reconciliation between the conflicting parties due to the Church neutral position of the conflict. Churches, as a neutral party (third party), can play a role in mediation, conflict transformation or in the resolution of the conflict.

The Church has credibility and impartiality and is accepted by the conflicting parties for its social and humanitarian role that it provides for free in times of conflict in particular. It is a human body with a large number of people, which spiritual leadership can play a role in reconciliation between the conflicting parties. It can work to mobilize the peaceful public opinion to practice pressure in the direction of peaceful resolution of conflicts in society and renounce violence.

This means that negotiation and dialogues is one of the most important nonviolent means of resolving conflicts that Jenny Sharp may have overlooked in his analysis of the nonviolent means of resistance.

Strangely enough, this era was expected to deepen its secularism and atheism rejecting religion since religion is the cause of conflicts between peoples and civilizations. Nevertheless, it seems that this era can be described as a post-secular era or an age of religious explosion. Religion shows as a central factor in human life, both on personal and social levels. Religion in this age seeks to find a role in public affairs and to participate in all contemporary fields.<sup>248</sup> In this era of peace, all religions seek to unite their efforts to declare their rejection of violence and their pursuit of world peace or at least their contribution to the achievement of this humanitarian goal with international forces. This goes in line with the religious canonical approach of organization, non-dissention, tolerance and rejection of violence.<sup>249</sup> Intolerance is the natural reaction against secularism and atheism in the modern world.<sup>250</sup>

Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople affirms that our country in the Levant was a model of coexistence between the three religions: Islam, Judaism and Christianity, and that religion are like bridges and means for peace, understanding and tolerance among people through interfaith dialogue.<sup>251</sup>

There is certainly a difference between political peace, which exists at the official level only between political and world leaders, and the peace that Churches and other religious authorities are seeking to achieve. Churches, in cooperation with the leaders of other faiths in the world, seem to promote the peaceful message of religions to practice pressure on the political leaders who, since ages, are exploiting religion to initiate conflicts and achieve their goals. The pressure practiced on those leaders is to stop them doing so and for them to adopt the will of peoples to live in true peace, a deep religious belief in peace and coexistence at the local or international levels. Peace is founded on the acceptance of the other and its right to exist and on the acceptance of diversity; peace that guarantees all the legitimate rights of every human being in society.

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<sup>248</sup> Address of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to Al-Azhar and Muslim Council of Elders' Global Peace Conference. <https://publicorthodoxy.org/2017/04/30/religions-and-peace/>

<sup>249</sup> كورنثوس الأولى 14: 33

<sup>250</sup> Ibid. global peace conference

<sup>251</sup> Ibid. global peace conference

All the Christian churches' leaders in Palestine and the participants in the sixth Sabeel International Conference on the Christian Presence in Palestine believe that "the Palestinians and Israelis, Christians, Muslims and Jews can live together in peace".<sup>252</sup> That is if Israel accepts the Palestinians to live independently within their own state and end all forms of occupation in the West Bank and Gaza. The participants stressed that peaceful non-violent resistance is the best way to end all forms of Israeli occupation of the occupied territories.<sup>253</sup>

Finally, yet importantly, what comforts us through the difficulties the Christian presence in Palestine is facing and experiencing is 2 Corinthians 4:8-9, which reflects the state of our suffering as Palestinians, but provides us with hope, patience and solace. The verses say, "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed."

The Palestinian Churches message must have a practical strategy to share with the Palestinians and the Israelis. Coexistence cannot be achieved under duress, but with contentment. It is the will of the Churches to live together in peace, tolerance and reconciliation. Thus, the Churches strive to spread its revolutionary idea of reconciliation and love, the love of God to all human beings.<sup>254</sup>

Religion in our time is much better than atheism, meaning rejecting and eliminating the values stemming from religion. Through interfaith dialogue and continuing relations at the clergy or believers level, the spirit of love, tolerance and coexistence will be strengthened.

<sup>252</sup>نعيم عتيق وسيدر دعيبس. الحضور المسيحي في الأرض المقدسة 2008. ص11

<sup>253</sup>يقصدون بالأراضي المحتلة: الضفة الغربية وغزة.

<sup>254</sup>مقابلة مع الاب فراس ذياب كاهن كنيسة القديس جوارجيوس للروم الملكيين الكاثوليك في الزبادة بتاريخ 2018/1/16

## **Chapter Four**

### **The Role of The Churches in Palestine in maintaining Social Peace**

## Introduction:

This chapter examines the role of churches in Palestine in establishing Palestinian civil peace in its various contexts. This chapter examines the role of the Churches in Palestine in establishing Palestinian civil peace in its various contexts. The researcher developed the information and obtained the results through studying the interviews he conducted with Church figures, Palestinian ecclesiastical representatives as well as subject-expert Christian and Muslim figures. The researcher also resorted to the Churches, their related books and websites as well as to studying local and international television stations videos in order to show the extent of the Church's understanding of the importance of this subject and its inclusion in the Churches' social or political strategic plans. We limited the duration of this study to be from the beginning of the first Intifada to this day and in the geographical area of Palestine (region).

Churches in Palestine are considered distinguished institutions and Christians are seen as a basic component of the Palestinian people.

In this chapter, the researcher explains the meaning of civil peace in its various contexts, addresses civil peace elements and identifies obstacles and challenges the Church faced playing its role in civil peace establishment. The researcher also addresses the meaning of the security chaos and highlights the Church's interventions in the first Intifada and the period of chaos as well as its contributions in the post-split period. The researcher then defines these concepts within the Palestinian reality by seeking and obtaining the opinions of priests representing different churches in Palestine.

The role of the Palestinian Church is effective, important and essential in the Christian and national contexts. However, the Church does not see a difference between these two contexts considering that what the Bible presents goes in line with Palestinian nationalism. The Palestinian Church links and associates Christianity, its teachings, spirituality, rituals and music with its history and originality in the Palestinian society where Christ lived 2000 years ago. In this sense, the Churches are trying to bridge the gap created by the historical contexts and variables in Palestine.

In his Christmas Message H.E. Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine on 22/12/2017 he gives clear image of churches' efforts toward Palestinian people and recognizes the role of Christian Churches in Palestine and the Palestinian Christians in Palestinian national struggle and in social development. he reiterated his "appreciation for the work of the local churches in Palestine, which filled this land not only with a word of hope and saints ... but also with institutions that serve all Palestinians regardless of their religion... who are the descendants of the first followers of Jesus Christ and an integral part of the Palestinian People. There will not be a verdant Palestinian society without its Christian component. The contributions of our Christians to the national movement have been precious, always remembered, and represent an example for the rest of our region to make clear that there will not be an Arab world without Christians, an inherent part of our societies".<sup>255</sup>

The relations between Christians and Muslims are based on the principle of "live and let me live" in the spirit of simplicity without any complications between the two. Conferences based on dialogue and understanding brought the two parties together. These

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<sup>255</sup> Negotiations Affairs Department. State of Palestine. Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). 22/12/2017 Available on: <https://www.nad.ps/en/media-room/speeches> visited on 25/12/2017

conferences played a great role, especially in the Bethlehem and Jerusalem area. “There have been developing Islamic Christian ecumenical conferences in Bethlehem. These conferences were attended by the Mufti, patriarchs, clergymen and national and corporate figures in Israel. Sometimes, these conferences were also attended by peaceful Jews who believed in religious dialogue. This aimed at promoting civil and national peace among the Palestinian people, spreading the culture of understanding, tolerance and love among the Christians, Muslims, Jews and Samaritans. A journal called ‘Al-liqa’ Journal’ used to publish religious and cultural articles and to call for dialogue in the areas of civil peace and culture, even Hamas movement used to participate in such conferences.

However, in the Second Intifada, the Palestinian Christians were marginalized, were thousands of Christians emigrated during the Second Intifada, in particular from Beit Sahour and Beit Jala. The Islamization of the Palestinian cause divested the latter of its national totalitarian theme. What worsened the matters is the violent revolutionary approach by the Palestinian Islamic groups against Jewish communities such as the bombing of Israeli buses. This hindered the church’s work reflecting the struggle in its Islamic concept that is way too far from the Christian peaceful perception.<sup>256</sup>

Johnson defines the characteristics of religious leaders and religious institutions that contribute to peace and reconciliation. These characteristics can be seen within the framework of the Palestinian situation; Palestinian-Palestinian and Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These characteristics are<sup>257</sup>:

- 1- credibility as a trusted institution;
- 2- a respected set of values;
- 3- moral warrants for opposing injustice on the part of governments;
- 4- unique leverage for promoting reconciliation among conflicting parties, including an ability to re-humanize situations that have become dehumanized over the course of protracted conflict;
- 5- a capability to mobilize community, nation, and international support for a peace process;
- 6- an ability to follow through locally in the wake of a political settlement; and
- 7- A sense of calling that often inspires perseverance in the face of major, otherwise, debilitating obstacles.

The humanitarian principles and values that the leadership of different religious groups can establish in their believers can be transformed into a solid infrastructure for peaceful, just and sustainable coexistence. It is from this belief that constructive understanding and dialogue can emerge to resolve disputes through honest and transparent negotiations and dialogues that put an end to any form of violence, hatred and intolerance that are rejected by the fundamental principles of religions. This basic method of dealing with conflicts or struggles that religion is a part of is more effective and efficient than the traditional way of resolving such conflicts by states or leaders through direct negotiations between leaders without having a strong supporting spiritual ground.

“The Church has its own good and useful objectives for the society. The Church desires and choses to do the good deeds towards all society segments, as the Church doesn’t distinguish the Christians from the Muslims.”<sup>258</sup> The priests see themselves as the fathers of all the Palestinians, where a friendly relation between Muslims and Christians is seen.

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<sup>256</sup> Interview with Father Firas Diab, Zababdeh catholic church, 19/1/2018

<sup>257</sup> Smoch, David R, Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Interview with Father Raji (Issa) Khoury Abdullah, retired Orthodox priest, Birzeit 21/1/2018

“However, that relation is hindered by the existence of extremist and ignorant groups who are devoid of culture, love and etiquette in dealing with the others.<sup>259</sup> These groups are Muslims and Christians who reject the principle of equality and good citizenship.<sup>260</sup>

The role played by the Church in the establishment of civil peace is of an individual, collective, societal and sectarian character.

The problems and conflicts that the Church contributes to solve are:

- Couples' problems;
- Brothers and sisters' problems;
- Individual problems about financial or moral matters;
- Problems based on religious conversion;
- Sectarian problems between Christians;
- Social problems caused by political and religious intolerance;
- Problems related to the Israeli occupation.

### **Civil peace:**

The community needs the efforts of individuals and groups within it for the common good of groups and individuals. This is achieved, primarily by the efforts of the state to impose peace, security and equitable distribution of wealth.

The absence of the civil peace elements in a society, which are harmony, balance, moderation, community consensus as well as order and law, creates an infrastructure that would ignite a social conflict confined to individuals or that which may include groups and parties. This situation results from dissatisfaction with economic affairs and state-run resources that directly affect the citizen as well as the absence or competition on basic human needs. Social conflict includes all groups such as the family, tribes, clans, families and communities. Conflict is an organic phenomenon in humans' life and their relations with others.

Cultural figures play an important role both in the establishment of civil peace and the resolution of conflicts or in fueling and creating conflicts, depending on the attitudes and positions adapted by these social actors. This is reflected in the Palestinian context as Christian religious figures play a very important role in the establishment of civil peace and promoting rapprochement, reconciliation and trust. This research will address such national religious figures, who struggle on a daily basis to advocate coexistence and a culture that unifies and includes all under the framework of the Palestinian cause.

Johan Galtung says that violence has different forms, first of which, structural violence towards others. Structural violence includes repression, suppression, systemic injustice, inequality, greed and cruelty. Second, cultural violence, which precedes direct violence as a direct reaction, based on hatred and ridiculing of the others. Cultural violence includes psychological and media mobilization against the other through propaganda. Third, direct violence which is harmful destructive behavior by one party against the other using destructive weapons, murder, war, crime, rape and other hostile and harmful actions. This conflict resolution begins by de-escalation of the conflict. Behavior and attitudes change and shifting from conflicting interests, which is the essence of the structure of the conflict, to

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<sup>259</sup> Interview with Father Raji (Issa) Khoury Abdullah, retired Orthodox priest, Birzeit 21/1/2018

<sup>260</sup> Interview with Issa Najjar. Branch manager of Palestinian Bible Society/ Jenin. Zababdeh 25/1/2018



common interests takes place. This can be done by ceasing and discontinuing the violence in terms of overcoming structural and cultural violence, not just ceasing fighting.<sup>261</sup>

Civil Peace, Social Peace, International Peace and Human Security have been a subject of study and examination by many intellectuals and researchers who developed several theories to clarify the terminology and to establish concepts in order to understand the society and the way the peaceful conduct of relations. This process also aimed at clarifying the threats and causes of conflicts, both within societies or between States, and the methods to positively employ it in order to address the problems at their roots.

The 1982 Conference of Scientologists concluded that violence is not human nature; not genetically inherited, but it occurs for certain social reasons that have developed this hostile behavior.<sup>262</sup> Humans are created to live in peace, tranquility and harmony with their social environment. This can be achieved when Human Security is provided. Human security theories argue that non-violent conflicts and violent conflicts occur due to the unavailability of the human needs. When a person is unable to provide their basic living and non-living needs, they resort to violence and sometimes twisted ways and means to secure these needs. Basic living needs are classified as shelter, food, drink, health and education. Non-living needs are, for example, security, identity, recognition, participation and understanding. All these needs, despite their importance, look unimportant and ridiculous, from a class or societal point of view, when requested by the individual or group in need. He who lacks these fundamentals must be poor or weak, thus needs somebody to provide him the basic living needs and ensure the latter continuity. Therefore, the absence of these needs leads to distrust and skepticism of one's self. This generates a sense of inferiority, which negatively affects the social environment.

Abraham Maslow proposed Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which is a pyramid divided into 5 stages. The first stage at the pyramid bottom is physiological 'Food, Water and Shelter.' The second stage is Safety, the third is love/belonging, the fourth is Esteem and the fifth, at the head of the pyramid, is Self-actualization. Maslow asserts that humans are looking sequentially at achieving their needs from the bottom up.<sup>263</sup>

On the other hand, John Burton employs the theory of Basic Human Needs to predict and find out the causes of social and political conflicts to prevent them.<sup>264</sup> In his work on protracted social conflicts, Burton sees human needs with a global perspective that transcends borders; all human beings require the same basic needs as individuals or groups such as security, identity, recognition and the right to political representation. When neglected, they lead groups to use violence to obtain their rights and to meet their needs. Among the things that Burton sees as an important human need is education and culture that make an influential group despise or diminish the other groups, sparking the social conflict between them.

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<sup>261</sup> Academy of conflict transformation. Available on <http://mylearnlab.de/ar/exercise/galtung> visited on 26/1/2018

<sup>262</sup> Adams, David. Early History of the Culture of Peace. A Personal Memoire. published on August 2003 (with postscripts in 2004, 2009, 2018),

Available on <http://www.culture-of-peace.info/history/introduction.html> visited on 30/01/2017

<sup>263</sup> Marker, Susan. What Human Needs Are. In Beyond Intractability, August 2003. Visited on 12/12/2017. Available on

[http://www.beyondintractability.org/m/human\\_needs.jsp](http://www.beyondintractability.org/m/human_needs.jsp)

<sup>264</sup> John Burton, Conflict: human needs theory, Center for Conflict Analysis and Resolution George Mason University, Virginia, USA, 1990. Visited on 12/12/2017. Available on <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/bfm%3A978-1-349-21000-8%2F1.pdf>

John Burton's theory emphasizes the responsibility of the security institutions and the state to protect and secure citizens' needs and to assume the primary responsibility for a conflict.<sup>265</sup>

Another very important theory, Conflict Transformation, by John Lederach. This theory is asking to view and address the flow of conflict as opportunities given to create constructive change, thus avoiding violence and increasing justice through direct interaction, social building and responsiveness to real life problems in human relations. This transformation is based on two basic pillars: first, the ability to see positive conflict as a natural phenomenon that creates opportunities for building, and second, the desire to respond in means that increase opportunities for positive change. The likelihood of a successful conflict transformation increases when we pre-emptively are bias to see conflict as a potential growth catalyst<sup>266</sup>.

The importance of John Lederach's theory is it focuses more on the context of the relations between the conflicting parties. This theory helps us to understand the Palestinian community, Muslims and Christians, relations in order to understand the role of the Church in community development and preserving civil peace. By understanding the relationship, we identify facilitators and obstacles to the work of the Church in the civil peace and community development in Palestine.

To understand the conditions conducive to peace, which is drives us away from conflict, Galtung distinguished positive peace from negative peace. According to his theory, negative peace is the absence of conflict or violence. While positive peace is the integration of human society.<sup>267</sup> The positive peace is strengthened through the establishment of means of communication and dialogue as well as the promotion of peace, coexistence, international cooperation, conflict resolution, conflict management and arbitration. Positive peace is positive, non-violent, retaining the use of force, violence and threatening to impose peace. Although Galtung addresses peace in the sense of international relations, his theory remains inspiring and instructive even in local social contexts.

After understanding the causes of the conflict we will need to understand John Lederach's theory "Conflict transformation." Lederach believes that any conflict must be seen as an opportunity to create a process of constructive change to avoid violence and to increase justice through direct interaction, social building and responsiveness to the problems of real life in human relations. This transformation is based on two basic pillars: first, the ability to see positive conflict as a natural phenomenon that creates opportunities for building, and second, the desire to respond in means that increase opportunities for positive change. The likelihood of a successful conflict transformation increases when we pre-emptively are bias to see conflict as a potential growth catalyst<sup>268</sup>.

The importance of Lederach's theory is that it focuses more on the context of the relations between the conflicting parties. The incident is used in the conflict in order to understand the conflict in depth as well as the reasons behind it. These relations are our concern in the Palestinian context. We are trying to understand the relationship between the

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<sup>265</sup> John Burton, Conflict: human needs theory, *ibid*.

<sup>266</sup> John Paul Lederach, conflict transformation, Good Books, 2003. PDF. available on <http://www.solutionsco.org/images/cs-bmt-module-2-reader.pdf>

<sup>267</sup> Galtung, J. . An Editorial. *Journal of Peace Research*, 1 (1), (1964) p.2

<sup>268</sup> John Paul Lederach, conflict transformation, Good Books, 2003  
<http://www.solutionsco.org/images/cs-bmt-module-2-reader.pdf> available on

different sectors of the Palestinian society, Muslims and Christians, in order to understand the role, the Church plays in community development and maintenance of social peace in Palestine as well as to draw lessons and turn obstacles into opportunities for convergence and creativity.

