

## SHEIKH JARRAH ISSUE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE AGAINST THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION: A GAME CHANGER

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**ABSTRACT:** *The dynamics of the Palestinian issue have been characterised by the domination of the paradigm of the settler colonialism in which the state of Israel has been exercising unjust policies against the Palestinians. The Jewish state whose borders have not yet been established, wants to build more settlements at the expense of the Palestinians who are viewed as a demographic threat. While the Nakba of 1948 is associated with the dispossession of over 500,000 Palestinians, it is difficult to say that it is limited to that year. The Israeli government's decision to expel the Palestinians from the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood from the homes they had lived in for decades resurrected the image of the never-ending Nakba. This paper attempts to answer the question of how the potential dispossession of the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood impacted the dynamics of the Palestinian issue by shedding light on Sheikh Jarrah case's developments including its origins, Israel's ethnic cleansing policies, the Palestinians' steadfastness and the international formal and informal responses.*

**KEYWORDS:** Settler Colonialism, Dispossession, Ethnic Cleansing, Sheikh Jarrah Neighbourhood, Palestinians' Steadfastness.

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### INTRODUCTION

Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood is regarded the centre of Jerusalem's heartland due to its historical, political and cultural significance. It is the geopolitical pivot that has recently given the Palestinian map life as it represents the most visible embodiment of Israel's encroachment on the Palestinian land. It is one incident in a long series of the Israeli systematic ethnic cleansing operations against the Palestinians in which Israel seeks to suffocate the Palestinians especially the Jerusalemites and implement a thorough Judaisation plan for the city. Throughout its history, the demographic factor in Sheikh Jarrah was in favour of the Arab Muslims. It was the first area built outside the walls of the old city and it

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was inhabited by an Arab majority (Kark & Landman, 1980) who came from different Palestinian and Arab communities since the Ottoman Empire era. Furthermore, the neighbourhood was inhabited by the traditional Palestinian families who constructed numerous homes and palaces. These buildings were then converted into schools, libraries and associations and thus played an important part in the political and cultural life of the neighbourhood.

The area has played a significant role in the history of the Palestinian people as a whole. The Ottoman archive states that 167 families lived the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood in 1905. This number increased as a result of the British mandate's quick building boom which turned the Sheikh Jarrah area into one of the most affluent neighbourhoods in Jerusalem by the middle of the twentieth century (Jubeih, 2021). The residents of Sheikh Jarrah area struggled against the Zionist gangs' avarice in 1948, the year that commemorates the Nakba. They defended the area steadfastly with the aid of the Jordanian army and the voluntary fighters which led to the survival of the neighbourhood till it fell prey to the control of the Israeli occupation in 1967 (Ibrahim, 2022). Additionally, Sheikh Jarrah district became the resort of the Palestinian refugees who were forcefully driven from their homes in 1948 and a residency for their offspring (Saqib, 2021).

The event that drew attention to the neighbourhood is the likely implementation of forcible dispossession decisions against 28 families consisting of 500 members by the end of 2020. Since the majority of these families were residents of Jaffa and Haifa before 1948, the possibility of internal displacement represents a replay of the Nakba. It is critical to emphasise that it would be reductionist to view the Sheikh Jarrah issue as a legal issue or interpret it as a "property dispute" or as an issue of "contested neighbourhoods". The issue is rather a purely political one in which Israel pursues deliberate strategies of uprooting the Palestinians and denying them the right to possess their homes and remain in them.

These expulsion decisions are mainly promoted by the settlement associations, legitimised and approved by the Israeli courts, and implemented by the Israeli government. The claims that the settler organisations presented to the Israeli courts about their ownership of the Sheikh Jarrah lands and their appeals to the courts to order the expulsion of the Palestinian families, which the courts accepted and the Israeli government implemented, have painted a clear picture of this situation which was seen in the expulsion of the Kurd, Hanon and Ghawi families in 2008 (Refugee Studies Academy, 2021). Moreover, the inciters and the applicants of these policies enjoy the ultimate protection of the Israeli army units. These players who serve as the main pillars of the Israeli apartheid system work together to advance the expansionist ambitions of Zionism at the expense of Palestinians who are subjected to the endless institutionalised injustices.

These developments raise the question of "What is the impact of the Sheikh Jarrah issue on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?" The importance of this question lies in gaining a clear understanding of the circumstances surrounding the

potential application of an ethnic cleansing policy against Palestinian families in Sheikh Jarrah and its inescapable relationship with the wider context of the Palestinian struggle against Israeli occupation. In order to answer these questions and grasp the comprehensive picture of the Sheikh Jarrah incident and its relationship with the Israeli Palestinian conflict, further questions should be asked regarding the historical importance of the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood, the origins of the problem, the divergent accounts of Israelis and Palestinians regarding who owns the area, the characteristics of the Palestinian resistance, Israeli judicial, political, and military policies, and the regional and global responses to the Sheikh Jarrah incident and the Palestinian resistance.

The main argument proposed to answer this question is that the Sheikh Jarrah issue increased people's comprehension of the true dynamics of the Palestinian struggle against Israeli occupation, as well as the justifications of the Palestinian resistance and the nature of Israeli apartheid systems against them, which helped the issue gain significant international attention and brought the Palestinian issue back to the forefront.

This paper is a case study that relies on historical and analytical perspectives since it seeks to connect the current developments of the Sheikh Jarrah incident with the historical progression of the Palestinian struggle against Israeli occupation. It also tries to assess these developments to see how they affect the bigger picture. The study is based on both primary and secondary sources. For primary data it uses news outlets and already conducted interviews, as for secondary data, it depends on scholarly papers and articles. With this, a connection is made between the Sheikh Jarrah issue and past Palestinian events. This paper also depends on the perspective of politics from below or the contentious politics which highlights the significance of the people in shaping their destiny through their own movements and resistance especially in Palestine where top down approach is insufficient to explain the dynamics of the Palestinian struggle against the Israeli occupation. This was clear in the great Palestinian resistance sparked by the Sheikh Jarrah issue which marginalised the role of the Palestinian political factions and maximised the role of the Palestinian people in standing for themselves.

#### **THE ORIGIN OF THE SHEIKH JARRAH ISSUE AND THE CONFLICTING NARRATIVES**

The issue of Sheikh Jarrah is primarily the result of divergent claims of ownership of the neighbourhood between the Palestinians and the Israelis. The issue does not depict a struggle between equal sides. This is rather a struggle of the indigenous people, the Palestinians against the oppressors, the Zionist occupiers. The settlers' companies did not randomly attack the neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah. It is at the centre of their dedication to establishing a ring of settlements around the old city and isolating it from its Palestinian surrounding relying on their own biblical beliefs and maps (Terrestrial Jerusalem, 2021).

The Palestinian story begins around the pivotal year 1956 when Jordan, which was ruling Eastern Jerusalem and the West Bank at that time, represented by the Ministry of Construction and reconstruction in coordination with UNRWA adopted a housing project for 28 families in “Al-Jaone District” in return of these families’ relinquishment of their refugee ration cards, not the refugee status (Yosef, 2021). The families were promised that they will be the official owners of these houses after three years. However, this promise never materialised and the situation was worsened by the Israeli occupation of Eastern Jerusalem in 1967.

Another crucial year in the eyes of the Palestinians is 1972 since it complicated the issue in which the Sephardic community committee and the Knesset Israeli committee started making claims about their property rights to the area based on alleged old religious and historical ties to the land (Advocates Sans Frontiers, 2011). Since then, the Palestinians have had to deal with ongoing difficulties proving their ownership of their homes in the Israeli courts and fending off the claims made by the settlers and the settlement corporations.