John Lederach believes that mediation is a process during which the mediator helps and assists the conflicted parties to voluntarily settle their differences through negotiations. The mediator uses special skills and means in the negotiations that help the parties to find a solution. However, the mediator does not decide what they should do but helps them to understand the problem, which is the cause of the conflict. The mediator also paves the way for dialogue and negotiation to find a solution that satisfies the parties. This is called win-win negotiation.<sup>269</sup>

### **Civil peace in the Palestinian context:**

When we project the theoretical definitions of conflict; Basic Human Needs, Conflict Transformation and Civil Peace, on the Palestinian national context, it seems as it matches our painful reality, under the prolonged Israeli occupation and the chaotic conditions it creates in society.

According to Patriarch Michel Sabbah, the Church "participates in the formation and support of civil peace based on lofty principles, not only on the principle of mutual interests." The Church has a role in supporting civil peace through the comprehensive upbringing and education of the human, body and spirit, and his spiritual value, through pro-poor "projects of love" and educational projects. The patriarch Michel Sabbah believes that "the Church alerts the man for what he is, for his spiritual value, and that from his nature he is called upon to develop the life of the Spirit in any life before God." The Patriarch adds that the evidence of the God's love within the believer appears through the believer's behavior and attitude towards others.<sup>270</sup>

"The correct understanding of civil peace stems or must be understood from citizenship, which should not be based on discrimination by reason of religion, color, race or sex ... Etc. The adoption of the concept of citizenship, where all Muslims and Christians are equal in rights and obligations, automatically leads to civil peace, or at least leads to the exclusion of what may lead to destabilize civil peace."<sup>271</sup>

Civil peace can take many forms, such as the manifestations of national political unity, i.e. agreement and reconciliation. An example of this concept in the Palestinian context is the division between Hamas and Fatah, which began in 2006, threatening the Palestinian national project of liberation and self-determination. In this framework, threats to civil peace can be any sectarian, tribal, familial, social or other forms of conflicts that may occur in society for various reasons; economic, religious or individual. Where civil peace prevails, the people are cohesive and united, the national interest and the interests of citizens are paramount. Thus, all citizens live on their homeland peacefully, that no one is attacked either by the state or by other parties or criminal groups. Thence the absence of torture, infighting, displacement and its causes, such as incitement and dissemination of a culture of

<sup>269</sup> John Paul Lederach, conflict transformation, ibid

<sup>270</sup> مقابلة مع البطريرك ميشيل صباح، الطيبة، 2018/2/5

<sup>271</sup> Interview with Dr. Akram Daoud –Dean of the Faculty of Law at Al Najah university. Nablus - 10/12/2017

violence, hatred, discrimination and threats that are already prohibited in the principles of human rights and international conventions.<sup>272</sup>

On the contrary, there is cooperation between the State and civil society to establish coexistence and harmony and to manage state affairs, so that everyone bears the responsibility of preserving the homeland and the citizens by preventing civil war and fragmentation of the country. Civil peace guarantees individual and collective rights of citizens and groups within the same homeland without exclusion or elimination of anyone, which ensures effective cooperation.<sup>273</sup> This is guaranteed by international treaties with regard to civil rights. Article 2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights “Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.”<sup>274</sup>

Different contexts that include security, social, cultural, economic, religious, political and intellectual contexts can fall under the Civil Peace framework. The researcher will study each context separately to determine the role that the Church might have played in promoting and establishing civil peace or community development.

These principles are the mottos and values of the Church represented by its national clergymen, such as Archbishop of Sebastia of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Archbishop Atallah Hanna, who issued a statement on January 11th, 2018 that confirmed, “We are strong when united and by our solidarity and belonging to this Holy Land, we are strong by our righteousness, integrity, sincerity and our defense of the justice cause of our people. We are strong when we defend our right when we do not have money, military arsenal or oil wealth. We have what is more important than that, a humanitarian intellectual Palestinian who is conscious and culturally sophisticated.”<sup>275</sup>

Some see that the role of the church is to support the concept of citizenship by promoting a culture of respect for the other, which is contrary to the Arab world, where the religious identity is strengthened in the state instead of focusing on citizenship.<sup>276</sup> Some clergy believe that the church should be more open and create a suitable environment for the gathering and the convergence of activities and meetings that bring Muslims and Christians together for dialogue and generate opinions on topics of general interest to society.<sup>277</sup>

What is required from the Church is to prioritize the idea of supporting the concept of citizenship based on the promotion of a culture of citizenship and respect for the other. The church, over the past decades, used schools to promote this culture, which is called upon in the light of the challenges that threaten the culture of acceptance of others' culture and citizenship. The Arab world is witnessing the promotion and enforcement of a culture of

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<sup>272</sup> See International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. By its resolution 2106 A (XX), the United Nations General Assembly adopted the convention and opened it for signature on 21 December 1965. Entry into force: 4 January 1969, in accordance with article 19. (Al Haq Publication)

<sup>273</sup> Interview with Mutei Duibes, Zababdeh ex-Mayor , 25/1/2018

<sup>274</sup> Look: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. By its resolution 2200 A (D-21), the United Nations General Assembly adopted the convention and opened it for signature on 16 December 1966, Entry into force: 23 March 1976, in accordance with article 49. Al Haq Publication.

<sup>275</sup> The official page of Archbishop Atallah Hanna, Archbishop of Sebastia of the Greek Orthodox church. <https://www.facebook.com/ArchbishopAttallahHanna/posts/1771579826247601>

<sup>276</sup> Interview with Dr. Akram Daoud - Nablus 10/12/2017

<sup>277</sup> <sup>277</sup> Focus group of religious leaders. Zababdeh. 2/2/2018

religious affiliation in the state, which is the right to exist in a state based on religion rather than citizenship.

### **Security and Social Peace:**

Security is one of the factors that play a very important role in the establishment of civil peace.<sup>278</sup> The law is enforced creating a state of reassurance that is absent in the event of security chaos, i.e., failure to enforce or even violation of the law by those entrusted to enforce it or by criminal individuals or groups<sup>279</sup>. Security chaos is considered a threat to civil peace as the systematic hostilities and violence within the society<sup>280</sup> that is harmful to the lives and rights of citizens, such as their right to physical integrity, protection of property and the sense of safety, which are guaranteed by the international law. The competent security services refrain from preventing such violations and threats to the civil peace or fail to prosecute criminals and outlaws for factors caused by the Israeli occupation, which impedes the work of the Palestinian security services.<sup>281</sup>

Moreover, the security services were left in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip without political reference, without being subject to accountability, which in turn resulted in the exploitation of the Palestinian security services of their powers as they are left without supervision, thus violating many of the civil rights guaranteed to citizens by the law. The Independent Commission for Human Rights, in its 20th annual report for 2014, believes that the security services must be held accountable for acts that violate the law and for human rights violations, in order to ensure that these services enjoy the trust of citizens.<sup>282</sup> If it fails to obtain citizens' trust, this may lead to increased cases of crime, hostility and quarrels among citizens, which weakens the society cohesion. In Palestine, there is no distinction nor discrimination between Christians and Muslims regarding the application and enforcement of law and order.<sup>283</sup>

However, there are separate cases by ignorant individuals, non-intellectuals and racists who cause sectarian degeneration in the country, which creates a situation of insecurity, especially in the absence of rigid attitudes towards them either by the state or by reformers, clans and clergy<sup>284</sup>. Some clergy, however, believes that the Church should communicate with everyone, especially in those cities and villages where Christians do not live. Thus, the common values of coexistence and the exclusion of prejudices, both adopted by Muslims or Christians, can be established<sup>285</sup>.

Although the Church has a message based on the dissemination and propagation of the values of love and peace among the people and although it has tremendous power, the Church has committed to neutrality and adapted the role of "a spectator" as it did not take

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<sup>278</sup> Interview with Issa Najjar. Palestinian Bible Society director - Zababdeh 25/1/2018

<sup>279</sup> Interview with Father Firas Diab, Zababdeh

<sup>280</sup> See The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (commonly known as the United Nations Convention against Torture). The text of the Convention was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1984 and, following ratification by the 20th state party, it came into force on 26 June 1987 in accordance with article 27 (1). Al Haq Publication, April 2003.

<sup>281</sup> Look: 20th Annual Report of the Human Rights Situation in Palestine, Executive Summary, 1 January - 31 December 2014. The Independent Commission for Human Rights - Grievances Bureau, P.11.

<sup>282</sup> Look: 20th Annual Report of the Human Rights Situation in Palestine, 2014, P.18.

<sup>283</sup> Interview with Issa Najjar. Ibid.

<sup>284</sup> Interview with Mutei Duaibes, Zababdeh. 1/25/2018

2018/2/2 . Focus group of religious leaders in Zababdeh . <sup>285</sup> <sup>285</sup>

the initiative as it is supposed to due to fear<sup>286</sup>.” This fear is translated by the Church refraining from meddling in political affairs, which often take a religious character, particularly with regard to Jerusalem, where it is expressed as an Islamic issue by the Palestinian majority or a Jewish issue by the Israeli majority, “leaving and ignoring the Christian character”<sup>287</sup> This fear prompted many of the Church figures to express their refusal to address the issue of Jerusalem without regard to the status quo of the Christian presence and their religious rights. Although the Church “does not have a hand in politics”,<sup>288</sup> it has good relations with all parties to the conflict, which qualifies it for a mediator role. It, nevertheless, does not interfere, considering itself as a religious minority. This is one of the obstacles inherited historically. According to Najjar, the Church has a responsibility towards humankind in terms of “submission to God” and “walking the path of the Cross,” i.e., bringing the two sides closer to each other<sup>289</sup>.

Others believe that the Church, as a part of society, mission and message should be to make society more humane and to reject injustice and violations of human rights for any reason. Society, they believe, is not a barrier to the Church work and if any, the Church must address the challenges it faces.<sup>290</sup>

It seems that the role the Church is expected to play in the Palestinian society is limited and uneven despite its enormous potentials and powers. It seems that there are several obstacles that hinder the Church's work, including the People being distracted from religion and the weak social relations due to social communication means, which created a huge gap in relations rather than strengthen them. In addition, this distance from clerics has weakened the relationship, credibility and desire of many to regard clerics as responsible and influential leaders<sup>291</sup>. Some Muslim and Christian clerics stressed that the cleric should be an idol, a good example and close to the people. Clerics should also seek to be close to people and community and should also talk and discuss people's concerns, provide them the necessary guidance and keep relations excellent with everyone, which creates a state of trust. This trust is needed to prevent conflicts and struggles within the society.<sup>292</sup>

### **Community and Social Peace:**

Community and Social Peace means that society in all its forms is tolerant and co-existent away from any harmful collisions, chaos or absence of mutual respect. It also means the absence of bullying and intimidation, which leads to negative social behaviors, detrimental to civil peace and hindering social development. This term falls within two contexts, the first within Christian-Christian relations, both within the same denomination or among different Christian denominations. There seems to be “racism practiced by the priests of the denominations against each other, so how can they have a real role in promoting civil peace and having a positive impact?”<sup>293</sup> Second, the relationship between Christians and Muslims in the Palestinian society on the one hand and the relationship between Palestinians living in Israel with Israeli Jews and non-Jews living in the Israel.

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<sup>286</sup> Interview with Issa Najjar, Branch manager of Palestinian Bible Society- Jenin, 25/1/2018.

<sup>287</sup> Interview with Issa Najjar. Ibid.

<sup>288</sup> Interview with Issa Najjar. Ibid.

<sup>289</sup> Interview with Issa Najjar. Ibid.

<sup>290</sup> Interview with Dr. Akram Daoud - Nablus - 10/12/2017

<sup>291</sup> <sup>291</sup> Focus group of religious leaders. Zababdeh. 2/2/2018

<sup>292</sup> <sup>292</sup> Focus group of religious leaders. Zababdeh. 2/2/2018

<sup>293</sup> Interview with Demah Diab, Op. cit.

For the Church to reach the stage of intervening in the establishment of Security and Social Peace, researcher Demah Diab believes that, “the church must first promote the culture of mutual respect and educate the priests on the subject of tolerance and civil peace towards themselves first then on a sectarian level i.e. with the other Christian denominations.” “The Church”, she adds, “have to evaluate and modify the actions of their priests, i.e. the development of the church clergy first, then the parish to later develop the relations with all community spectrum.” Many priests “made the sheep Scapegoats”, meaning that they deal with the parish in line with their own interests. Priests seek their own interests. The answer lies in the Church’s quest for the development of individual’s faith before anything else.”<sup>294</sup>

Civil peace risk factors include tribal fighting, revenge or quarrels that cause bodily harm to citizens or property, where the law does not take place solving such social problems. The Palestinians have experienced many cases that fall within the violation of the Community and Social Peace, especially in recent years. These cases were in light of “the failure to call for legislative and presidential elections in the Palestinian territories. Thus, going beyond the principle of constitutional legitimacy, and the exceptional situation of the existence of an executive authority with wide powers that lacks legislative control and erodes the principle of separation of powers. This threatens Community and Social Peace by establishing a state of fear, intimidation and exploitation by security forces.”<sup>295</sup>

On the other hand, the threats to civil peace in Israel lie first in the manifestations of security chaos, fighting, sectarian conflicts, the absence of law enforcement in Arab towns, in addition to rampant criminal gangs, drug abuse and trafficking in Arab towns and the systematic discrimination by the occupation authorities and the Israeli conflict against Arab citizens on the other hand.<sup>296</sup>

Civil peace means living in a peaceful social environment where there is a diversity of methods, models and forms of behavior and patterns adopted by individuals and groups to express themselves and to organize their lives, thus enriching and developing the society. Contemporary society must uphold the principles of humanity, equality, freedom and fraternity, which are civil and political rights that international law guarantees. Article 20 (2) states, “Any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law,” as it constitutes “incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence;” one of the most important items Israel violates against Arab citizens.<sup>297</sup> One of the most serious violations regarding Jerusalem is the closure of Jerusalem in front of Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip who are barred from worshiping in Jerusalem.<sup>298</sup>

In its endeavors to establish a community social peace, the Church seeks to contribute to building strong relations with Muslims through frequent meetings between

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<sup>294</sup> Interview with Demah Diab, Op. cit.

<sup>295</sup> Ahmad Harb: Commissioner-General of the Independent Commission for Human Rights. 20th Annual Report, Op. cit. P.8

<sup>296</sup> Amnon Ramon, Christians and Christianity in the Jewish State Israeli Policy towards the Churches and the Christian Communities (1948-2010) The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies and Jerusalem Center for Jewish-Christian Relations 2012. available on <http://jerusalemstitute.org.il/upload/christianspdf-eng%20abstract.pdf> . visited on 16/1/2018

<sup>297</sup> Haitham alshareef, article, Raseef website, published on 20.09.2015 in arabic <https://raseef22.com/life/2015/09/20/racial-discrimination-practiced-by-israel-against-the-palestinian-arab-citizens-of-the-inside/> . visited on 16/1/2018

<sup>298</sup> Interview with Archimandrite Glacton Awad, head of the Greek Orthodox Transfiguration Church in Ramallah and former member of the Orthodox Synod. Interviewed in Ramallah, 21/1/2018.



Sheikhs, Patriarchs, Priests and Imams.<sup>299</sup> The Church believes that these meetings foster love and strengthens relations and fall within the framework of a genuine national context and in the context of the mobilizing against the Zionist enemy and the national dangers facing the entire Palestinian people. Some priests believe that openness and convergence should not be confined to the clergy, but should include individuals in the community and that the church and the mosque can organize familiarization meetings and activities that focus on people rapprochement and convergence and address their concerns. Thus, creating new conscious relations and continuous human development<sup>300</sup>. The church, represented by clerics, intervened to put an end to threats or harassment of Christian individuals by armed members of some armed factions during the second intifada.<sup>301</sup>

### **Culture and Social Peace**

Culturally, however, civil peace means freedom of cultural expression. Contextually, it is the right of groups to express their appreciation of theoretical ideas such as law, art, politics, history, morals and behavior.<sup>302</sup> It also encourage renewal and change away from the closure of traditional values, concepts and intolerance towards any new traditions. Intolerance leads to chaos and violence towards others, which eliminates, isolates and weakens the other. The absence of tolerance means the spread of prejudice, violence and the mentality of prohibition and criminalization, whether on the intellectual, political, social, cultural or lifestyle levels.

In the absence of civil and cultural peace, the right to think, belief and express is denied; as restrictions and controls are imposed. People can be sentenced and penalties can be imposed on anyone who thinks and drifts away from the inherited traditions. This creates insecurity, especially among the political, national or religious minorities at home, such as small parties or Christian religious communities, which, for example, in the absence of cultural security, they will certainly feel threatened and receded. They will also sense inability to integrate or express themselves or their unique identity. This will, subsequently, disrupt or impede or even exclude them from the national or social aspect, which will prevent the Church from performing its social mission to the fullest. If manifestations of violence and fighting against everything that is different in terms of opinion, behavior or approach appear, the fear of expression opinions will prevail.

Multiculturalism in society is one of the features of contemporary modern society. The views of the representatives of the churches in Palestine on the existence of a culture of tolerance and peaceful co-existence in Palestine vary considering that there are individuals and groups, whether Islamic or Christian, still living in seclusion and believe that the exclusion of the other is for their class interests. This group, which contradicts the national consensus, needs to be educationally rehabilitated by religious leaders, tribal leaders, family education or certainly through the schools and the awareness role played by the state in various ways and available means. If the Church has a role in addressing these groups, then Father Raji Abdullah believes that the Church can only address Christians not Muslims, due to religious differences<sup>303</sup>. The Church does not address the community as a whole but rather addresses the Christian community as it is its competence. It is concerned with the spiritual and social believers, for example, “to solve family and private problems on the land between

<sup>299</sup> Interview with Issa Najjar. Ibid.

<sup>300</sup> <sup>300</sup> Focus group of religious leaders. zabadbeh.2/2/2018

<sup>301</sup> Interview with Father Firas Diab, Zababdeh

<sup>302</sup> See definition of culture at:

<https://www.nad.ps/en/media-room/speeches> visited on 25/12/2017

<sup>303</sup> Interview with Father Raji Abdullah, Birzeit,, 21/1/2018



the brothers, e.g. heirs issues.<sup>304</sup> Some believe that the Church must adhere to its spiritual role and distance itself from the politics or slogans on the coexistence of religions as these slogans ignore the fact that the Palestinians were always co-existing without addressing religion.<sup>305</sup>

### **Politics and Social Peace:**

Civil peace, politically, means that the government is not specific to the rule of a specific group or party and is not justified to prohibit or confiscate others opinions in the name of nationalism, conflict with the enemy, social classes or on the pretext of defending the interests of the workers or religion. The latter, in fact, might be to silence any voice that influences the society or opposes the ruling party or regime. Intolerance towards the politically different and the failure to grant them the right of expression and political participation means that citizens do not enjoy civil peace at their home country. This constitutes a serious threat to civil peace, which could lead to severe and bloody conflicts, as in the context of the Palestinian division. It is crucial to emphasize the important role that civil society can play in institutions, trade unions, Churches, as well as in tribal and economic groups in exerting pressure on the ruling party and the parties to the conflict to contain the dispute.<sup>306</sup>

It seems that the Church did not intervene to bridge the gap between Fatah and Hamas and did not publicly declare its opinion on this issue as in an official church position. It, however, merely talked about the importance of national unity and keeping the Palestinian ranks unified in front of the Israeli occupation<sup>307</sup>. Some believe that this is appropriate and correct<sup>308</sup>, as this issue, some believe, is all about factions and parties' interests that is unrelated to the message and the spirit of the Church. The Church did not initiate mediation between Fatah and Hamas, because it sees itself as a religious institution that exclusively addresses Christian affairs. Since political matters are not within its jurisdiction, the Church finds itself taking a neutral stand avoiding addressing or interfering with partisan or political affairs.<sup>309</sup> Several reasons might be behind this, the most important of which is that the church "was characterized and affiliated with the Palestinian National Authority, especially Fatah, the ruling party." Most churches participate and celebrate Fatah's celebrations and events and ignores other parties, marking these churches as "Fatah affiliates. Thus, their mediation is logically unacceptable<sup>310</sup>." For the Church, the issue is not within its competence.

On the other hand, there are some fathers, such as Father Manuel Musallam, who managed to live in Gaza under the rule of Hamas. Father Musallam has honorable national positions and statements. He called Hamas to cooperate with Fatah to end the division<sup>311</sup>. In addition, during his service as a parish priest in Gaza, he was described as "a spiritual, wise intellectual with a social and political unifying position. Security services and major institutions chiefs, dignitaries, and mayors met with him on a weekly basis to discuss the

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<sup>304</sup> Interview with Father Raji Abdullah, Birzeit, 21/1/2018

<sup>305</sup> Interview with Mutei Duibes, Zababdeh. 1/25/2018

<sup>306</sup> A UN report on the vital role of civil society in the success of community and national reconciliation. On 12 March 2016. Available at [http://www.uniraq.org/index.php?option=com\\_k2&view=item&id=5336:2016-03-13-06-31-14&Itemid=444&lang=en](http://www.uniraq.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=5336:2016-03-13-06-31-14&Itemid=444&lang=en) The site was visited on 30/1/2018

<sup>307</sup> Interview with Father Ibraheem Nino. Latin priest of Zababdeh, Zababdeh, 23/1/2018

<sup>308</sup> Interview with Dr. Akram Daoud - Nablus - 10/12/2017

<sup>309</sup> Interview with Father Glacton Awad, Ramallah 21/1/2018 and interview with Father Ibraheem Nino, Zababdeh, 23/1/2018

<sup>310</sup> Interview with Father Firas Diab, Zababdeh, 19/1/2018

<sup>311</sup> Interview with Father Firas Diab, Zababdeh, 19/1/2018

developments. They listened to his advice and sometimes called him to intervene to solve problems not only between Christians but also among Muslims”. President Yasser Arafat used to visit the church in Gaza on holidays and congratulate all Christians. This convergence is a reminder of the good relations and enlightened thinking of the civil and the popular & ecclesiastical leadership<sup>312</sup>.

Some Christians refuse to consider themselves a religious minority or a sect, which is considered to weaken, marginalize and undermine the Christians' presence, national position, identity and nationality<sup>313</sup>. “The Church continues to insist not to give the conflict an Islamic-Jewish religious conflict character. It describes the conflict as a conflict between an occupying force and a people, whose rights are violated<sup>314</sup>.”

### **Religion and Social Peace:**

Religion is a distinctive factor in the identity of a society's components. In the event of an ongoing conflict in such a society, religious leaders can make use of the conflict to reduce or cease the conflict, as such conflicts cannot be confined to one country, but extend beyond the borders due to the spread of religions. It is, therefore, very important to intervene in an early stage to impose civil peace and to establish its infrastructure.

Civil religious peace means accepting the existence of a multiplicity of religions in the homeland, the freedom of expression and practice of rituals, which means tolerance towards other doctrines and jurisprudences, not to prevent diligence, not to forbid or atone different religious thought and not to deny the right of different interpretations of a religion. The right to different interpretations should not be prevented, especially what is contrary to what is prevalent in society, that is, the opposite of the interpretation adopted by the majority. A specific interpretation should not be imposed by force and coercion. Under article 26, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights guarantees the equal right of all people before the law to enjoy an equal right of protection that prohibits religious discrimination<sup>315</sup>. Article 27 of the same Covenant affirms the right of ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities to enjoy their own culture, profess their religion, practice their rites, or use their own language<sup>316</sup>. This privilege is available in Palestine and can be seen in most Palestinian towns of mixed religious communities, such as Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Ramallah, Nablus, Jericho, Zababdeh. However, this religious freedom still falls short. Priests from different denominations believe that religious freedom might be imposed by the law, but still insufficient in the contexts of citizenship and equality.

“In some areas, there is religious freedom and in other areas, there is not. This might be due to the spread of Islamic political thought and the emergence of extremist fundamentalist Islamic religious movements that we did not use to see before. These movements are emerging because of the media and the Internet, which addresses the Muslim in a way that leads him to consider others as foreigners<sup>317</sup>.”

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<sup>312</sup> Interview with Issa Najjar, Branch manager of Palestinian Bible Society- Jenin. Zababdeh 25/1/2018

<sup>313</sup> Archbishop Attallah Hanna, his official page on Facebook, visited on 12/08/2018 <https://www.facebook.com/ArchbishopAttallahHanna/posts/1771579826247601> See also Mutie Duaibes, Interview, Zababdeh

<sup>314</sup> Interview with Dr. Akram Daoud - Nablus - 10/12/2017

<sup>315</sup> Article 26, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Ibid.

<sup>316</sup> Article 27, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Ibid.

<sup>317</sup> Interview with Father Firas Diab, Zababdeh, 19/1/2018

Father Ibrahim Nino believes that citizenship means that the Christian in his homeland is committed to his national institutions, to exercise his right to partnership in decision-making and to be an effective and useful citizen. He also believes that the state must be civil not based on “religious constitutions”, as to “be able to raise our children not on religions but on humanitarian noble values<sup>318</sup>.”

Father Glaction, on the other hand, believes that citizenship is to live and enjoy all the rights set by the state and to freely exercise your right as a citizen. He affirms that the state supports these conditions, that is, it represents the rights of all equally. This is confirmed by most of the Priests that were interviewed. They believe that the state has the first and primary role in enforcing the law and establishing civil peace in cooperation with all sectors of society.

In the context of the Palestinian conflict, the efforts exerted to show the success of this religious co-existence and religious tolerance are of great importance, especially to the Christian and the Samaritan communities, which are an essential component of the Palestinian people alongside the Muslim majority. It seems that this religious tolerance is rooted in the history of the Palestinian people. However, this tolerance became evident during the first Intifada, especially during the period of the Palestinian National Authority, where the Palestinian Churches increased their activities towards the Palestinian cause and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Clergymen interest in establishing Religious Civil Peace is evident by their denouncing and condemning of any act that would stir up religious strife between Muslims and Christians. Several clubs and institutions have been established to deal and address any manifestations of discrimination among citizens on religious basis. They also aim to create a unity spirit at the level of civil, religious and cultural leaders to create a unified Palestinian voice.<sup>319</sup> Archbishop Atallah Hanna commented on the events of a sectarian strife that occurred in Az-Zababdeh village before Christmas 2017, he said:

“The phenomenon of extremism, backwardness and hatred that some seek to introduce into our society must be met with greater awareness, wisdom and responsibility. It is not permissible to confront the phenomenon of extremism with extremism, hatred with hatred or racism with racism. It is our duty (Christians) to defend our ancient presence in this holy land, away from the incitement, abuse and harassment of others (Muslims) because this is not in line with our culture, faith, ethics and principles<sup>320</sup>.”

While Father Tumah Daoud, the Priest of the Greek Orthodox Church in Zababdeh, believes that the key role in the establishment of civil peace in the town of Zababdeh goes back to the state represented by Fatah in Zababdeh. Fatah efforts led to the formation of reform committees of Christian and Muslim figures from Az-Zababdeh as a strong deterrent against any attempt to divide the national unity and any destabilization of security or social stability by a sectarian strife<sup>321</sup>.

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<sup>318</sup> Interview with Father Ibraheem Nino, Zababdeh, 23/1/2018.

<sup>319</sup> Father Manuel Muslim, official website on Facebook, on the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/abounamanuel.musallam> visited on 26/1/2018

<sup>320</sup> Archbishop Atallah Hanna: A speech during the visit of a group of the people of Zababdeh to his holiness in Jerusalem, on 3/1/2018. Available at <https://www.facebook.com/ArchbishopAttallahHanna/posts/1759946797410904> The visited on 5/1/2018

<sup>321</sup> Interview with Father Tumah Dawood, Zababdeh, 11/1/2018. Father Tumah Dawood is one of the members of the reform committee he stated. He always participates in the meetings of the reform committees where he is invited to participate in reform and reconciliation visits in cases of killings or sedition.

Despite the importance of the reform and reconciliation committees, which are composed of tribal and public representative and figures, Christian clerics are rarely being invited to participate<sup>322</sup>. The reason behind may be that qualities of a reform-person, such as the confidence and personality of the cleric and his ability to manage the situation<sup>323</sup>. According to some Christian clerics, it is not advisable for the cleric to participate in the reform committees for the reason that the religious framework used in conflict resolution in the Palestinian society is the Islamic framework. Thus, the cleric will find himself in an alien environment<sup>324</sup>.

Citizens have lived in Jerusalem for hundreds of years within the framework of respect of the law and the inherited treaties that guarantee the freedom of worship and draws the relations between the Christian communities and their social environment in Jerusalem and the Holy Land. This coexistence is tainted by the Israeli occupation and the ongoing Judaization of the city's landmarks.

Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem believes that "the people of Jerusalem have a religious and national identity and are aware of the sanctity of the one human nature that brings them together<sup>325</sup>." What threatens this peaceful and civil coexistence in Jerusalem are the settlers seeking to change the status quo in Jerusalem through the use of deception and forgery of the land ownership documents seeking to expel Christians from Jerusalem. Not to mention the Jewish politicians' continuous endeavors in the Israeli parliament to pass laws that restrict the freedom and independence of Churches in order to acquire their property, which the patriarch considers an explicit violation of the convention on protection of communities and similar international treaties. In its quest to undermine the efforts aiming at weakening the Churches in Palestine, the Churches entrusted the Patriarch Theophilos to take an international tour to mobilize support from the presidencies of the Orthodox World Churches represented by the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Pope Francis and Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby in order to convey to them the dangerous situation the Christian presence faces in Palestine. In addition to mobilizing international support<sup>326</sup>.

### **Economy and civil Peace:**

It is known that the economy has great importance in establishing the foundations of a society. As the economy grows and stabilizes, society prospers and stabilizes and jobs and creativity opportunities increase. Civil peace from an economic perspective is one of the components of human economic security, where all citizens are free to produce, trade and flourish. It ensures equitable distribution of wealth and the absence of favoritism, corruption and monopolization of national income sources, which reinforces investment and enables economy growth.

Patriarch Michel Sabbah believes that civil peace "is understood in the spirit of everyone's direction towards a secure, cooperative, spontaneous or organized life, where

<sup>322</sup> Focus group of religious leaders. Alzababdeh.2/2/2018

<sup>323</sup> مقابلة مع الاب جاك كاهن رعية الروم الكاثوليك في الطيبة. الطيبة. 2018/2/3

<sup>324</sup> مقابلة مع الاب جاك. الطيبة. 2018/2/3

<sup>325</sup> TV interview with Greek Orthodox Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem on 31/12/2017. Available on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6FkpI1tj0c> 15/1/2018 يوم الموقع زيارة تمت

<sup>326</sup> A speech of Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem. Available in English at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kg3IQE6Gmxc> Visited on 14/1/2018

each cares for their fellow human as they care for themselves and fulfils the requirements of those in need."<sup>327</sup>

The absence of individual economic freedom leads to manifestations of violence, theft and vandalism on the one hand and leads to the weakening of society and its cohesion on the other. Christian churches and institutions have been keen to support the individual and collective social economy through some development projects that have contributed over time to the development and prosperity of some aspects of economic life in various fields, such as tourism, education, culture, vocational schools, hotels, hospitals, colleges, universities and charitable organizations supporting marginalized people and individuals with disabilities<sup>328</sup>.

### **Social peace from the Palestinian Church perspective:**

Since its founding in Palestine, the Church has adopted these basic human values and principles and included them in the basic educational goals. It passed them to the different successive generations through religious preaching and education in schools, colleges and universities as well as through setting a role model. Priests use every possible opportunity to speak about faith, love, hope, brotherhood, peace, and other noble human values. They encourage young people and children to adopt these values. In addition, these values and principles are part of the strategic objectives of ecclesiastical work, which we consider to be a key contribution of the Church to the establishment of civil peace through raising awareness and through spiritual and national religious education. This education, in turn, contributes to the creation of an educated, sophisticated and enlightened generation capable of overcoming conflicts, avoids the use of violence in finding solutions, and capable of addressing problems in a peaceful way by means of civilized manners and dialogue.

Others believe that the patriarchy and bishops should educate and train clerics to resolve conflicts, have the culture of tolerance and acceptance of the other as well as openness to pass Christian ethics. "Christian moral education is a set of criteria that makes a person deal with himself, his family, his community or his country with the values that come from Bible legislation, which, itself, connects you with our Lord and reflect on your behavior with others"<sup>329</sup>.

The deeper the selection of the supreme interest is based on the free and responsible dialogue between all parties the easier it is accepted and defended. Human dignity and noble humanitarian values are the supreme goal that the Church seeks to strengthen by providing support, guidance and direction.

### **Citizenship from the perspective of the Palestinian Church:**

Citizenship means "belonging to a people and a homeland and loyalty to the people and the homeland. Citizenship means to overcome sectarianism or factionalism within the same nation and become subject to the homeland.<sup>330</sup>" It is within citizenship that each class or sect works to achieve the ultimate goal i.e. the prosperity of the homeland and its development.

Moreover, Citizenship requires certain conditions to be achieved, such as state, democracy, civil society, and co-existence. These, however, are Western concepts generated

<sup>327</sup> مقابلة مع البطريرك ميشيل صباح. بطريرك كنيسة اللاتين سابقاً، الطيبة. 2018/2/5

<sup>328</sup> See chapter 5 of this research.

<sup>329</sup> Interview with Demah Diab, Postgraduate studies in Christian Education Curriculum, Zababdeh.

<sup>330</sup> Interview with Demah Diab, Zababdeh, 22/1/2018.

by the Western culture after the Middle Ages, especially by social contract philosophers such as John Locke, Hobbes, Montesquieu and John Jacques Rousseau, who said, “We will not really become human beings unless we become citizens<sup>331</sup>.” Hence is the term citizen in the sense of the individual who belongs to a state or a political legal entity that ensures the individual rights and equality with others<sup>332</sup>. In order to guarantee the individuals their political rights, such as election and holding public office in the state. Alexis de Tocqueville sees citizenship as “free and conscious involvement in the management of public affairs<sup>333</sup>.”

The majority of Christians believe that the Palestinian Basic Law and the Palestinian Declaration of Independence made the Arab Christians in general and the Christian clergy in particular sense the spirit of belonging.<sup>334</sup> Citizenship to the Christian is a source of pride and belonging to the land of ancestors and the source of the Christian message, faith and historical roots. Christians see homeland as a source of livelihood, life and goodness<sup>335</sup>.

The researcher believes that citizenship for Christians in Palestine is rooted deep in their conscience and behaviors and act in their daily life such as any other Palestinians.

### **The Dispersion and Geographical Fragmentation of the Palestinian People:**

The dispersal of Palestinians in their homeland within three separate geographical regions has contributed to the weakening of the ability to meet, discuss and make decisions. The Palestinians do not meet in a single geographic place and are not ruled by a single political system. There is about one million five hundred thousand Palestinian in Israel, about two million and 900 thousand in the West Bank under occupation and governed by Fatah, about one million and 950 thousand in the Gaza Strip under the Israeli blockade and governed by Hamas, and about six million and 150 thousand Person around the globe. Despite the aspiration of the entire Palestinian people to liberate Palestine and realize their dream of return and independence, the different environments and conditions of governance have affected the culture of the Palestinians, the way they deal and address matters, their understanding of the issues and their vision of a solution to the Palestinian cause.

Therefore, the Church stresses the importance of establishing and strengthening national values and fundamental principles of humanity, love and solidarity among the Palestinian people wherever to promote the Palestinian identity first, away from any political and religious disputes. The Church, however, recognizes the specificity of each of these areas, the changes in their logic and perceptions and understand their differences and needs.

Therefore, there is three main axes of study, which are the general context Palestinians live in historic Palestine: Palestinians live in three semi-isolated geographical areas. The first group lives on the land occupied by Israel in 1948, i.e. living in the State of Israel as second-class citizens. A second group is an isolated group that lives in the Gaza Strip. The third lives in the West Bank.

These three groups live in different general environments, different living conditions and different political contexts. The researcher will discuss the role of the Church in

<sup>331</sup> عبد الجليل أبو المجد، مفهوم المواطنة في الفكر العربي الإسلامي، إفريقيا الشرق، الدار البيضاء الغرب، 2010، ص 33-32

<sup>332</sup> محمد عبد الغني حسن هلال، الولاء والانتماء: الانتماء الهوية والمواطنة، مركز تطوير

الأداء والتنمية البشرية، القاهرة، 2012، 75.

<sup>333</sup> أماني قنديل الموسوعة العربية للمجتمع المدني، الهيئة المصرية العامة للكتاب،

القاهرة، 2008، ص. 107.

<sup>334</sup> Interview with Father Glaktion Awad, Ramallah.

<sup>335</sup> Interview with Issa Najjar. Zababdeh. 1/25/2018

contributing to the establishment of Palestinian civil peace in historical Palestine since the first intifada in 1987 until today.