Another detrimental plot took place in 1982 when the Israeli lawyer, Yitzhak Cohen, who was appointed by some of the families in the neighbourhood to represent them in the Israeli courts acted in a way that made the families’ legal struggles more difficult. He introduced a new status that reduced the position of the families from being the real owners to being merely “protected tenancies” which indicates that they must pay the rent to the settlers who were regarded as their landlords (Arnaout, 2022). The brutal moments of these families’ struggle against the settlement project occurred in 2009 when the Israeli settlers invaded two Palestinian families’ houses and dumped their possessions into the street (Abdullhaq, 2023). Similarly, the strangest example of the application of the policy of dispossession took place the year before when Al-Kurd family lost half of its house which was granted by the Israeli government to a group of Zionist settlers.

The Sephardic community committee and the Ashkenazi assembly of Israel claimed that the origin of their story lies in their purchase of a grave of a religious person known as “Shimon Hatzadik” in 1975 (Kunza, 2022). Furthermore, the settlement companies like ‘Nehal Shimon’ support their assertions that the Jewish families purchased the neighbourhood with the help of antiquated Ottoman documentation. However, the legitimacy and correctness of these documents are seriously questioned (Sergides, 2012). The settlers also argued that the homes built for the Palestinians by UNRWA in 1956 were primarily built on the property that had previously belonged to the Jewish families who had been driven from their homes during what they refer to as “the war of independence” (Phillips, 2009).

#### **THE BEGINNING OF THE RESISTANCE OF THE SHEIKH JARRAH NEIGHBORHOOD**

The ambition of the settlers caused various worries among the Palestinians. Their biggest worry was that if Israel gains more political sway over the city, it might prove its case that Jerusalem is the Jewish state’s capital. The removal of the

Palestinians from the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood allows Israel to capitalise on the political and cultural significance attached to the location which is rich with consulates, hotels and UN headquarters. The other contagious fear that occupies the national psychology of the Palestinians is that they believe that any dispossession of the inhabitants of Sheikh Jarrah threatens the existence of Palestinians elsewhere and can result in a nonstop domino effect (English, 2021).

This effect started to materialise in Israel's pursuit of a systematic policy of dispossession against the Palestinians in Batn Alhawa and Silwan in which the Israeli government expelled the Palestinians from these neighbourhoods, demolished their homes and even forced them to destroy them by themselves or pay high fines if they rejected to do so (Frère, 2021). This situation triggered the already raging tinderbox and fuelled a complex backlash that revitalised the Palestinian issue and raised an unprecedented awareness. Due to these worries, the Palestinian families in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood started implementing extensive resistance tactics against the Israeli occupation's actions.

Actually, these families' resistance is a particular instance of the Palestinians' ongoing resistance against the Israeli policies. In addition to the two significant Palestinian Uprisings in 1987 and 2000, Palestinian resistance against the Zionist occupation has increased over the past ten years. This is most evident in uprisings like the 'Marches of Return', which aim to raise awareness about the refugee issue, protests in support for the Palestinian prisoners which aim to reunite the Palestinian people given the important of the prisoners' cause as a cause impervious to criticism and able to draw large attention (Anthonisen, 2019). Additionally, the Palestinians organised large scale uprisings in front of al-Aqsa Mosque gates in protest of Israel's installation of electronic gates there, which limit the Palestinian mobility while permitting the settlers to enter al-Aqsa Mosque without any kind of restriction or scrutiny (Hammuda, 2017).

Palestinians showed a strong resistance to Israel's collective confiscation policies. Different Palestinian villages in Jerusalem and the West Bank witnessed Palestinians organising popular marches particularly on the national and international occasions. Demonstrators also tied themselves to the olive trees, raised the Palestinian flags, composed national songs and climbed into iron barrels to withstand the Israeli tanks (Aweisi, 2013). Additionally, the Palestinians focused on bolstering the widespread spatial resistance and strengthening the actions and campaigns that caught the attention of the global activists in the Jordan Valley, al-Naqab, al-Jaailil and Jerusalem (Huwari, 2018).