There is no doubt that there can be no Palestinian civil peace without collective cooperation and active participation by all influential forces in the Palestinian society. Pluralism and democracy are very important criteria for measuring civil peace. From the perspective of Palestinian human security, the institutional work of the state, society and others share the national responsibility of the Palestinian people. Political parties, trade unions, labor unions, and civil society organizations working in the public and private sectors as well as all religious institutions are involved in making a difference, adjusting and correcting the path towards real reconciliation, sustainable development and a stable civil peace.

It is important to emphasize that these differences in the three geographical areas with different political sovereignties (the territories of 1948 are of Israeli sovereignty), (some areas of the West Bank with specific Palestinian sovereignty since 1993) and the ( Hamas-controlled Gaza strip since 2006)<sup>336</sup> have a direct impact on the concept of civil peace, the way the Church expresses itself and the role it plays within these three societies. The Church reality in the areas ruled by Israel differs from that under Fatah rule or in Gaza under the Hamas rule.

The Church's societal discourse takes a perspective of normalization with the de facto ruling regime of the people subject to the Church (Community). For example, the letter of the Head of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem to the Orthodox Church Parishes in the Palestinian territories occupied in 1948 under the rule of Israel. This letter, which is circulated among the priests of the Orthodox Church in Israel, wishes the parish and the parish of Bethlehem which is considered "living in the State of Israel" peace, harmony and safety<sup>337</sup>.

The Church duality in dealing with the parish establishes its division and hinders its integration into the national concept. The consecration and focus on the concept of the citizenship of Christians in the State of Israel impedes and uproots their historical roots as Palestinian people and over time erases the national concept of the value of future unity.

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<sup>336</sup> The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) is supposed to be a Palestinian self-government. PNA was the product of the Oslo agreement signed between the PLO and Israel within the framework of a two-state solution. The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) was established by a decision of the Palestinian Central Council in its session held on 10 October 1993 in Tunis, and is considered to be the nucleus of the future Palestinian state on part of the land of Palestine: The West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which constitute 22% of the total historical land of Palestine. It is an interim administrative body responsible for the Palestinians in these territories, who in 2008 numbered about 4 million Palestinians - 36.6% of the total number of Palestinians in the world.

It is noteworthy that the leadership of the Authority historically, like the leadership of the PLO, is in the hands of one Palestinian faction, Fatah movement, which controls all of its services, including security. However, the situation changed after the 2005 legislative elections and the winning of Hamas. The Authority was divided to the two factions, one of them in the West Bank and the other in the Gaza Strip, in the so-called Palestinian division, resulting in the formation of two Palestinian governments. However, there is a symbolic participation of some Palestinian factions in these governments and other previous governments. This division was accompanied by fighting between Fatah and Hamas that claimed the lives of many Palestinians and caused a real threat to the national project to establish an independent Palestinian national state. This fighting also led to the absence of security and civil peace from the Palestinian arena.

<sup>337</sup> The message of His Beatitude the Patriarch of the Holy City Theophilus III on the occasion of Christmas 2017 faxed from the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Jerusalem to the priests of the Orthodox community in Israel on the occasion of Christmas and signed by His Beatitude, to be read in Churches during Christmas Mass.



However, these people see the reality subjectively, they believe that citizenship means ultimate affiliation and submission to the law where applicable. Therefore, they see the State of Israel as a legal incubator that protects their existence and allows them to develop and prosper, enjoy the services and economic opportunities provided by the State<sup>338</sup>.

This discourse is heard in all churches that the de facto situation goes in line with the ecclesiastical discourse. Former Latin Patriarch Michel Sabbah believes that an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be achieved through church intervention to reconcile the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. The Patriarch is neutral and does not take any's side. For example, he stated that he rejected the international protection of the Christian Palestinians, claiming that this excludes and uproots them of their origins, and that the Christian Palestinians are part of the humanitarian community, part of both Muslims and Jews. Palestinian Christians are asked to engage in the popular struggle led by their people and their community for freedom. It appears that the Palestinian Christians under Israeli occupation in 1948 became citizens of the State of Israel by virtue of ageing. They are Israelis and an essential component of the Israeli people, and therefore they must submit to the ruling state and act according to their context, as Israelis.

In this regard, Patriarch Michel Sabbah says: "The existence of the Palestinian in Israel does not affect his affiliation with his people and his homeland, but in addition to these two affiliations, his presence in the State of Israel obliges him to be loyal to the state in which he lives; Israel. Even though Israel is in a state of conflict and war with its Palestinians, being loyal to the state, of course, does not mean taking part of Israel's war effort, but being loyal by helping to put an end to the conflict between it and the Palestinians. This Palestinian, by doing his role, shows what the Palestinian truly is, not a terrorist as Israeli officials say<sup>339</sup>."

This is reflected in the calls and thought of Gabriel Naddaf, the Orthodox priest who led a public campaign for Christian Arab Israeli Occupation Army enlistment. He is proud of his citizenship in the State of Israel, considering it a personal freedom and belonging to the homeland (Israel). "We are not Arabs and we are not Palestinians, we are Israelis and citizens in this country", he says. Naddaf founded a Forum to encourage the recruitment of young Christians in the Israeli Army.<sup>340</sup> This was opposed by all local churches, considering it an act that opposed national ranks and betrayal.<sup>341</sup>

The Church has an important role in communicating the voice of the Palestinian cause to Western institutions, especially governmental and civil, which in turn can affect the desired peace between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. Through meetings and visits by the heads of the Church to international political leaders and civil and ecclesiastical institutions<sup>342</sup>. The Catholic Church, represented by Patriarch Fouad Twal, affirms the importance of separating religion from the state in our Arab countries and focusing on citizenship that brings all citizens together<sup>343</sup>. Father Melatius Basal believes that the Church must take into account the political circumstances that Christians are subject to in dispersing within the borders of the two states, Israel and Palestine. He also sees that they should deal

<sup>338</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4XataZIQNI> See: Visited on 26/1/2018

<sup>339</sup> مقابلة مع البطريرك ميشيل صباح. الطيبة. 2018/2/5

<sup>340</sup> See: Available on YouTube on the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/abounamanuel.musallam> visited on 26/1/2018

<sup>341</sup> BBC news: YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjmybFROH-s> visited on 26/1/2018

<sup>342</sup> Al Mayadeen channel. Interview with Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem Fouad Twal. On 5/8/2012, available on: <http://www.almayadeen.net/episodes/535140> visited on 18/1/2018

<sup>343</sup> Al Mayadeen channel. Interview with Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem Fouad Twal. Ibid.



with the State of Israel in order to meet the interests and promote the steadfastness of the Christian parish there<sup>344</sup>.

Christians believe that the main reason for the gap between Muslims and Christians is the responsibility of both parties. Of the important matters and issues that cause Christians to fear of social engagement and natural co-existence are the issues of marriage and Islamization. Christians are afraid that Christian women marry Muslims, thus, abandon or renounce their religion, which they fear most<sup>345</sup>. The Church prohibition of intermarriage between the two sides and the prohibition on Muslim women marrying Christians cause the feeling of not being close to each other. There remains a gap that prevents true convergence compared to the relationship within the social religious group. It seems that the Church does not seriously examine this subject in spite of its utmost importance.

### **The First Intifada: An Overview of the Ecclesiastical Situation**

In the context of tense political conditions in Lebanon since 1975, manifested in sectarian civil war, the 1979 Iranian revolution, the end of the Cold War, the Palestinians despair of Arab countries, the rise of religious fanaticism and the emergence of Islamic religious movements in conjunction with the penetration and spread of Christian Zionism in Israel, manifested in the establishment of the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem the Palestinian academics in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip took the lead in the popular uprising. On December 9, 1987, the first Palestinian uprising 'Intifada' against the Israeli occupation began in a spontaneous manner aimed at protesting against the Israeli occupation in a spontaneous manner. Palestinians were protesting the general situation in the camps, the pervasive unemployment, the Israeli humiliation of the Palestinians national feelings and the daily oppression practiced by the Israeli occupation authorities against the Palestinians. The Palestinian National United leadership and the Palestine Liberation Organization later led the organization of these protests. The Intifada calmed down in 1991, and was finally ended with the signing of the Oslo Agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization in 1993.

At this crucial stage of the struggle and steadfastness of the Palestinian people, the Church did not stand idly by, but extended its hand in the ways it saw fit. The role of the church began to take a new turn towards the national events going on. Christians took part in the popular uprising (Intifada), as did the Palestinian Muslims. However, the rifle remained absent from the Christians culture, the Church and their national discourse. Nevertheless, few Christian men and youth engaged in the national struggle within the framework of the left-wing communist part by joining the armed groups of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The church, however, did not encourage this, this engagement was out of a national feeling not religiously.

This first uprising was characterized by popular resistance and peaceful demonstrations. Christian clergy lead the demonstrations shoulder to shoulder with Muslim clerics as well as national political leaders. At that time, Beit Sahour was a great example of peaceful resistance, reflecting the national Christian role of the era.

The first intifada prompted the Christian leaders and the heads of the Churches to issue statements advocating the Intifada and defending the Palestinian right. The first statement was issued on 22-1-1988, a few weeks after the First Intifada statement. At that

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<sup>344</sup> Melatius Basal, interview, Jerusalem. 12/11/2017

<sup>345</sup> Interview with Issa Najjar, Op. cit.

time, *Theology and the Local Church in the Holy Land*, by Al Liqa' Center for Religious and Heritage Studies.<sup>346</sup> This document paved the way to write a Christian theology for the Palestinian context that addresses the Palestinian issue on the basis of justice and gives a glimmer of hope for peaceful coexistence between the Israelis and the Palestinians. The document was written by church figures such as Patriarch Michel Sabbah, Archbishop Lutfi Laham, Pastor Munib Yunan, Father Rafik Khoury, Pastor Dr. Mitri Al-Raheb, and other personalities such as Youssef Zakkoun, Peter Qamari, George Huntleyan, Shukri Sanbar, Adnan Msalam, Lawrence Samour and others.

These attempts to crystallize and build a Palestinian theology - that justifies the resistance and calls for justice - led to the institutionalization of Palestinian theology through the establishment of three theological centers, Al-Liqa' Center for religious and heritage studies, founded in 1982, Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in 1989<sup>347</sup> and the International Symposium House - Diyar Consortium in 1995<sup>348</sup>.

Christian clergy started to write a Palestinian theology, a "Palestinian initiative to read the Bible in the context of the reality lived by the Palestinian Christians and other Palestinian segments under the Israeli occupation"<sup>349</sup>.

The Palestinian Liberation theology served as an answer to the questions of Palestinian Christians about the holiness of the Old Testament used by the Zionists to justify the occupation and oppression of the Palestinians. Where the Church was unable to provide answers to all the questions of Palestinian Christians: How can the Old Testament be the word of God at the time used by Zionism to justify the suffering and oppression of the Palestinians? In order to escape these theological dilemmas, the Palestinian liberation theology emphasizes the need to place Biblical texts in their historical context. They reflect a human concept of God that prevailed in a certain historical period. This concept helps Christians now to know how God was seen and how this concept changed with the advent of Jesus Christ. In any event in history, Christians can know whether or not God approves it by asking themselves whether this act corresponds to the nature of God which we have known in Christ or not. "The basic condition for peace is justice first, then peace and security for all." The path and means approved by the Palestinian Liberation Theology to resist injustice is the path of nonviolence, which represents Jesus' method and philosophy based on nonviolence." The Palestinian Liberation Theology called on the Israelis to abandon their injustice and their ambitions, and called on the Palestinians to love the enemy in accordance

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<sup>346</sup> In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a large number of Christian and Muslim academics and clerics began to observe the phenomenon of religious fanaticism among some Christians and Palestinian Muslims, which led them to meet and discuss this dangerous phenomenon that would corrupt the whole society if not treated or addressed by the intellectuals and officials. Accordingly, several meetings were held in 1982 to study this phenomenon and to identify its causes. For more information, please visit: <http://www.al-liqacenter.org.ps/arb/archive/2011/Sabeel/> visited on 8/12/2017

<sup>347</sup> Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center seeks to work in all peaceful ways in order to end the occupation, establish a Palestinian state and bring peace to the region. He said that change must start within one's self first and understanding that leads to respect for the other. He also called for building relations and strengthening ties between Muslim and Christian families in all locations for the purpose of building relations, promoting common values and co-existence. See: <http://www.al-liqacenter.org.ps/arb/archive/2011/Sabeel/> visited on 20/12/2017

<sup>348</sup> <http://www.diyar.ps/ar> : Diyar is a national Lutheran institution based in Bethlehem founded by the priest Metri Raheb.

<sup>349</sup> Interview with Dr. Rev Naim Ateeq, PhD in Theology, Director and Founder of Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem. He has a large number of articles and books in Arabic and in foreign languages, especially in English. In 1948 he wrote the book "The struggle for justice", which explains the theology of Palestinian liberation. See: Naim Atiq, *The struggle for justice*, Dar al-Kalima, 2002, 1st print.

with the commandment of Christ “Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you”<sup>350</sup>.

The Palestinian Liberation Theology hopes to establish “two democratic states united together in a confederation or a federation with Jerusalem as the capital of both.” The Palestinian Liberation Theology sees the best solution to the Palestinian cause as a “single bi-national state in Palestine - Israel, in which everyone enjoys freedom and equality within a constitutional democratic system that protects and guarantees the rights, obligations and responsibilities of everyone without racism or discrimination. One state for two peoples embracing three religions”<sup>351</sup>.

This period causes the heads of the different churches to increase their meetings to coordinate to unify the thoughts and beliefs of Christians in Palestine, especially with regard to the Palestinian national affairs and humanitarian issues. Churches heads also carry out continuous communications with Churches around the globe in order to draw attention and mobilize support for the Palestinian people and their national cause.

Dr. Atallah Hanna says, “We, as Eastern Churches, Churches in the Holy Land and in the Arab Orient - whether we are Orthodox, Catholic or Evangelical Churches - we have our communication with the universal Churches. As an Orthodox Church, we always communicate with the Orthodox Churches of the world. The local Catholic Church has the same role. We try as local churches to convey the Palestinian pain, the Palestinian voice, hope and aspiration, hoping to have the support of the so-called West Christians towards our Palestinian cause and towards our people and our nation”<sup>352</sup>.

“The Roman Orthodox Patriarchate has no strategic plan to play a role in effective civil peace,” said Father Melatius. The Patriarchate’s attempt to mediate in the division has failed and the Church has been set aside. Today, the Church is paying more attention to the Palestinian economy and community development rather than playing a role in politically promoting civil peace”<sup>353</sup>. Christians expect their churches to address religious and public national culture and the churches to share the national and social matters of the Palestinian people<sup>354</sup>.

### **Manifestations of Security Chaos in the Palestinian Society:**

The concept of security, according to the Critical Theory ‘Frankfurt School’, focuses on the individual. Therefore, the state is only a means for achieving human security, where protecting and securing individuals and humans is the ultimate goal. Thus, the state is a means to maintain and achieve individuals' security.<sup>355</sup> When the state is unable, under qualified and incapable of imposing order and achieving security, security chaos takes place. Thus, cases of theft, murder, trafficking in stolen cars, encroachment on state land, corruption, nepotism, discrimination and terrorism increase.

<sup>350</sup> Matthew 5: 44, see also Luke 6: 27, 35

<sup>351</sup> Naim Atiq, The struggle for justice, P. 213

<sup>352</sup> Archbishop Atallah Hanna, Al Jazeera, Without Borders Program, titled “The Christian Role in the Palestinian Intifada.” For more information, see the following link:

<http://www.aljazeera.net/programs/withoutborders/2004/6/3/في-المسيحي-الفلسطينية-الدور-الانتفاضة-في-المسيحي-الدور> visited on 20/12/2017

<sup>353</sup> Father Melatius Basal, interview, Jerusalem.

<sup>354</sup> Father Melatius Basal, interview, Jerusalem.

<sup>355</sup> حوار مخبر عن تصدر الثقافي، الحوار مجلة ،(والمخاطر الأبعاد المفهوم، الجذور)، نظرية دراسة: الإنسانى الأمن ، أزروال يوسف ، الجزائر مستغانم بجامعة السلم وفلسفة الثقافي التنوع الحضارات، Issue 9, Spring and Summer of 2016. P. 197. Available on the following link: <https://www.univ-mosta.dz/images/revue/2016/revue9ar.pdf> visited on 2/1/2018

The security chaos in the territories controlled by the PNA was the reason behind citizens seeking to solve their problems by means of alternative violent actions, such as revenge one's self, or by nonviolent actions like seeking justice through tribal judiciary or the reform and conciliation committees due to the weak performance of the police, which is no longer pursue or prosecute criminals. This was a result of weapons trafficking and possession by some citizens, as well as police or members of the resistance groups, who miss used it. Moreover, the policies of the occupying state, exerted pressure to weaken the performance of the Palestinian security services in order to make the latter appear incapable of achieving security. The occupation also weakened the Palestinian economy and contributed to the smuggling of prohibited items such as stolen cars, drugs and weapons, which posed a threat to Palestinian civil security and peace.

The phenomenon of security chaos, disorder and internal violence in the PA territories has sharply grown in the second year of the Palestinian Intifada 'uprising' in 2002.<sup>356</sup> There were patterns and behaviors of assaults on the rule of law and the taking of the law into one's own hands. The chaos reasons and means varied, such as assassinations or attempts of murder of citizens, political, partisan or public figures; murders of citizens for various reasons (revenge, material, family or security); attack and assaults on some figures of the judiciary authority as well as on lawyers; abductions<sup>357</sup> of academic, trade union, informational or foreign personalities; and armed robberies against some shops. There have also been patterns of armed attacks on some governmental and penal institutions and some public facilities. Most of these attacks have been committed by law enforcement officials or at least in their absence maintaining order and security in the areas they are entrusted to protect. The lack of effective prosecution of the perpetrators as well as the absence of effective accountability that convinces the citizens to recourse to law has intensified these acts.<sup>358</sup>

In that period characterized by the absence of law, use of arms and thoughtlessness "Christians did not have any problem or issue with the Muslims in Gaza, there were no conflict or the Christians did not feel that they were in conflict with the Muslims. That was due to the Church helping and supporting in all ways possible to minimize the suffering, as the Church felt that this was its role."<sup>359</sup> Another opinion says that the Churches role declined in this period and became confined within the walls of the Church. In addition, the Christian voice was torn apart since 2008 and there is no longer a national leadership representing the Christians in the country.<sup>360</sup> Another says that there were burning attempts of the Churches of Tubas and Tulkarm during that period, which are irregular attempts and manifestations.<sup>361</sup>

The Melkite Greek Catholic Church in Zababdeh opened its doors to protect the Palestinian soldiers for two years. It provided to them food, water, and shelter fearing that they would be targeted by the occupation during the second Intifada.<sup>362</sup>

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<sup>356</sup> Several violations and indicators of the security chaos in the Gaza Strip were observed in the years following the second intifada until 2014. 20th Annual Report, Op. cit. P. 26

<sup>357</sup> Interview with Mutei Duaibes, Zababdeh.

<sup>358</sup> 20th Annual Report, Op. cit.

<sup>359</sup> Interview with Issa Najjar. Palestinian Bible Society - Zababdeh Office Manager, 25/1/2018 Issa Najjar is a Palestinian Christian citizen living in the West Bank, but he is Gazan and constantly visits it.

<sup>360</sup> Interview with Father Firas Diab, Zababdeh

<sup>361</sup> Interview with Father Firas Diab, Zababdeh

<sup>362</sup> Interview with Father Firas Diab, Zababdeh

Some believe that the role of schools, universities and ecclesiastical and western institutes in Palestine was negative in terms of passing Western culture and American educational programs. This contributed to facilitating immigration as the Christian youth felt closer to the West than to the East. The other negative role exercised by the PNA is providing certain privileges to some Churches on the expense of others, which contributed to the deepening of the gap between the Christian communities and hindered rapprochement as there were lack of confidence and trust, whether it was intentionally or inadvertently<sup>363</sup>.

Father Ibraheem Nino believes that the security chaos is still going on to this day. He also believes that most of the Christian youths have become secular and are far away from spirituality, where they see themselves today strangers. They also feel that they do not belong to the Arab nation and they already do not follow the Church, says Nino.<sup>364</sup>

The Church has role in helping citizens within the security chaos period to solve problems. It also provided them protection in cooperation with many Muslims in Ramallah, who repelled any attempt to attack Christians or the Church in the event of any case. He sees that "Christians do not trust parties and governments as the Church is their state and their government, and they resort to the Church for everything. This, however, is both positive and negative. Negative that they resort to Church for even the simplest matters."<sup>365</sup>

### **Creative Resistance: 2007 - today:**

The internal political conflict between Fatah "secular" and "Islamic" Hamas, has not stopped. Both see its method as the best way to liberate the land and the human. This conflict reached its peak in 2007, when matters developed into a political division, other than that geographical division caused by the occupation, between the West Bank led by Fatah and the Gaza Strip led by Hamas. Furthermore, the continued failure of all efforts and initiatives for reconciliation<sup>366</sup> caused the Palestinian national project to dramatically deteriorate. It became clear to the decision-makers that neither violent resistance nor the peace process, represented by Oslo Accords, would grant the right to its owners. In this context, Christian intellectuals stepped to initiate an attempt to pave an alternative path, the path of creative resistance. They issued Kairos Document - a Moment of Truth - at the International Center of Bethlehem (Dar Annadwa) on 11/12/2009 to expose the religious fundamentalism and to serve as word of hope and love in the time of despair to be "a title of creative resistance that desires life not death."<sup>367</sup> The document was written and elaborated by the some ecclesiastical leaders, they are: Patriarch Michel Sabbah, Bishop Attalla Hanna, Rev. dr. Mitri Raheb, Father Jamal Khader, Rev. Naeem Atiq, Rev. John Katanashu, Rev. Fadi Diab Dr, Jeries Khoury, Seider Duabies, Nura Karat, Lucy Thaljiyeh, Nidal Abu Al Zulf, Yousef Thaher, Raf'at Qassis. They formed a promising uniting Palestinian national voice.

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<sup>363</sup> Interview with Father Firas Diab, Zababdeh

<sup>364</sup> Interview with Father Ibraheem Nino, Zababdeh.

<sup>365</sup> Interview with Father Glaktion Awad, Ramallah.

<sup>366</sup> The two movements did not succeed in implementing any of the provisions of previous agreements such as the Cairo Agreement signed in 2005, the National Reconciliation Agreement of 2007, and the Mecca Agreement under Saudi sponsorship and the formation of a national unity government. In 2009 Egypt proposed a reconciliation proposal that was signed in 2011, sponsored by Egypt and Saudi Arabia, the Doha Agreement in 2012 sponsored by Qatar and finally the Beach Agreement on 23/4/2014. -See the 20th Annual Report, Op. cit. Pp. 17-18.

<sup>367</sup> See Kairos Palestine - a Moment of Truth document. Available on: <http://www.kairospalestine.ps/index.php/component/content/article/12-arabic/213-2016-12-27-10-32-55> visited on 28/12/2017

Major challenges facing the Christian presence, especially in Palestine and the Middle East due to the rise of extremism and the right wing in Israel and its supporting countries; the rise of Christian Zionism on the one hand and the emergence of Islamic extremism in its abhorrent form under the name of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, and its other names (Al Qaeda, Al Nusra, Ansar Al Sham and others); the bloody events accompanying these front emergence, mass forced displacement and genocide of Christians; the constant pursuit and oppression of Christians vital existence within disappointing Arab circumstances, where Arab countries are occupied and scattered by internal sectarian and ethnic struggles, Christian movements saw to find peaceful popular international lobbying methods to have the world have a moment of truth and take a just position with the Palestinian People<sup>368</sup>. It also called to boycott Israel, its goods, its occupation, tyranny and colonization that is taking place in the twenty-first century in the post-globalization era.

According to Father Milatius Basal, several factors contributed to the weakening of the Church's intervention in peace and social affairs. The multiplicity of Palestinian factions and movements as well as the martyrdom of President Arafat separated and scattered the unified Palestinian stand, thus alienating the community and religious institutions from political and social field. This was evident after Hamas won the elections and later rejected, the fighting between the Palestinians and the creation of two governments. Add to this the political developments, which has a great influence on church leaders. This has directly and indirectly allowed the influence of Western political power and the influence of Zionism on some of the foreign church leaders.<sup>369</sup>

In the current stage of Palestinian suffering under occupation, few Christian Palestinians remain. This very few may be enough to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world through their transformation from mere existence to effective presence. This can be achieved through a practical and achievable strategic plan. It should start with the internal construction and development of the Church, the openness to the rest of the churches in Palestine and the world and then conducting interfaith dialogue (both Islamic-Christian and Jewish-Christian dialogue.)

The convergence between the different sectors of Palestinian society has created a space for syncretism<sup>370</sup> in the Palestinian case, which created a balance between the traditional and the contemporary religious concept of identity. Thus, new concepts were developed to facilitate the formation of the new appearance of the modern Palestinian preserving the traditional identity, while having it colored with the theme of openness, cooperation, partnership and citizenship for all the population.

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<sup>368</sup> Kairos Palestine- A Moment of Truth is the Palestinian Christians message to the world about what is going on in Palestine. This document exposes the Israeli occupation crimes and illegal practices. It also gives a glimmer of hope and a calls to the Israeli and Palestinian peoples to renounce violence and hatred and establish a spirit of love to live in peace in historic Palestine.

<sup>369</sup> Interview with Father Melatius Basal, Jerusalem

<sup>370</sup> Syncretism, which is of a Greek origin of reconciliation and alliance, according to the Greek Plutarch means "Cretan federation". It dates back to where the Cretans were in a permanent war among themselves, however, they would stop the fighting in order to creating a force to face a common enemy. They stand together despite the difference when their lives' are at threat if not united. Consensus and alliance to fight a common enemy, despite differences of opinion, is an existential national demand. This term applies to the Arab proverb: "I and my brother against my cousin, and I and my cousin against the stranger." This term may also be mirrored on Palestinians - especially since the beginning of the 20th century - who, despite their ideological and religious, forms of worship, ideologies, teachings, confessions and policies differences, are united and stand together to meet the challenges. They do not unite at the basic concept, the cultural and political concept, but at the humanitarian and national concept.

This convergence and alliance was established in the middle of the 20th century when Christians felt that when split due to their divisions and differences they are no longer an effective force, nor could they deliver their message clearly. The World Council of Churches and the Middle East Council of Churches were established and an ecumenical movement was drafted. The ecumenical movement is in turn a movement of reunification and reconciliation of churches that pays efforts towards improving Christian-Christian relations first, then Christian-Islamic relations. It is the cornerstone of building the Christian unity that is required to stand in front of the challenges facing the Church in Palestine. Moreover, it could be considered a lobbying movement that could pave the way to establish peace between Palestinians and Israelis<sup>371</sup>.

The Catholic Church believes that Arabs and Jews must live together on the land that is the property of God the owner of heaven and earth. It also believes that convergence between Muslims, Christians and Jews will create a relationship of mutual love, which makes it harder for the Israeli ruler to mobilize the Israeli street against the Palestinian people<sup>372</sup>.

The Greek Orthodox Church in Palestine considers itself as part of the Palestinian people and believes that its mission to all Palestinians is a message of love, brotherhood and convergence with the other. Archbishop Atallah Hanna says, "We reject extremism, isolationism and hateful sectarianism, we are people who always call for national unity. The prosper and beauty of our country will never be but through this convergence and the Islamic-Christian national centuries-long unity." The Archbishop calls Christian Palestinian to be proud of belonging to Palestine and to the struggling Palestinians. "Muslims and Christians are the sons of one people defending one cause. Those who target us, Christian Palestinians, by targeting our endowments and our deep-rooted presence in this Holy Land are those who also target the Islamic holy sites and endowments. We are all targeted and attacked because we belong to this land; the setbacks, oppression and injustices we faced, is aimed at all components of the Palestinian people, where no one has been excluded at all<sup>373</sup>."

### **Obstacles of the Church work in the establishment of civil peace in Palestine:**

The Church faces several obstacles and challenges that limit its capacity and potential to intervene to achieve civil peace. Patriarch Michel Sabbah summarizes these obstacles in the following points:

- The selfishness of individuals or groups: an example of this is when the interest of political parties is prioritized over the public interest for which the party is established in the first place, "as happened and happens in Palestine."
- People who incite and conduct seditious activities: they are world-level forces that want to destroy countries and societies for political and inhumane purposes. Sedition is a weapon used today in the wars of the region. In Palestine, Israel uses strife to differentiate and separate people. "People, like those who are raised on sectarianism (especially relations

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<sup>371</sup> Naim Atiq and Sider Duaibes. 2008, P. 24

<sup>372</sup> Michel Sabbah, article "Memories in 2017 and the Prayer of Believers". 2017/05/2 Official website of the Higher Presidential Committee of Churches Affairs In Palestine. For more information, please visit: <http://www.hcc-plo.ps/?q=ar/newsletter/higher-committee-churches%E2%80%99-affairs-palestine> visited on 28/1/2018

<sup>373</sup> A quote from an interview with Archbishop Atallah Hanna during his meeting with a delegation from the Greek Orthodox Church community of Birzeit on 13/1/2018 in Jerusalem. For more information, please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/ArchbishopAttallahHanna/posts/1773968989342018> visited on 13/1/2018



between Muslims and Christians), are like a "burning material." It would take one match to fire the strife that would burn everything, while he who caused the fire is away and unknown<sup>374</sup>."

- corruption of some officials: the unfair and unorganized distribution of the country's goods<sup>375</sup>.

The Patriarch believes that the Church must practice its mission to say the truth and expose strife and corruption for it to be treated. "The Church raises the conscience" of the ruler and the citizen.

### **Jerusalem and the Trump Declaration: Ecclesiastical View:**

Jerusalem is considered one of the most important points of contention between the Palestinians and the Israelis, which is considered by both sides as the capital of their country. It is one of the main obstacles to a final solution to the conflict between the two sides. The subject of the negotiations on Jerusalem was to be conducted during the 'permanent status negotiations' according to Oslo I Accord, where Jerusalem status is to be agreed upon through negotiations between the conflicted parties.

Nevertheless, the current sitting US President, Donald Trump, surprised the international community by declaring Jerusalem the eternal capital of the Jewish state and by promising to move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. This caused a Palestinian and international anger and condemnation due to the serious effects of such a decision on the course of the peace process.

However, It is believed that the American Evangelical Church has a direct role in exerting pressure on the US President to accelerate the implementation of the US Congress decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and transfer the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to it.<sup>376</sup> However, the Evangelical Church in the Middle East rejected this position by the head of its Holy Synod in Jordan, Imad Maayaa, stating that, "Few evangelical Churches in the US support Trump's decision in this regard, especially Christian Zionism."<sup>377</sup>

The Churches in Palestine did not stand by regarding this matter, not only due to its serious consequences on the Palestinian national cause, but also due to the threats it poses on the status quo in Jerusalem and on the rights of the Christian communities in Christian religious shrines.

Churches in Palestine have suffered since the founding of the State of Israel. The Israeli government and the Jewish settlement institutions have exploited every possible way to seize the church property (the Christian endowments) by use of power and authority, especially in the 1948 occupied territories. These institutions have isolated the Christian endowments in that country from the Patriarchal headquarters in Jerusalem, which since 1948 were subject to the Jordanian rule. This has caused the Church to be accused of neglecting and selling its endowments for small sums of money. The Church rejects these

<sup>374</sup> مقابلة مع البطريرك ميشيل صباح. الطيبة. 2018/2/5

<sup>375</sup> مقابلة مع البطريرك ميشيل صباح. الطيبة. 2018/2/5

<sup>376</sup> Orient News Agencies. An article published on 7/12/2017. Available on: [http://orient-news.net/ar/news\\_show/143167/0/](http://orient-news.net/ar/news_show/143167/0/) visited on 30/1/2018

<sup>377</sup> Mohammed Al Ursan, January 13, 2018, press release. Arabi 21. Available on: <https://arabi21.com/story/1063561/> visited on 30/1/2018



accusations and says its acts are due to force majeure. In his Christmas Message H.E. Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine, has expressed the national position of Christians and Muslims against Trump's decision, where he adds, "Palestinians derive their inspiration from the message of Jesus Christ, who rejected injustice and promoted hope."<sup>378</sup>

Not only did Christian churches denounce the US administration's decision on Jerusalem, but also expressed its rejection of the unfair and unjust American position and expressed the fears of the consequences of such a decision on the fate of Christians in Jerusalem and Palestine in particular,<sup>379</sup> and on the Palestinian cause and co-existence and peaceful living in the Middle East in general. "We Christians stand with our Muslim Palestinian brothers and we categorically reject Trump's promise," said Archbishop Atallah Hanna<sup>380</sup>. Michel Sabbah, the former Latin Patriarch, sent a message to the American president, saying, "Jerusalem is the capital of Palestine and is the religious capital of the three heavenly religions<sup>381</sup>." The Bishop of Lutherans in Palestine, Muneeb Yunnan, also warned that the decision may change the reality of Jerusalem, and is "an attempt to open a religious war in the region<sup>382</sup>."

The Church in the world expressed its rejection and condemnation of the decision of Trump. In the Christmas message, the head of the Catholic Church in the world, Pope Francis, said, "The churches envision a final solution to the city of Jerusalem as a city open to all, with no single religious identity. The Israeli and Palestinian states will share sovereignty over the city. The end of the conflict, the Church sees, will not be the end of the occupation, but reconciliation between the two peoples. Naim Atiq said that the Israeli and Palestinian peoples must work together to adopt new constitutions for the two countries, stating that one can rely upon "the goodwill of those in power."<sup>383</sup>

In a vote by the United Nations General Assembly to call on the United States to reverse its decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Israel, 128 countries voted in favor of the vote, nine against and 35 abstained. UN General Assembly resolutions are not binding on states, however, these decisions are of a political weight.<sup>384</sup>

Church played a humble role in Palestinian national affairs, prominently after the first intifada. This role effect has increased with the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority. Today, the Church presidencies are considered an influential factor in the Palestinian national arena, as Church clergy play a major role in expressing the national position of the Christians of Palestine. This position, which was considered shaky and uncoordinated in the pre-first-intifada period, has turned to a unified and prominent position. There was a remarkable improvement in the relations between the Christian churches, which

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<sup>378</sup> Alwatan. The Churches position is clear; against Trump decision and with the Arabism of Jerusalem against the occupation. 24/12/2017. Available on: <http://alwatan.sy/archives/132678> visited on 30/1/2018

<sup>379</sup> Alaraby, this is the Christian and Samaritan clergy message in response to Trump's decision. December 8, 2017. web. Available on: <https://arabi21.com/story/1054552/> visited on 30/1/2018

<sup>380</sup> Alwatan. The Churches position is clear; against Trump decision and with the Arabism of Jerusalem against the occupation. Ibid.

<sup>381</sup> Wattan News Agency. Video Published on 21/12/2017. Available on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vHzI5M7Jd5k> visited on 30/1/2018

<sup>382</sup> Alwatan. The Churches position is clear; against Trump decision and with the Arabism of Jerusalem against the occupation. Ibid.

<sup>383</sup> عيم عتيق، ص 151

<sup>384</sup> Al Arabiya News Site: 128 countries supported Jerusalem in the United Nations. After the American veto Trump threatens to stop aid from countries voting against his decision. Published on 22 December 2017. Available on: <http://www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/2017/12/21/> visited on 30/1/2018

increased their confidence and led them to interpret the events within the framework of religion to proudly express its national position.

The role of the Church has not been limited to building bridges of trust and cooperation between the various Palestinian people and it has not been confined within the walls of Churches and Christian denominations, but it exceeded to participating in the creation, replacement and maintenance of civil society peace, by word, deed or being a role model.

## **Chapter Five**

### **The Role of Palestinian Churches in Community Development**

## Introduction:

Several concepts that are connected and related to development have been seen through the mechanism and strategy adopted by the Churches in Palestine to achieve community development. These concepts include the concept of development itself, underdevelopment, growth, progress or follow-up of contemporary human development and the adoption of basic human principles such as equality, freedom, citizenship. Finally, the concept of social change.

The researcher believes that social change is the strategic goal that Churches seek. As we have noted in the Third Chapter, the Church has gone through different historical circumstances and contexts affecting its role in the society. Therefore, the Church seeks to create a peaceful and safe space for its activity as a distinct religious and cultural group and sees it as one of its legitimate rights.

For the Church to bridge this gap between the people of one nation, which is based on different religious and cultural principles, it tried to build intercultural and interreligious bridges of dialogue, as to influence the Palestinian society to adopt a part of its culture and concepts of life. The Church culture and concepts based on Christianity are a new model acceptable and adoptable or at least should be treated as an acceptable social body. This change will give the Church the ideal space to grow in turn and flourish, apart from any historical or future obstacles based on religious discrimination. This space is based on good citizenship, taking into account the changes that are supposed to occur on the Palestinian Interim Constitution Especially with regard to article 4, which states that the religion of the state is Islam.<sup>385</sup>

Christians can compelled accept an undemocratic legal context. However, they hope that it will not create the impression that Christianity is alien to Arabs or imported from the West, which is untrue. Since the Christians view themselves as the original people of Palestine, their religion was the religion of the people of Palestine before the Muslims entered and occupied the land. They also, since the absence of the Islamic rule in Palestine by the collapse of the Ottoman Caliphate, seek to create the appropriate space for their existence and identity and reveal the true framework of their national identity through several contributions both political and developmental.