It can be said that the resistance demonstrated by the Palestinian families in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood made use of the Palestinian resistance tactics. Their resistance together with that of the Palestinians across Palestine established the victory culture, rejected defeat, emphasised the collective identity, and asserted that the daily life in Jerusalem is resistance on its own which frees the concept of resistance means from being imprisoned in the duality of armed resistance and the popular one (As'ad, 2021).

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PALESTINIANS' RESISTANCE

### Efficient activism away of the classical leaderships

Sheikh Jarrah families took the matter into their own hands. They realised that the Palestinians must stand up strong for themselves instead of relying on the traditional leadership which primarily consists of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, the Palestinian political parties and the Palestinian political figures, to find solutions for their problems. This realisation also raised the credibility of their narrative. Additionally, they came up with novel ways to articulate their issue and mobilise support for it.

These two elements of non-reliance on the political leaderships and making great mobilisation efforts were also clear in the Palestinian revolts in the nineties. Also in 1936, the Palestinians started one of the longest strikes in the history of the region, which was organised then by the Arab Higher Committee. The Palestinians were willing to continue their strike to eventually gain independence. However, the strike was terminated due to mistrust gulf between the main Palestinian political figures and the intervention of regional Arab leaders to put an end to the strike (Abdullah, 2005). Similarly, in 1987, the first intifada was distinguished by the widespread participation of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, the diversity of resistance tactics, such as popular demonstrations and strikes, as well as spontaneity. It is interesting that, like the Israeli leadership, the Palestinian leadership in Tunis was taken by surprise by the uprising (Naser-Najjab, 2020). In the Second Intifada in 2000, the Palestinian factions were facing organisational and structural problems which had negative impact on these factions' influence on the Public (Hilal, 2000).

It can be argued that Sheikh Jarrah's families understood the historical course of the Palestinian resistance and discovered that the strength of resistance lies in the hands of the determined masses in addition to realising the limited role that the traditional leaderships, mainly Fatah and Hamas, can play because of their conflicting considerations and visions regarding their ideological references in which Hamas is Islamist and Fatah is secular, their approaches to the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in which Fatah prefers the international diplomacy and Hamas favours the armed struggle (Al-Abdullah, 2019).

The families' initial action was to create the hashtag "Save Sheikh Jarrah" in many languages and an online page with the same name in March 2021 (Save Sheikh Jarrah Page, Facebook, 2021). This step was essential to avoid ambiguous public sentiment, and prevent the reduction of the issue to a legal one and any kind of dogmatic speeches which are usually delivered by the classical leaders. The page also stressed the importance of the constant Palestinian resistance against the Israeli occupation. Moreover, the page went beyond national mobilisation to internationalise the issue since the families believed it is the responsibility of the international community to take explicit and stringent action to denounce the Israeli occupation's practices. These practices include transferring the civilian population of the occupying power into the occupied territories, the

establishment of settlements, the unjust attack of the occupying power on the integrity of the occupied territories and the civilian population living there in addition to the occupying power's destruction of the personal properties belonging individually or collectively to the inhabitants of the occupied territories. Notably, these war crimes flagrantly contravene Articles 49 Al.6 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, 85(4) (a) of the Additional Court, and 8 (2) (b) viii of the Statute of Rome (Poissonnier & David, 2020). The International Crime Court's Statute of Rome has not been ratified by Israel. However, it is argued that Israel should abide by its provisions since they represent the customary International Humanitarian Law (Poissonnier & David, 2020).

The second thing the families did was to plan numerous community gatherings and invite different voluntary groups and non-profit organisations to hold their activities in the neighbourhood including protests and visits (Asfour, 2021). The largest demonstration took place on Earth Day when the demonstrators hoisted banners that expressed: "Dispossession is a war crime, long life to the eternal earth day and we will stay here" (Al-Ahrar Palestinian Movement, 2021). Furthermore, the representatives of the families also made notable effort, raising their voices and primarily appealing to Jordan to obtain property documents (Arabi 21, 2021). The attorneys of the families also travelled to Turkiye to search the Ottoman archive for relevant documents.