It should be noted that human dignity and respect for human rights are among the priorities that the Church seeks to preserve by creating a culturally mature environment in a society that secures the basic human needs.<sup>386</sup>

## The Role of Churches in Community Development in Palestine 1987 - 2017

The Church in Palestine recognizes the importance of development to achieve social stability and the desired change. Therefore, the Church has continuously endeavored and sought to contribute to the basic human needs of its followers, but it has strategically build schools out of its understanding of the importance of building generations in accordance with Christian religious and human principles to reach a society capable of understanding and co-existing with the others. All the Christian Churches in Palestine have religious and scientific education institutions that aimed at, the old ones, building an educated clergy and Church cadres that is capable of following-up with the requirements of the new era.

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<sup>385</sup> See Article 6 and Article 7 of the Draft of the Palestinian Constitution. Available on: <http://www.pcpsr.org/ar/node/284> visited on 19/1/2018

<sup>386</sup> Interview with Dr. Akram Daoud - Nablus - 10/12/2017

The new institutions, on the other hand, aim to prepare a new generations intellectually and scientifically able to make pave the path for the future. Churches in Palestine have different roles in contributing to community development for reasons that can be due to the political, demographic, economic and charismatic powers of the heads and members of these Churches. In order to demonstrate the individual work of Churches and their contributions to the subject of this research, the work of each Church must be highlighted. Thus, this chapter was divided to the Churches in Palestine, respectively, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Evangelical. It goes without denying the role of other Churches, but the major roles are carried by the above-mentioned Churches for their openness to the community with several development projects and not limiting these projects to Christian communities. In addition, this chapter also addressed the ecclesiastical or evangelical civil institutions. Several institutions were addressed; the Palestinian Bible Society, Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, Caritas Internationalis and the World Vision for the importance role-played in supporting community development.

### **1- The Role of Greek Orthodox Church in Community Development in Palestine:**

The Greek Orthodox Church of Palestine is considered the mother Church or the first Church in the history of Christianity, from which faith originated to all over the world. During the second half of the 19th century, the Patriarchate entered a glorious period of reconstruction and renewal<sup>387</sup>. The entire Orthodox Christian world led by the Greek state, which gained independence in that period, contributed through donations and material assistance for reconstruction. The Patriarchate and its members bought many lands and built and renovated many religious shrines, monasteries and Churches. The interest in building schools aimed at creating a healthy Christian youth was increased.

The Church, as a social and religious institution, has schools and medical, educational and social institutions, which aims to communicate science and culture and focus on the development of the understanding of the other, especially in the recent period of increasing religious extremism.<sup>388</sup>

The relationship of the Greek Orthodox Church in Palestine with other Churches in the Holy Land is considered great, as the Church participates in Christian-Christian and interfaith dialogues. The Orthodox Patriarchate is a member of the World Council of Churches, the Parliament of the World's Religions and the Council of Religions in the Holy Land, which includes Muslim, Christian and Jewish religious leaders.<sup>389</sup>

In order to encourage the steadfastness of Christian youth in Palestine, the Church was interested in establishing schools and cultural centers to serve the local community. In addition, the Church supports the education of young people for university studies, both in Palestine and abroad<sup>390</sup>. The Orthodox Church aims at opening schools and paying attention to education in general<sup>391</sup> due to the importance of education to develop a conscious and educated generation capable of building a future for his Church and homeland.<sup>392</sup>

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<sup>387</sup> <http://www.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/ara> all the above-mentioned information about the Jerusalem Greek Orthodox Church is available on the official website of the Patriarchate. visited on 1/11/2017

<sup>388</sup> Interview with Father Milatious Basal, Jerusalem,

<sup>389</sup> A speech of Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem. Available in English at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kg3IQE6Gmxc> Visited on 14/1/2018

<sup>391</sup> See Table 1, a list of schools built and run by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Palestine.

<sup>392</sup> Interview with Archbishop Atallah Hanna. Jerusalem 2/2/2018

Archbishop Atallah Hanna believes<sup>393</sup> that the Orthodox Church is present in Palestine in terms of development, not by a developmental plan by the Church Presidency, but through individual initiatives of Bishops, priests or secular believers, especially rich expatriates. He believes that these initiatives can be considered contributions of the Church to development, where the Church have taught and guided its sons to do good deeds. The developmental role of the Church should take the form of guidance, advice, encouragement. It should plant and promote patriotism, steadfastness, service and giving as well as belonging to the Church and the homeland.<sup>394</sup>

The Orthodox Church is also responsible and in charge of important Churches and shrines in Palestine, such as the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and Gethsemane Church in Jerusalem, the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, as well as many Orthodox Churches and monasteries, most of which were founded in the first Christian centuries, especially during the Byzantine period and beyond<sup>395</sup>. These Churches are religious sites visited by Christian pilgrims from all over the world. Thus, they are considered of the most important centers and sites to meet the priests and monks of the Church, most of them Greek. These sites are also considered of the most important sources of income for the Church.

The Orthodox Church has been present in several Palestinian towns in the territories under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian National Authority and in various numbers, these locations are Jerusalem, Gaza, Bethlehem, Beit Sahour, Beit Jala, Jifna, Taybeh, Aboud, Birzeit, Nablus, Rafidya, Nisf Jubeil, Tulkarm, Zababdeh, Tubas and Burqin.

The Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem also comprehend and embrace Russian-speaking citizens, Russian being the second language of Israel where 20% of the latter population speak it as their first language. Thus, the Church has assigned and allocated special monasteries to hold prayers in the Russian language in Jerusalem, Acre, Nazareth, Al Mujaydil, Tiberius, Capernaum, Jaffa and Beersheba, where the number of Orthodox Russians in historic Palestine is estimated at 384,000 Christian Russians holding Israeli citizenship.

## **2- The Role of Catholic Church in Community Development in Palestine:**

Although the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem was founded in 1099 following the first crusade and follows the Vatican. However, since the nineteenth century it began to take the Arab character and engaged in Palestinian national affairs by making many contributions, especially educational and cultural, to the Palestinian community. The Patriarchate, then, established Orders, monasteries, Churches and institutions in several parts of historic Palestine.<sup>396</sup>

The number of Catholics served by the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem today is estimated at about 70,000, divided into four different sovereign countries and within a wide variety of rich cultures, languages, religions and traditions. These four countries are Palestine, Israel, Jordan and Cyprus.<sup>397</sup>

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<sup>393</sup> Atallah Hanna, Archbishop of Sebastia of the Greek Orthodox. He served as the official spokesman of the Jerusalemite Patriarchate.

<sup>394</sup> Interview with Archbishop Atallah Hanna. Jerusalem. 2/2/2018

<sup>395</sup> See the list of monasteries and their locations in Table 2

<sup>396</sup> See Table 2:

<sup>397</sup> Official website of the Latin Patriarchate in Palestine. <https://www.lpj.org/diocese/history/> visited on 1/11/2017

The appointment of the Latin Patriarch in Jerusalem is subject to the ecclesiastical authority of the Pope. In June 2016, the Italian, Father Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa<sup>398</sup>, has been appointed as an apostolic administrator until the appointment of a new patriarch<sup>399</sup>.

The establishment of the Seminary in Jerusalem in 1852, which was later transferred to Beit Jala in 1936, is one of the important developmental contributions of the Latin Church in Palestine. Apart from the spiritual interests of youth Palestinian and other of priesthood, the Seminary is also considered for it teaches French, where French is the language of instruction. Theology and philosophy are also taught at the Seminary. Graduates receive a Bachelor's degree in Theology and Philosophy. The PA recognizes and authorizes this degree since 2009. The Seminary aims to raise youth, from Palestine and all around the globe, to serve as priests.

One of the active institutions in Palestine that supports the Latin Patriarchate is The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem. (The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem). With 30,000 supporting members from all around the world. The Order supports Christians and provides them with a decent life by sustaining charitable, cultural and social assistance and supporting the institutions of the Catholic Church in the Holy Land, especially the Patriarchate.<sup>400</sup>

Due to its strategic interest in education and culture, the Latin Patriarchate has established schools in many areas of Palestine<sup>401</sup>. Today, it is considered one of the most distinguished schools with high academic achievement and distinguished behavioral and moral discipline. "It is a unique case where teaching students disciplinal behaviors is in a mixed environment".<sup>402</sup>

The needs of the Catholic parish in Palestine are examined as part of a strategic plan and periodic meetings of the Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land, where the needs of the parish are fulfilled<sup>403</sup>. Father Jack believes that the cleric should not confine his role to the service of spirituality, rituals and prayers but to give a good example in the community service and initiate in partnership with the people of his community and his town. The cleric should also initiate economic projects to support the local economy because of this impact on the steadfastness, survivability and continued presence of the Palestinians in their country<sup>404</sup>. "The Church is not only clergy and monks, but also all believers. If they work together and initiate economic projects, they can cover social needs and flourish,"<sup>405</sup> he said.

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<sup>398</sup> Msgr. Ptasapala was the 156th Custos of the Holy Land for the hundred and fifty-sixth of June 2, 2004, after his appointment on 15 May of that year. The Custos of the Holy Land is appointed by the Friars Minor Order Minister General with the ratification of the Holy See, in accordance with the pontifical regulations in place in the Custody of the Holy Land, which are part of the Friars Minor Order regulations. For more info, see <https://www.lpi.org/apostolic-administrator/> visited on 2/1/2018

<sup>399</sup> The resignation of Patriarch Fouad Twal, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, due to age reasons in accordance with Article 401, Section 1 of the Canon Law. See Vatican Radio. Website: Pope Francis accepts the resignation of Patriarch Fouad Twal as the latter reached the age limit. An article published on 7/12/2017. Available on: <http://www.maannnews.net/Content.aspx?id=259921> visited on 1/30/2018

<sup>400</sup> The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem, available on, <http://www.oessh.va/content/ordinequestresantosepolcro/en/chi-siamo.html> visited on 2/11/2017

<sup>401</sup> See Table 6:

<sup>402</sup> Interview with Mr. Nizar, Qabatiya, 31/1/2018

<sup>403</sup> مقابلة مع الاب جاك . الطيبة. 2018/2/3

<sup>404</sup> مقابلة مع الاب جاك . الطيبة. 2018/2/3

<sup>405</sup> مقابلة مع الاب جاك . الطيبة. 2018/2/3



Christian Churches in Palestine contribute to the support of more than 20,000 Palestinian Christian and Muslim families through the creation of jobs within churches and ecclesiastical institutions, which amounts to 45% of institutions and civic organizations in the West Bank<sup>406</sup>. The Patriarchate also built hospitals and hotels in Palestine. It has considered the construction of housing units in the East of Jerusalem and in the neighborhood of Al-Shaya in Jerusalem, home to 68 Christian families. Furthermore, it supports the Beit Faji housing project for young couples with low income. Yet, another housing project is being carried out and renovations are being carried out in Old Jerusalem for 2,000 Christians who did not leave the city out of 10,000. The Church has several housing projects in Gaza<sup>407</sup>. Father Jack believes that the projects carried out by the Church are not only the projects carried out directly by the Patriarchs in Palestine, but also the projects carried out by the ecclesiastical institutions, such as the Caritas Internationalis, World Vision and other institutions, as well as the initiatives of Christian individuals or groups who believe in the importance of philanthropy<sup>408</sup>.

There are many international Catholic organizations which are active in Palestine. The researcher will give example of two of them: Caritas Internationalis and World vision organization.

#### **a- World Vision:**

The organization is part of a global Christian humanitarian organization which inspire its work from the teaching of Jesus Christ<sup>409</sup>. Since 1975, the World Vision started working serving the poor and marginalized and implementing long-term community-based development programs focused on children in the areas of: education, health, economic development and child protection. Their programs aim to build resilience, sustainability and self-reliance within the societies and are implemented with cooperation with local partners and supported by technical experts.

They have five offices with 150 staff across Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza benefitting around 560,000 people.<sup>410</sup>

Aiming into giving hope in better future for the people of the holy land, the world vision in partnership with local organizations in most areas of Palestine, works with the communities, families and children in Jerusalem, west bank and Gaza. Also they advocate to improve the lives of children under Israeli occupation and promoting peace and justice between the two people, and finding solutions to change the future for their kids and the next generation<sup>411</sup>

Last year, their work in Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza, directly benefitted more than 92,000 children; nearly 40,000 of those were in Gaza.<sup>412</sup>

#### **b- Caritas Internationalis:**

<sup>406</sup> مؤتمر الحضور المسيحي في فلسطين والشتات: إحصائيات، تحديات، آفاق. دار الندوة الدولية بيت لحم. لقراءة المزيد

<sup>407</sup> تمت زيارة الموقع يوم 2018/1/28 <http://www.abouna.org/node/1437>

<sup>408</sup> تلفزيون الميادين. مقابلة مع بطريرك اللاتين في القدس فؤاد طوال. المرجع السابق

<sup>409</sup> مقابلة مع الاب جاك. الطيبة. 2018/2/3

<sup>410</sup> موقع مؤسسة الرؤيا العالمية. <https://www.worldvision.org> تمت زيارة الموقع يوم 2018/2/3

<sup>411</sup> الموقع الرسمي لمؤسسة الرؤيا العالمية/ فلسطين. متوفر على الانترنت : <https://www.wvi.org/jerusalem> تمت زيارة الموقع يوم 2018/2/03

<sup>412</sup> موقع مؤسسة الرؤيا العالمية.

<sup>413</sup> موقع مؤسسة الرؤيا العالمية. المرجع السابق



Caritas Internationalis is confederation of over 160 members who are working at the grassroots in almost every country of the world. When a crisis hits, Caritas is already on the ground. The diverse members from small groups of volunteers to some of the biggest global charities. Inspired by Catholic faith, Caritas is the helping hand of the Church –reaching out to the poor, vulnerable and excluded, regardless of race or religion, to build a world based on justice and fraternal love.

Caritas Internationalis has its headquarters in Rome –coordinating emergency operations, formulating development policy and advocating for a better world for everyone. All national Caritas organizations are members of their own regional Caritas networks and the international confederation.

From the founding of the first Caritas in Germany in 1897, to the setting up of Caritas Internationalis in 1951, until today, Caritas has a rich history of listening respectfully to the suffering of the poor and giving them the tools to transform their own lives. The deep moral and spiritual principles of dignity, justice, solidarity and stewardship still guide Caritas today.<sup>413</sup>

It seems, from the data given, that the Latin Church in Palestine represented by its patriarch and priests perform a noble mission in the homeland, both pastoral and social. The academic and educational institutional achievements as well as the monasteries and shrines managed by the Patriarchate contribute to human and cultural development. Meetings and encounters with the peoples of the world of pilgrims and visitors conveys and broadcasts Palestinians voice all over the world. It also mobilizes moral, material and political support for their cause. Thus, it ends the international isolation and contributes to support the Palestinian political leadership, which considers the ecclesiastical presidencies a helping hand in the nonviolent popular struggle.

### **3- The Role of the Lutheran Church in Community Development in Palestine:**

The Lutheran presence in Palestine began to emerge in the middle of the 19th century through German and British missionaries. Today, the Lutheran presence is mainly in five locations, mainly in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Ramallah and Amman. The Ramallah and Amman parishes are of refugee families who fled their homes during the wars that followed the establishment of the State of Israel.<sup>414</sup>

The Lutheran Church is headed by the Palestinian Bishop Munib Younan<sup>415</sup>, an ecclesiastical, national and international activist.

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<sup>413</sup> . For more information about Caritas Internationalis visit: <https://www.caritas.org/who-we-are/> visited on 31/1/2018

<sup>414</sup> <http://www.elcjh.org/> The official site of the Lutheran Church in Jordan and Palestine

<sup>415</sup> Bishop Younan was educated in Palestine and Finland and has been active in numerous faith organizations since his ordination in 1976, such as the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Fellowship of the Middle East Evangelical Churches (FMEEC). The bishop was the first to translate the Augsburg Confession, a key document of the Lutheran Church, into Arabic. He is an active member of various ecumenical and interfaith dialogue initiatives in Jerusalem that he helped found. He is the former President (2010-2017) of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), a global communion of Christian churches with 145 member churches in 79 countries representing more than 70 million Christians. He is past president of FMEEC and provides leadership for the ecumenical Patriarchs and Heads of Local Christian Churches in Jerusalem, as well as for the Council of Religious Institutions in the Holy Land (CRIHL), comprised of leaders of Jerusalem's Jewish, Muslim and Christian communities. For more visit the official web

The Lutheran Church paid attention to education and culture as well as community development. It established the Martin Luther Community Development Center in Jerusalem.

The center was established with the intent of supporting the local community by providing education and creative activities. It also aims at improving the quality of life for the citizens of the Old City of Jerusalem through the provision of a gymnasium, a day-care center, a children's activities program, a post-school program for students, as well as a developmental information and reference center.

The Lutheran Church considers that it expresses and shows its Christian faith by spreading the culture of peace, nonviolence, communication and dialogue by virtue of its presence in a Christian, Muslim and Jewish community.

The Lutheran Church contributed to the enrichment of environmental sciences in Palestine through its establishment of the Environmental Education Center in Beit Jala in 1992.<sup>416</sup>

In order to activate the cultural life in Palestine, the Lutheran Church established Dar Al-Kalima University College of Arts and Culture in 2000 to provide a space for creativity, self-expression and cultural exchange locally and internationally. This school, which later evolved into Dar Al Kalima College, aims at empowering Palestinian youth, women, teachers and leaders of the future as well as activating their role in society through quality civic education and participation programs that seek to motivate, refine and develop their potentials and abilities.

This institution has created new educational opportunities in Palestine suitable for the twenty-first century. The institution is to provide the developmental requirements of the Palestinian society by creating educational opportunities that are alternative to conventional and traditional ones. It also supports and encourages students to develop their future through their work. It provides training programs, such as visual and performing arts, communications and tourism and documentaries. The training programs also target individuals and community's health development through the provision of primary health care services based on the principles of prevention and community awareness as well as the provision of facilities and programs based on the convergence of body, mind and spirit.

It also provides services and programs for different age groups, from children to young people to the elderly in order to meet the educational, social, spiritual and recreational needs<sup>417 418</sup>. They also have schools in Ramallah<sup>419</sup>, Beit Jala<sup>420</sup>, Beit Sahour<sup>421</sup>, a kindergarten in Jerusalem, and a guesthouse in Beit Jala to welcome the pilgrims.<sup>422</sup>

#### **4- The Role of the Anglican Church in Community Development in Palestine:**

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page of the evangelical Lutheran church in Jordan and the Holy land:

<http://www.elcjl.org/welcome/contact/bishop-munib-younan/> visited on 3/11/2017

<sup>416</sup> <http://www.eecp.org> for more information about the Center

<sup>417</sup> <http://www.diyar.ps/en/page/mission-and-vision> for more info about Dar Al Kalima.

<sup>418</sup> [www.daralkalima.com](http://www.daralkalima.com) the official website of Dar Al Kalima.

<sup>419</sup> <http://www.alrajaa-edu.ps/pg/>

<sup>420</sup> [www.talithakumi.ps](http://www.talithakumi.ps)

<sup>421</sup> <http://www.elcjl.org/departement-of-education/programs/al-mahaba-kindergarten/> the official website of the Kindergarten of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

<sup>422</sup> <http://www.bs-lutheranschool.com/> For more information on the Lutheran School in Beit Sahour, see:

The first Evangelical Church was built in Jerusalem in 1845 in Jaffa's Gate. This Church contributed greatly to the aid of Palestinian refugees in 1948. In 1958, Bishop Najib Qabain appointed the first Arab bishop to the Evangelical Church in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, including East Jerusalem and the West Bank. The Evangelical Church is subject to the territorial authority of the British Archbishop of Canterbury.

In 1976, the first Palestinian Anglican Bishop, Faik Haddad, was appointed in Jerusalem. The Bishops of the Anglican Church, such as Samir Qaf'iti and Suhail Douani, have focused on seeking a just peace in the Holy Land and the Middle East by visiting all over the world to advocate for the Palestinian cause and to initiate visions for peace and reconciliation by strengthening the Christian presence in the Holy Land and participating in Ecumenical programs, such as interfaith dialogue to promote reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians.

Today, under the auspices of The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, there are 27 parishes, about 30 priests and 7,000 Anglicans throughout the Diocese. Today, the Diocese serves more than 30 institutions spread across the various countries it covers. The Diocese employs about 1,500 people. Some 6,400 students attend the Diocese schools. The Diocese also have hospitals with more than 200 beds.

The Anglican Church pays great attention to health and education care and its continuous development. The clinics aim to provide primary health care to areas lacking clinics and health care institutions. These clinics are served by a professional staff or the Church clergy and others. It is noteworthy that the fees are nominal, as clinics are non-profit charitable organizations.

Along with these services, the Department of Peace and Reconciliation in the Diocese continues to promote interreligious dialogues with our Jewish and Muslim brothers. "Our Kids4Peace program seeks to educate the next generation the language of tolerance and acceptance of the other."<sup>423</sup> Summarizing the Role of his Church in Palestine, Bishop Suhail Douani, Archbishop of the Evangelical Episcopal Church in Palestine, says. The Anglican Church expressed its developmental role in Palestine by establishing several schools and institutes in the West Bank, Israel and Jerusalem.<sup>424</sup>

#### **4.a Interfaith Dialogue Service:<sup>425</sup> Project: Kids4Peace:**

The program includes meetings between Israeli and Palestinian families, where children between the ages of 10-12, from Jewish and Arab families (Christian and Muslim) meet each other and participate in various fun activities. The vision of the project is based on the conviction that learning tolerance and respect for cultural and religious diversity and pluralism should begin with young people.

#### **4.b Peace and Reconciliation Department: Another activity in the context of interfaith dialogue:**

Bishop Dawani is a member of the Council of Religious Institutions in the Holy Land, which is composed of 15 Christian, Jewish, and Muslim religious leaders from the Holy Land. He is active in peace initiatives aimed at reducing violence in the region and creating an open dialogue for peace. These are the objectives of this Council:

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<sup>423</sup> Bishop Suhail Douani, The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem Website: <http://www.j-diocese.org/index.php?lang=ar>

<sup>424</sup> See Table of Anglican Schools and Hospitals in Palestine and Israel (Table 3)

<sup>425</sup> <http://www.j-diocese.org/index.php?lang=ar&page=1296660335722>

1. Establish “hot line ”procedures of rapid communication among the religious presidencies in order to address and advise government officials regarding issues of protection of and access to Holy Sites before such issues become cause for conflict.
2. Establish mechanisms to monitor media for derogatory representations of any religion, and issue statements in response to such representations.
3. Together reflect on the future of Jerusalem, support the designation of the Old City of Jerusalem as a World Heritage Site, work to secure open access to the Old City for all communities, and seek a common vision for this city which all of us regard as holy.
4. Promote education for mutual respect and acceptance in schools and in the media. We will sponsor a conference for Israeli and Palestinian educators, academics and Ministers of Education on “The Role of Religion in Educating for Peace: Principles and Practices. ”
5. Demonstrate through our relations that differences can and should be addressed through dialogue rather than through violence, and strive to bring this message to our respective communities and political leaders that they may embrace this approach accordingly. “disagreement ruins not amicability”
6. Provide ongoing consultation to our government leaders, and through the example of our work together remind them that the interests of one community can only be served by also respecting and valuing the humanity and interests of all other communities.<sup>426</sup>

#### **4.c Interfaith dialogue projection on the Palestinian context:**

Dialogue seminars are very important to pave the path to a conscious and humane thinking that is capable of creating a peaceful environment for building the homeland, Palestine, away from violence, destruction and fighting. Religions play a pivotal role in providing moderate compromises to crises and conflicts.

The importance of development initiatives, projects and proximity dialogues at the level of the spiritual presidencies of religious institutions lies in the fact that it also mobilizes moral and material support for the Palestinians in their various places of residence. The visits of the presidents and priests of the local Churches to the conferences and the ecclesiastical and international gatherings conveys Palestinians voice; mobilizes solidarity and support and crystallizes a global humanitarian force to stand and support the oppressed.

The fruits of these international contributions are reflected in the fact that they have brought thousands of foreign solidarity activists and visitors who arrive to live the painful reality of the Palestinian people in cities, villages and camps. They demonstrate, gather, film events, protest against occupation soldiers, coordinate with international institutions and report violations.

An example of such solidarity is the work of the Christian Peacemaker Team (CPT), which has been operating in Hebron since 1995 and practices non-violence based on the Christian faith, resisting the suppression of Israeli military and colonial occupation. “We are based on faith in the sense that we practice the so-called Third Path of Jesus, ”says Reverend Robert Holmes<sup>427</sup>. “The option to stand up still and show nonviolent resistance to repression ”limits violent resistance and renounces escape from the executioner. Members of the team, on a daily basis, accompany schoolchildren and their teachers in Hebron as they

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<sup>426</sup> Bishop Dawani. Op. cited

<sup>427</sup> Rev. Robert Holmes is a member of the Christian Peacemaker Teams, a Catholic priest from Toronto, Canada.

cross military checkpoints on their way to school to prevent violent behavior by Israeli soldiers.

Over the years, CPTs have carried out many projects in support of the Palestinian nonviolent resistance against continued repression by Israeli soldiers and settlers. For example, they carry out a project in Area 918, where Israeli military orders have been issued to evacuate eight Palestinian villages and these villages have been continuously harassed by Israeli settlers and authorities. The CPT is working shoulder to shoulder with fellow citizens from various countries and with Rabbis for the Human as well as to support the steadfastness of the people of these villages. Rev. Robert Holmes believes that activists are committed to making international pressure affect the situation.<sup>428</sup>

There are also two Anglican and Lutheran associations which are active in Palestine and to be considered ecumenical Christian one, these are:

#### **4.1 The Palestinian Bible Society:**

The Palestinian Bible Society was established in the Holy Land in 1816. Since 1993, the Society has served the Palestinian people within the framework of its new identity (the Palestinian Bible Society) and has served in Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The Palestinian Bible Society is an ecumenical Christian organization<sup>429</sup> that serves and cooperates with all denominations and Christian Churches in particular and all members of the Palestinian community in general. Its mission is to deliver the Word of God to everyone in a comprehensible low-cost language. It also supports the Palestinian community in difficult circumstances via all developmental means available, so the latter may maintain its unity.

The Society has an advisory board of representatives of most Christian Churches and community leaders.

Its programs include Youth and College students' services, as well as services provided to children and women.

The Palestinian Bible Society also provides public libraries, book exhibitions, specialized seminars, summer camps and school services. Furthermore, it provides small developmental projects for the poor and low-income families in order to play a role in the civil peace, where the PSB holds dinners in Ramadan, these events are attended by Imams and Church clerks as well as community public and key figures in order to build and strengthen relations.<sup>430</sup>

#### **4.2 Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center**

Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, founded by the pastor Dr. Naim Ateeq, is a Palestinian liberation theology center that aims through its programs, conferences and studies to uncover the challenges, obstacles and negative aspects that limits the Churches performance and service of their spiritual, humanitarian and national mission. The

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<sup>428</sup> Robert Holmes, *Peaceful Resistance in Islam and Christianity: Examples of Peaceful Resistance in Palestine*, Christian Peacemaker Teams, Al-Liqa Center and Sabeel Center, 2014, p. 173-174

<sup>429</sup> Ecumenical means that the society does not follow or fall under a certain Church, but cooperates and works with all Churches and sects in order to achieve its humanitarian purpose.

<sup>430</sup> Interview with Issa Najjar, Branch manager of Palestinian Bible Society- Jenin, Az-Zababdeh 25/1/2018.

aim of the conferences is to find solutions and to build bonds and bridges for joint action between the Churches and the community as a whole. It also aims to strengthen the Church's role in uniting the Palestinian community by unifying its language and programs.<sup>431</sup>

The idea of establishing this center came from the absence of a Palestinian Christian theology that answers theological questions on the Palestinian identity and the theology of the land from a Palestinian Christian standpoint. Furthermore, it aims to answer the question of how to be believers in our everyday lives in Palestine despite the conditions we live under occupation<sup>432</sup>.

The contributions of the Sabeel Center can be summed up in the following points:

1. To highlight and promote ecumenical work among churches. Ecumenical activities enabled the Churches to issue and highlight their attitudes and positions towards the Palestinian cause. A unified position to confront Christian Zionism, Kairos Document, the positions of the World Council of Churches and the positions of the heads of the local churches all confirm the achievement that the Center has achieved through the meetings, books, studies and conferences it organized.
2. The development of local Palestinian theology influenced many international churches, (Protestant churches), which contributed to the introduction of the Palestinian cause to these Churches followers and increased their support for the Holy Land Churches and their projects.
3. 7 Churches withdrew their investments from companies benefiting from the occupation;
4. Published theological books that are authorized by the greatest theologians of the world;
5. Issuing and publishing joint Islamic and Christian studies, the first of its kind in the world, that are being taught at the best universities in the world, such as the book of popular resistance in Islam and Christianity.
6. Palestine has become one of the most influential countries in world theology where there is a local theology center for every 8,000 Christians in Palestine.

The Center contributed to raising the level of relations in the community in general and the Christian in particular by strengthening the culture of dialogue, democracy and acceptance of the other. This democratic thought gave the space for many intellectuals, priests, secularists, Christians and Muslims to meet and discuss issues that concern the national cause and the community issues in the spirit of equality and citizenship.

We conclude this chapter by stating that Churches and institutions with Christian backgrounds in Palestine have a clear tendency towards community development, in the pursuit of their heavenly mission on earth, to show God's love of Humans. Community development, from the Church perspective, aims to bring about a state of sustainable change in the economic, social and spiritual situation in the society. This developmental approach is limited to two main sectors, education and health, as well as the housing sector. Churches believe that these two sectors are essential for a physically and intellectually, and spiritually healthy society. Therefore, it established research and theological centers with a focus on national education in the context of an ecclesiastical approach.

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<sup>431</sup> Maan News Agency. Pastor Naim Ateeq: The Third Church Sponsors Conference discusses internal challenges and Islamic coexistence. Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center. An article published on 8/2/2010. Available on: <http://www.maannews.net/Content.aspx?id=259921> visited on 2/2/2018

<sup>432</sup> مقابلة مع عمر حرامي. مركز السبيل اللاهوت التحرر. القدس. 2018/2/4

The institutions of the Church, as spiritual presidencies, priests, pastors as individuals or seculars as citizens, can be regarded and included within the framework of the role of the Church in community development.

### **5- Armenian Church: The Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem**

The local historian Kivork Hentilian says that the Armenians are not indigenous people in Palestine and that the Armenian community was formed since the fourth century AD in Jerusalem and crystallized with the following numerous Armenian pilgrimages to Palestine.<sup>433</sup>

The importance of the Armenians in relation to the Palestinian national cause is reflected in the Armenian Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem, which constitutes one-sixth of this town in a unique geographical location. In contrast, the presence of the Armenians in Jerusalem and their prominent cultural, social, and political role, which constitutes a quasi-small state that has persisted for centuries despite the unfinished politics and the Israeli expansion in the rest of the Palestinian territories.<sup>434</sup>

The Armenians struggled to preserve their heritage, language and faith through their solidarity with the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem in a neighborhood called after them (Armenian Quarter - 300 dunums), that represents one sixth of the Old City of Jerusalem. The Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem built a school, a theological institute, a library, a museum, a medical clinic and a majestic printing press. Moreover, the Patriarchate is responsible of some religious shrines, such as the Cathedral of Saint James in Jerusalem; they have a corner in the Holy Sepulcher Church, not to mention their presence in Ramallah, Jaffa, Ramle and Haifa in varying numbers.<sup>435</sup> The majority of Armenians in Palestine speak Arabic, Hebrew, English, In addition to their mother tongue - Armenian. Armenians, especially Jerusalemites, prefer to speak Armenian in their homes and to one another in general.

The Armenians categorically reject the fact that the Armenian Quarter of Jerusalem remains under Israeli sovereignty. In principle, Armenians are against the partition of the Holy City and believe that it must remain under the sovereignty and control of its Palestinian citizens.<sup>436</sup>

Some members of Armenian community held high-ranked positions in the Palestinian National Authority, including Manuel Hassassian, Palestinian Authority's diplomatic representative to the United Kingdom, and the academic Albert Agazarian, and the academic Albert Agazarian, spokesman for the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid Conference in 1991.<sup>437</sup> Armenians are proud of their Armenian identity and their own culture. They are connected with their motherland, Armenia.

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<sup>433</sup> Kivork Hentilian See Naim Ateeq and Sider Daibes, op. Cit. P. 176

<sup>434</sup> <http://info.wafa.ps/atemplate.aspx?id=5269>

<sup>435</sup> Palestinian News & Info Agency <http://www.wafainfo.ps/atemplate.aspx?id=5049>

<sup>436</sup> Palestinian News & Info Agency <http://www.wafainfo.ps/atemplate.aspx?id=5049>

<sup>437</sup> Palestinian News & Info Agency <http://www.wafainfo.ps/atemplate.aspx?id=5049>

## **Chapter six**

### **Conclusion, results and Recommendations**



### **Conclusion:**

By neutrality and peaceful means dealt the church with the challenges faced the Palestinian people since the British Mandate and the Israeli occupation. Churches did not take a clear national position rejecting the occupation, not because they do not want to do so, but because of the different historical contexts that the entire Palestinian people experienced.

The position toward the occupation varied between welcoming and between neutral and between opponents

But after the first Intifada, churches not only accepted the existence of Israeli State, but many times it prays and hopes of its survival upon part of the land, which is the majority of the land, with a hope of establishment of a Palestinian state on some parts of the historic Palestine. The Church consider the Palestinian Christians to be separated on two states, in Israel and Palestine under different circumstances.

The difference between the Palestinian church's position toward the occupation and the Zionist Christian position is that the Zionist Christians refuse the rights of Palestinians in the land of Palestine and give the full rights to the Israelis in all the land of Palestine. While the Palestinian churches emphasize the right of Palestinian in parts of their homeland (west bank and Gaza strip) according to international agreements and the right of Jewish also in Palestine, following the after Oslo agreement, churches agree to separate the country between two nations (Israeli nation contains some Arab minorities) and Palestinians nation with its all components.

The church leaders in Palestine behaved peacefully and rejected all kind of armed resistance. it seems that they were seeking to justify the right of the two parties. But some churches clergy acted individually and expressed his opponent to the occupation and acted likely. The church respect the right of Palestinians to establish their independent state; but at the same time it respects the right and sovereignty of the state of Israel on the occupied territories of Palestine on 1948. Churches support the state of Israel and its rights, and support the Palestinian revolt and their rights in independent and equality.

On the one hand, the local churches opposed the global Zionist churches because they negate the Palestinian existence and their legitimate right in their homeland, because they distorted the true meaning of Bible verses. In contrast, the local churches see that the Palestinians also have the right to decide their fate in their land and that God loves them as well as the Jews.

As for Jerusalem, the churches do not consider it to be of a single religious nature. but it hopes for a solution that gives all members of monotheistic religions the right to worship and to live there freely and equally, while respecting the status quo with respect to shrines and places of worship. The Churches hope that peace between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples will prevail and that relations will develop into reconciliation and friendship, that is, to sustainable peace.

The role of the churches in Palestine after the first Intifada has been clearly demonstrated. The Churches, represented by their priests, institutions and followers, supported the peaceful revolution of the Palestinian people in the face of the Israeli occupation. The contributions have evolved clearly since the start of the two-state solution in the context of the Oslo Agreement and the entry of the Palestinian National Authority

(PNA) to parts of the occupied territories in 1968 by adopting a unified position on the Palestinian issue within the principles of the justice of the cause and the peaceful struggle.

The role of churches in the establishment of civil peace and community development is confined to the Christian community and the areas that inhabit them, limiting their role in Christian affairs only, while their religious mission and social role expected much greater.