They also coordinated their efforts with other 191 organisations and wrote a letter to the prosecutor of International Criminal Court (Al-Haq, 2021). These steps affirm the families' recognition that people have the right to communicate their historical rights and requests for protection asserts the rights of individuals to express their historical rights and ask for protection even if they did not do so through the usual channels of diplomacy and political officials.

### **Renewing of the Feminisation of the Palestinian Resistance Representation**

The significance of the Sheikh Jarrah issue is that it demonstrates how women are playing an important role in the fight not just as participants but as scene makers and leaders. Sheikh Jarrah's women took on the responsibilities of spreading the Palestinian narrative, recording the realities on the ground, the Palestinians' resistance and Israel's oppression, and constantly being active and available for news outlets and interviews.

Women's activism and leadership were present historically in which the Palestinian women proved that the Palestinian resistance is not male dominated. There have been a number of prominent female figures often combatants, activists and politicians (Banat, 2018). Since the British mandate, when women founded unions and philanthropic groups primarily the Arab Women's Union and armed women's organisations, Palestinian women have been successfully establishing their roles. After 1967, the Palestinian refugee women were assigned to carry out social activities (Alsaafin, 2014).

The Palestinian women's struggle extended beyond its social and institutional facets; it joined the Palestinian military organisations and took part in

the organisation and execution of military actions against Israeli military objectives (General Union of Palestinian Women, 1977). Furthermore, Palestinian women participated in the uprisings, protests, and defence of Jerusalem's holy sites. In terms of the Palestinian women's political participation, they took part in the political activities of the Palestinian National Authority, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, and non-governmental organisations. They, however, experienced challenges that prevented them from participating in the decision-making process at a high level (Abu AlGaib & AlKronz, 2015).

The Palestinian women of the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood worked to advance the course of the Palestinian resistance and brought about significant change in the women's participation in the decision-making areas which were not the political parties or the governmental agencies. They were rather the families' committees where women took the lead in organising solidarity efforts, attending the hearing secessions in the Israeli courts and following the developments of the legal battles (Jundi, 2021a).

The most obvious illustration of these warring women is Muna el-Kurd who used her journalistic skills to serve her people. She also started a massive electronic campaign and stepped up her documenting efforts. She spoke about Jerusalem and exposed Israel's abuses, which helped to spread awareness about the issue of Jerusalem and contributed to radically transforming the international discourse about Israel and Palestine (Abu Khadoura, 2023). The culmination of her motivational efforts was her graduation speech, in which she pushed the Palestinian students to use their academic expertise to further their cause (Harb, 2021). Additionally, Muna visited South Africa and Qatar to raise awareness of the Palestinian activism. Alaa Salaymeh also took part in the digital activism and demonstrated commitment to doing interviews with various media outlets and newspapers including the French newspaper 'Le Monade' (Imbert, 2021).

### **Reinforcing the role of Palestinian refugees and migrants in diaspora**

The components of the Palestinian collective memory served as a means through which pictures passed down from one generation to the next and were eventually assimilated into a culture to unite the Palestinian communities. Additionally, because this memory is centred on the idea and project of Palestine, it unites Palestinians (El-Sakka, 2013). The effectiveness of instilling a Palestinian national identity that is closely tied to the key of resistance, including development advocacy and pressure tactics, accounts for the distinctiveness of Palestinian immigration with all of its categories and linguistic expressions. As a result, the Palestinian diaspora is currently actively involved in every element of their national cause and is equally concerned with Palestine's pressing problems.

Palestinians in diaspora have been keen on preserving their national unity and improving new advocacy and pressure mechanisms including massive demonstrations, the cultural and academic activism of Palestinian writers, poets, lecturers and historians. Moreover, they founded several organisations that dedicated their efforts to counter the Zionist narrative and create a pro Palestine



stance in the West including Popular Conference for Palestinians abroad, Palestinian forum in Britain and Collectif Palestina Vacina in Italy. The Palestinians in the Palestinian refugee camps also demonstrated their solidarity with the Palestinians in the Palestinian lands, their adherence to the right of return, and their involvement in activities to resurrect the Nakba memorial. Yarmouk Camp in Damascus has always been active in holding demonstrations on the day of Nakba asserting their symbol "From Yarmouk to Palestine" (Al-Jazeera, 2015).