### **Results:**

The study resulted in several observations and conclusions that can be summarized in the following points:

- The Palestinian churches have a good role in establishing civil peace and community development. Its focus on the sectarian level was much more than its social and national focus. Considering that its mission is limited to the care of its believers and support them and provide evangelical solutions to their problems more than attention to the general public, even though they express their love and solidarity with all the people.
- Individual development initiatives of some priests or bishops or believers are included in the contributions of the Church in general. The Church's interest in working on culture, health and housing has focused on most projects.
- The Churches have initiated bridges of openness, dialogue and convergence not only with the Palestinian society but also with friends around the world and even with enemies (Israel).
- The Church has economic and developmental contributions. The Palestinian churches have invested in building monasteries, churches, centers for religious education and research centers, as well as health and education (in all stages), housing, charities and institutions of an economic and nonprofit nature, for their importance in building a Palestinian man capable of self-reliance and independence. Generous and creative.
- The contribution of the churches to investment in the economy and income-generating projects is insufficient if not less and does not provide economic solutions as required for the citizen to support his steadfastness and survival on the land of his ancestors.
- The Church focuses on religious education in its activities and sermons and does not deal with popular, national or social matters except in its own sphere or as a reaction to a debate in public opinion.
- The Church played a pivotal role in the lives of people. It was the link between man and his social, cultural, national, historical and emotional environment, but many Christians, especially in the 21st century, slipped away from the moral values that were the reference church and began looking for alternatives to satisfy his desires and satisfy his desires. Through the use of technology and materialism and selfishness in the era of globalization, created a unilateral tendency, which created a selfish unilateralism and isolation from the social environment, so he alone is not continuous with the environment, but the means of social communication to be available to him.

- Lack communication between the presidencies of churches, priests and pastors, which lead to a missing coordination, consultation and constructive planning, and does not give the impression of true unity, whether between the representatives of the Palestinian churches or between them and representatives of the spectrum of society in general.

### **Recommendations:**

The study came out with recommendations addressed to the spiritual presidencies of the churches summarized in the following points:

- The Church must recall its ancient past, full of heroism, sacrifice, giving and steadfastness, to be an example to be followed in the age of material globalization, to evangelize again love and solidarity.
- The spiritual presidencies must return to the wells that support their regenerative work in societies. The family, the school and the means of communication available. If the Church can recruit these axes in the best way, it must achieve positive achievements in renewing the relationship between them and the new generation, the young generation that is the society of today and tomorrow.
- The church's educational mission among the sons of the Church and the family is not traditional historical information, but the spiritual richness of the practical teaching of the Church as active and epistemological. Liturgy and liturgy are the key to holiness in the lives of individuals and ecclesiastical groups, which in turn will be reflected in society. Will increase the interdependence of people and their solidarity with one another, which will develop and strengthen society.
- The personal and direct communication of the priests and pastors with each other and with the believers and the people in the street, in the houses, and everywhere and talking with them deeply about their own problems and needs, this simple extension will help people psychologically and spiritually and lead them to return to their consciousness and reality and return them to the church.
- The Church must make more efforts to find the lost sheep of Palestine and take care of everyone in need and destitution. The categories that are needed in the society are children, unmarried single women, widowed women, orphans, the poor, the unemployed, the handicapped, the sick, the prisoners and the marginalized and the quarrelsome and sinners.
- People in our time are thirsty not for water but for the water of life, hungry not for bread but for baking life. Distorted images of God need purification, the people scream and call for a shepherd, many souls scream and call for freedom from slavery and humiliation and deprivation. Every parish priest and every priest has to work to meet those needs in his own environment, and focus on a small group of them to promote them to be a renewed intention, which in turn will work to renew its surroundings and so on.

- Non-dispersal of resources and energies. Each priest focuses on a specific type of social problem and works hard and deep throughout his priestly life, which will make him competent and experienced to provide the right medication for the disease. This specialization is characteristic of the present age and it is good for the priests to focus on it.
- Patriarchs should be more involved in society by communicating with their social environment, both at parish level and at the community level in general.
- To promote the spirit of engagement and openness among the priests of the parishes because they are in the field and to support and strengthen their vision and their ecclesiastical and national work.
- To organize honest and effective meetings among different Christian communities to build a strong Christian social fabric with a clear and unified national Christian vision in accordance with the will of Jesus Christ and the Gospel.
- Building Christian and civil Christian leaderships and developing their personalities to keep up with aspirations, hopes of Christians and Palestinians in our days.
- Educational and training courses for priests and monks from Palestinian churches to resolve conflicts in society, which will enable them to find solutions to the problems of believers and citizens when needed in a peaceful and successful manner.
- Cooperation with the community is very necessary. The fact that the Church is a part of the Palestinian people and it carries a message to it must cooperate with it in a strategic and well thought out manner. The Civil Society has a role in clarifying the needs and developing plans, strategies and implementation mechanisms inside the society.
- Coordination between the state and the church regarding the subject of the right of belief and change of religion so as to determine marital duties and rights in the event that a member of the family, for example husband or wife to change his religion that there is legal legislation to determine duties and rights, especially in such a case is divorce because of the prohibition of mating Muslim women from the Christian On the one hand, and non-acceptance of Christians from marrying their children or daughters of Muslims . This create a state of chaos and very difficult problems with inheritance laws and child custody.
- I recommend representatives of the religious, political and civil society to cooperate with the churches to facilitate their mission in society so that they can explode their development potential and their ability to effect change in a constructive manner that serves the interests of all.
- A recommendation to the Arab American University to invite the presidency of the churches and imams to join the study of the course of conflict resolution and development in the university for its importance to facilitate their work in resolving the conflicts facing them, both in their communities or in society in general.

## قائمة المصادر والمراجع المراجع العربية:

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### جدول رقم (1)

أ. جدول مدارس البطريركية الارثوذكسية في فلسطين التاريخية والاردن

الرقم	الاسم	المكان
1	المدرسة البطريركية (الاعدادية والثانوية) للقبر المقدس – مدرسة دينية	القدس
2	مدرسة القديس ذيميتريوس الابتدائية-الإعدادية-الثانوية	القدس
3	مدرسة الرعاية في بيت ساحور، (روضة، ابتدائية، اعدادية وثانوية)	بيت ساحور
4	المدرسة الارثوذكسية، (ابتدائية، اعدادية وثانوية)،	رام الله
5	المدرسة الارثوذكسية، ابتدائية، اعدادية و ثانوية	الطيبة / رام الله
6	المدرسة البطريركية النموذجية.	يافا
7	المدرسة الارثوذكسية (ابتدائي، اعدادي، ثانوي)	الرملة
8	المدرسة الارثوذكسية في غزة (روضة، ابتدائية واعدادية)،	غزة
9	المدرسة الارثوذكسية (ابتدائي، اعدادي، ثانوي)	عمان
10	المدرسة الارثوذكسية (ابتدائي)	العقبة
11	المدرسة الارثوذكسية (ابتدائي، اعدادي، ثانوي)	الفحيص
12	المدرسة الارثوذكسية (ابتدائي، اعدادي، ثانوي)	مأدبا
13	المدرسة الارثوذكسية (ابتدائي، اعدادي، ثانوي)	الزرقاء

### جدول رقم (2)

ب. الاديرة التابعة للبطريركية الاورشليمية الارثوذكسية

العدد	اسم الدير	العنوان
1	الدير المركزي: دير القديسين قسطنطين و هيلانة – مركز اخوية القبر المقدس	القدس
2	المقر البطريركي : دير الغاليليا الصغرى في جبل الزيتون ، كنيسة الرجال الجليليين	القدس
3	دير عذراء صدفيا: كنيسة القديس ذيميتريوس ، القديسة تقلا	القدس
4	دير القديس خرا المبوس	القدس
5	دير القديس يوحنا المعمدان	القدس

القدس	دير رؤساء الملائكة	6
القدس	دير القديس نقولاوس	7
القدس	دير القديس ثيودوروس	8
(حاره اليهود) القدس	دير القديس جوارجيوس	9
القدس	دير القديس جاورجيوس (المعروف بالمستشفى)	10
القدس	دير القديس باسيليوس	11
القدس	دير القديسة كاترينا	12
القدس	دير القديس سبيريدون	13
القدس	دير القديس نيقوذيموس	14
القدس	دير حبس المسيح وفيه كنيسة القديس استفانوس	15
القدس	دير القديس حنه	16
القطمون / القدس	دير القديس سمعان	17
القدس	دير الصليب الكريم	18
القدس	دير القديس اونوفريوس	19
القدس	دير صهيون المقدسة: حيث توجد المدرسة البطريركية الثانوية	20
القدس	دير القديس استفانوس	21
القدس	دير القديس بندلاييمون	22
جبل الزيتون / القدس	دير الصعود المقدس	23
القدس	دير القديس مودستوس	24
القدس	دير ابينا ابراهيم (حيث توجد كنيسة الاثني عشر رسولا)	25
بيت فاجي / القدس	دير بيت فاجي	26
صحراء بيت لحم	دير القديس سابا و يتراسة البطريرك .	27
في العبيدية - بيت لحم	دير القديس ثيودوسيوس - ابن عبيد	28
اريجا	دير القديس جراسيموس	29
اريجا	دير قرنطل	30
اريجا	دير يوحنا المعمدان في نهر الأردن	31
في واد القلط، مابين اريحا و	دير القديس جاورجيوس الخوري في	32

القدس		
الجليل	دير جبل طابور	33
اللد	دير القديس جاورجيوس	34
كفر كنا / الجليل	دير كفر كنا	35
اريجا	دير النبي اليسع	36
القدس	دير النبي إيليا	37
بلاطة / نابلس	دير بنر يعقوب (ويعرف بالسامرية)	38
القدس	دير العيزرية	39
اريجا	دير القديس ذيودوروس	40
طبريا	دير كفر ناحوم	41
بيت ساحور	دير الرعاة	42
عين كارم	دير يوحنا المعمدان	43
	دير الينبوع القابل الحياة	44
دير مار سابا / بيت لحم	برج القديس سابا	45
طبريا	دير الرسل	46
مصر	دير القديسة كاترينا في صحراء سيناء	47

### جدول رقم (3) الاديرة و الكنائس اللاتينية التابعة للبطريركية اللاتينية في القدس

#### أ- اديرة اللاتين في القدس

العنوان	اسم الدير	رقم
القدس	دير المخلص	1
بيت حنينا	القديس يعقوب	2

#### ب- اديرة و كنائس لاتين في الضفة الغربية و قطاع غزة

العنوان	اسم الدير او الكنيسة	العدد
<u>عبود</u>	سيدة الاوجاع السبعة	1
<u>عين عريك</u>	البشارة	2

3	البشارة	<u>بيت جالا</u>
4	سيّدة فاطمة	<u>بيت ساحور</u>
5	القديسة كاترينا	<u>بيت لحم</u>
6	الحبل بلا دنس	<u>بيرزيت</u>
7	العائلة المقدسة	<u>غزة</u>
8	الفادي	<u>جنين</u>
9	الرّاعي الصالح	<u>اريجا</u>
10	كنيسة اللاتين	<u>برقين</u>
11	القديس يوسف	<u>جفنة</u>
12	المخلص عند بئر يعقوب	<u>نابلس</u>
13	القديس يوستينوس	<u>رفيديا</u>
14	العائلة المقدسة	<u>رام الله</u>
15	الفادي	<u>الطيبة</u>
16	الزيارة	<u>الزبادة</u>

### ج- اديرة و كنائس للاتين في إسرائيل

الرقم	اسم الرعية	العنوان
1	رعية البشارة	الناصرة
2	القديس يوحنا المعمدان	عكا
3	القديس إبراهيم	بئر السبع
4	الاعجوبة الاولى	قانا
5	سيّدة فلسطين	دير رافات
6	الثالوث الاقدس	ايلات
7	القديس يوسف	حيفا
8	القديس انطونيوس	يافا
9	القديس يوحنا الرسول	يافا الناصرة
10	القديس أنطونيوس	الرامة
11	القديس يوسف العامل	الرينة



12	القديس يوسف	شفاعمر
13	القديس بطرس	طبرية

ج – اديرة وكنائس للاتين في الأردن

الرقم	اسم الرعية	العنوان
1	القديس بولس	عجلون
2	القديس اليليا	الوهادنة
3	سيدة الزيارة	عنجرة
4	نجمة البحر	العقبة
5	سيدة النعمة	الفحيص العلامي
6	قلب مريم الطاهر	الفحيص
7	الحبل بلا دنس	الحصن
8	القديس جورج	اربد
9	سيدة الكرمل	جبل الهاشمي
10	فرنسيس السالسي	جبل الحسين
11	البشارة	جبل اللويدي
12	سيدة الوردية	الكرك
13	قطع راس يوحنا المعمدان	مادبا
14	القديس يوسف	المفرق
15	القديس يعقوب الصغير	معين
16	مريم ام الكنائس	ماركا
17	قلب يسوع الاقدس	مرج الحمام
18	يسوع الملك	المصدا
19	قلب يسوع الاقدس	ناعور
20	ارتفاع الصليب المقدس	الرميمين
21	مريم ام الكنائس	الرصيفة
22	القديسة تريزا للطفل يسوع	صافوت
23	انتقال السيدة العذراء	السلط

شطنا	البشارة	24
الصوفيّة	مريم الناصرية	25
السماكية	القديس ميخائيل	26
تلّاع العلي	قلب يسوع الاقدس	27
الزرقاء الشمالي	الرسل الاثني عشر	28
الزرقاء الجنوبي	القديس بيوس العاشر	29

د. الرعايا اللاتينية الناطقة باللغة العبرية

الرقم	اسم الرعية	العنوان
1	رعية القدس	القدس
2	رعية حيفا	حيفا
3	رعية بنر السبع	بنر السبع
4	رعية يافا	تل ابيب

هـ. الرعايا اللاتينية الناطقة باللغة الروسية

الرقم	اسم الرعية	العنوان
1	Luckner Parents' Home	

و. الرعايا اللاتينية في جزيرة قبرص:

الرقم	اسم الرعية	العنوان
1	القديسة مريم ام النعمة	لارنكا
2	القديسة كاترينا	ليماسول
3	الصليب المقدس	نيقوصيا
4	القديس بولس للاعمدة	بافوس
5	القديس نيقولاوس	بافوس
6	بيسوري: الإباء القديسون	بافوس

أ- المدارس الانجيلية في الضفة الغربية:

الرقم	اسم المؤسسة	العنوان
1	المركز الاسقفي للتكنولوجيا و التدريب المهني	رام الله
2	المدرسة الانجيلية الأسقفية العربية	رام الله
3	الروضة المسيحية الوطنية	نابلس
4	البيت الإنجيلي للأطفال	رام الله

ب- المدارس الانجيلية في إسرائيل:

الرقم	اسم المؤسسة	العنوان
1	مدرسة المسيح الانجيلية الأسقفية	الناصرة
2	حضانة العائلة المقدسة الأسقفية	الريانة
3	مدرسة مار يوحنا الانجيلية الأسقفية	حيفا

ج- المدارس الانجيلية في القدس:

الرقم	اسم المؤسسة	العنوان
1	مدرسة المطران الثانوية	القدس
2	كلية القديس جورج	القدس

د. الرعاية الصحية التي تقدمها الكنيسة الانجيلية في القدس، الضفة الغربية وقطاع غزة:

الرقم	اسم المؤسسة	العنوان
1	مؤسسة الاميرة بسمة للأولاد المعاقين	القدس
2	المستشفى الإنجيلي العربي	نابلس
3	عيادة بنمان	الزبابدة
4	المستشفى الأهلي العربي	غزة
5	بيت المسنين ومركز جماهيري	ببرزيت
6	المركز الطبي الاسقفي العربي للسكري والقلب والاعوية الدموية	رام الله

جدول رقم (5)

أ. اديرة تابعة للكنيسة القبطية في مدينة القدس:

الرقم	اسم الدير او الكنيسة	العنوان
1	دير السلطان وبه كنيسة الملك والأربعة حيوانات.	القدس
2	دير مار انطونيوس	- شمال شرقي كنيسة القيامة./ القدس
3	دير مار جرجس	حارة الموارنة / القدس
4	كنيسة السيدة العذراء	جبل الزيتون / القدس
5	كنيسة قبطية	جبل الزيتون
6	كنيسة مار يوحنا	القدس
7	كنيسة الملك ميخائيل	داخل كنيسة القيامة

ب. مدارس تابعة للكنيسة القبطية في مدينة القدس :

الرقم	اسم المدرسة	العنوان
1	الكلية الانطونية للبنين (مدرسة ثانوية)	القدس
2	كلية الشهيذة دميانة للبنات (مدرسة ثانوية)	القدس

ج. أهم الممتلكات والكنائس والأديرة القبطية خارج مدينة القدس:

الرقم	اسم الدير او الكنيسة	العنوان
1	كنيسة ودير الانبا انطونيوس	يافا
2	كنيسة ودير الانبا انطونيوس	اريجا
3	كنيسة ودير مار زكا والقديس أندراوس	اريجا
4	كنيسة ودير مار يوحنا	على ضفة نهر الأردن
5	كنيسة السيدة العذراء والبشارة	الناصره

### ملخص الدراسة

تبحث رسالتي في دور الكنائس الفلسطينية في إحلال السلم الأهلي والتنمية المجتمعية في المجتمع الفلسطيني في الفترة ما بين 1987- 2017. فهذا الدور لم يتم بحثه من قبل بطريقة مركزة وتوضيح دور الكنيسة في هذا الموضوع له أهمية قصوى لأداء الكنيسة في المرحلة القادمة من بناء الدولة وتقرير المصير الفلسطيني. فالسلم الأهلي من أهم مكونات الأمان والتماسك والصمود للشعب الفلسطيني وتنميته تعتبر صمام أمان لبقائه وازدهاره وتحقيق آماله. تفترض الرسالة ان دور الكنيسة متواضع في إحلال السلم الأهلي في المجتمع الفلسطيني والتنمية المجتمعية وتقرن ذلك بدورها في الدفاع عن القضية الفلسطينية بشكل عام في ظل التقلبات السياسية المتعاقبة.

وقد قام الباحث باستخدام المنهجية النوعية، الوصفية، التاريخية، التحليلية و المقارنة من خلال اجراء مقابلات مع شخصيات كنسية وعاملة في الحقل المؤسساتي الكنسي والأكاديمي بالإضافة الى الرجوع الى الكتب والدراسات السابقة واستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي.

ونتج عن الدراسة استنتاجات عدة من أهمها ان للكنيسة دور متواضع في إحلال السلم الأهلي والتنمية المجتمعية للمجتمع الفلسطيني بشكل عام بالرغم من امكانياتها الهائلة والرغبة العقائدية الراسخة في خدمة المجتمع. وانشصار دورها في حل مشاكل الرعية المسيحية التابعة لكل كنيسة وهو ما حصر دورها في التجمعات المسيحية في المجتمع المسيحي. وتركزت اهم المساهمات التنموية في التعليم والصحية وبعض مشاريع الاسكانات.

وتوصي الدراسة الكنائس ان تتحلى بالشجاعة وتكون ريادية اكثر وتنتفتح على المجتمع الفلسطيني من خلال التدخل في حل الصراعات والنزاعات المجتمعية وتقديم الحلول المناسبة وعدم حصر دورها الاجتماعي في الجماعة المسيحية في المجتمع الفلسطيني.