These efforts were intensified by the Sheikh Jarrah issue. The Palestinian Forum in Britain staged an electronic evening of support for the residents of Sheikh Jarrah in March 2021 (Middle East Monitor, 2021a). Along with the festival they organised to celebrate the Palestinian culture, the Palestinians in the UK arranged a skype chat with the el-Kurd family (Arabs in the UK, 2021). Additionally, The Palestinian organisations in Europe and the United States launched calls for participation in protests to support the families of the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood. Through this unprecedented campaign, they were able to start an international movement, collect signatures from western institutions, and call for an end to Israeli aggression against the Palestinians (Royah News, 2021). The Popular Conference for Palestinians Abroad also affirmed its support for the Palestinians in the area and that the Palestinian resistance, not Israeli courts, will decide the outcome of this matter (Palestinian Refugees Portal, 2021). There were also demonstrations in the Palestinian refugees' camps. In Lebanon for example, the Palestinian refugees in Burj Al Barajneh in Beirut and Al-Jalil camps in Baalbek organised demonstrations in solidarity with the people of Sheikh Jarrah and demanded opening the borders for the refugees to participate in defending Jerusalem (Al-Quds News, 2021).

The Palestinian temporary migrants born and raised in occupied Palestine but went to pursue better education abroad exerted another powerful influence. These immigrants were successful in demonstrating Sheikh Jarrah's real-life situation by using their advocacy and journalistic talents. The most recognisable figure among this group of migrants is Mohammed el-Kurd. Before going back to Sheikh Jarrah to be with his family, he was a student in the United States. In an article titled "If they steal Sheikh Jarrah", Mohammad recalls his conversation with his mother and makes clear the need of understanding Sheikh Jarrah's political and legal realities. His mother's final words in the piece, "We won't leave", served as the impetus for everything that happened next (el-Kurd, 2021).

His contribution has four dimensions. The first one is the increasing understanding of national identity since the childhood. He was the star of the Julia Bacha and Rebekah Wingrent poets' 2013 film "my neighbourhood," which expresses a strong sense of affinity and belonging. He grew up as a poet with an unstoppable pen, which culminated in the book he titled for his grandmother (Rifqa), who is regarded as an inspiration for her determination to stay in her house even after half of it was stolen in addition to her influence on him with her steadfastness and accurate depiction of the Nakba and the Palestinian reality

(Azaizeh, 2021). The second, and most significant aspect is how migration is portrayed as a means of denouncing and vigorously opposing the policy of dispossession. His migration was in some ways voluntary, but not for the typical reasons that young people's brains typically conjure up. He emphasises that moving to the United States was more than just a means of escaping intolerable realities. He once said: *"My migration here which is closer to Ghurba in Arabic, was to narrate a story of a homeland lived catastrophes and refuses to admit a reality full of pain of an occupied nation"* (AlKbariti, 2018).

The third dimension emphasises how an activist has the potential to change the game. His creation of a political discourse to combat the western states' run media's approach of using inaccurate conceptualisations of the dynamics of the Palestinian conflict and labelling Palestinians with racist terms definitely took the game changer role. His language suggests a strong commitment to replace terms that are entirely in favour of Israel with ones that support the Palestinian narrative. For instance, He rejected the term "eviction" being used to conceptualise the situation and instead used the terms "ethnic cleansing" and "war crime" (CNN, 2021). This action signalled the beginning of an age in which Palestinian authors and journalists would serve as the genuine narrators rather than only being the targets of the established media's influence (Saba, 2021).

Finally, el-Kurd highlights the importance of collective action, whereby all Palestinians challenge the occupation in order to realise the larger goal of liberation, which manifests a national struggle that goes beyond the symbolism of figures. His statement that *"creating symbols which reduces the struggle of a whole people to a single face is not enough"* in response to the inclusion of both him and his sister on Time magazine's yearly list of the most important personalities in the world, supports this conclusion. He goes on to say that it is imperative to take more concrete steps to put an end to the Israeli prejudice against Palestinians (Middle East Monitor, 2021b)

### **The Innovation of New Unprecedented Methods of Resistance**

The Sheikh Jarrah families' mobilisation was successful and manifested in the big number of Jerusalemites who came to the area and expressed their real solidarity. The general public's reaction was sparked by the perception that the city was under a serious threat from a colonial goal of "Relentless Israelisation". Furthermore, the "same destiny identification" set up this reaction. As a result, Jerusalem residents approached the Israeli military barriers and sang slogans condemning settlement construction and the eviction of locals, while also calling for the intensification of the populace's resistance, which primarily took the form of nonviolent creative tactics.

Palestinians have historically used a variety of nonviolent forms of resistance including organising conferences and national festivals, press media campaigns, protest telegrams, sending political delegations, public demonstrations, general strikes and civil disobedience (Abu Amer, 2018). For Jerusalem, The Palestinians launched rallies and demonstrations in 1967 to reject Israel's occupation of

Jerusalem. Additionally, non-governmental organisations and civil institutions in Jerusalem were active in empowering the general public in national and social matters, making appeals to international organisations, boycotting Israeli institutions, and using the daily newspapers as platforms to express the demands of the Palestinian national movement (Al-Jbouri & Al-Samarrae, 2020). The Palestinians in Jerusalem also started blocking down highways, throwing rocks, and carrying out prisoner strikes.

Sheikh Jarrah incident intensified the nonviolence resistance means and introduced new themes for this resistance. The hazard the neighbourhood was facing was highlighted as the initial theme of these techniques. These techniques included meticulously documenting neighbourhood residents' daily activities, holding more live sessions on social media, fostering relationships between the neighbourhood's residents and local and international journalists through organising Ramadan Iftar programs which were attended by big numbers and attacked by Zionist settlers (Ammouri, 2021) in an indication of the effectiveness of local residents' efforts at mobilisation and the protesters' quick response.

The second theme was the revitalisation of the neighbourhood through the utilisation of art as a tool of resistance. The names of the 28 families were painted inside the cactus plants, along with the words "*Here we are staying*", on a map of Palestine that solidarity activists had drawn (Jundi, 2021b). They also inscribed, "*Welcome to the neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah al-Samed*". Similarly, a kid-friendly opening day was organised in the neighbourhood's little park. It included programs for young people to educate the next generation about the Palestinian issue and assist the Palestinian children in overcoming the traumas caused by Israeli soldiers (Safa Agency, 2021). In remembrance of the 1967 Naksa, the day that commemorates Israel's occupation of the eastern part of Jerusalem and the West bank cities in June 1967, Palestinians raised the national flag of Palestine, flew kites, and demonstrated in front of the home of Amr al-Qaswm, known as the Palestinian Mandela (Mohsen & al-Sadi, 2021). The nonviolent resistance involved both the creation of new and the revival of established figures.

The widespread strike that occurred in Palestine in May provided the most convincing proof of the nonviolent resistance's revival. It impacted all facets of society and increased demonstrations (Al-Quds Al-Arabi, 2021). It's interesting to note that the rising appreciation for the value of nonviolent resistance has extended beyond the borders of Palestine to Jordanians and Lebanese, who did not shy away from trying to cross into Palestine (al-Jazeera, 2021a). Some of them even claimed that Palestine needed civil support rather than military troops.

### **Reinforcing Palestinians' unity of resistance in different fronts**

Since it revealed that all Palestinians, regardless of where they live in the world, face the same enemy and dangers, the Sheikh Jarrah problem has sparked an unparalleled level of togetherness among Palestinians. It helped spark a national revolt against Israeli occupation and brought attention to the reality that the lives of colonial people cannot be kept separate from one another (Shoufani, 2021).

The significance of this unity lies in the fact that it was attained among the Palestinian people despite the colonial divisions, whereas it has been a difficult task on the level of Palestinian leadership where it is still negatively impacted by the protracted conflicts between the Palestinian factions.

The Palestinians have historically provided numerous examples of resistance that is organised and united. The Palestinians started revolutions and protests during the British occupation, which were visible in every Palestinian town and city such as that of 1936. Additionally, they implemented a six-month strike that involved all Palestinians across all economic sectors (Yousef, 2017). In a similar manner, the 1987 Intifada was distinguished as being the broadest geographically since it included Palestinians from all across Palestine in their cities, towns, and isolated villages who coordinated their moves with each other (Abu Amer, 2005).

The Sheikh Jarrah incident resurrected this historical unity in which Jerusalem, the West Bank, the areas along the Green Line, and the Gaza Strip were the four key fronts on which the Palestinian people continued to fight together. For Jerusalem, the resistance was embarked on three scales which were both intense and simultaneous. The first traditional scales are the continuity of the daily responses of the Palestinian guys to the Israeli occupational forces and the renewal of steadfastness of the Palestinians who dedicated their efforts to protect the al-Aqsa Mosque. The third one is the sustained protests in solidarity with Sheikh Jarrah inhabitants, the protests that fuelled the previous scales and added a revolutionary power to them.

Palestinians in the West Bank have been subjected to double repression by the Zionist occupation and the Palestinian National Authority. Therefore, the Palestinians living there and the nonviolent grassroots groups focused their efforts on exerting pressure on both the Israeli government and the Palestinian leadership (Høigilt, 2015). Palestinians in West Bank cities demonstrated in support of the residents of Sheikh Jarrah. Under the banner of "The Friday of anger", several forces in West Bank cities called for protests and marches toward the crossings between the West Bank and Jerusalem (al-Jazeera, 2021b). Additionally, the Palestinians organised demonstrations in West Bank cities, yelled slogans opposing Israeli attempts to control the neighbourhood and demanded that Jerusalem must be protected from Israeli aggression (Hadaf News, 2021).

The hallmark of this extensive Palestinian resistance was the green line territories, the northern part of the historic Palestine (occupied in 1048). The resistance of Palestinians in these territories is evidence of the failure of the systematic assimilation tactics of the Zionist government, which were intended to thoroughly assimilate them into Israeli society and pressure them to forget their Palestinian heritage. The Sheikh Jarrah issue was particularly close to the Palestinians living in these territories because they connected the potential implementation of the expulsion of Palestinian families from the neighbourhood with tales of their own villages that were in danger due to settlers' attempts to control them (Shulhut, 2021). In response to the events in the Sheikh Jarrah,

protests and clashes against the Israeli occupation forces and settlers broke out in the Lod, one of the largest cities in the green line regions. This action debunked the long-promoted claim that these cities are mixed communities where Jews and Arabs cohabit and highlighted the political reality of the cities in the green line regions as a struggle of the Palestinians against settler colonialism (Sadeq, 2021).

The Israeli aggression on Gaza in May 2021 is distinctive since it was an extension to Israel's provocative and aggressive policies in Sheikh Jarrah and al-Aqsa Mosque. This war was neither an isolated event nor was born in a vacuum. It should be rather placed within the larger context of the developments in Jerusalem and the context of the overall occupation (Hamid, 2021). This war was named by Israel with "Walls Guard" and by Hamas "Saif al-Quds". Hamas's naming of this war, meaning "Sword of al-Quds" is derived from the main motive of the war which is the issue of al-Aqsa and Sheikh Jarrah, unlike previous wars which were caused by the Israeli blockade of Gaza and Israel's assassination of Palestinian resistance leaders from Hamas and Islamic Jihad (Al-Astal, 2023). It can be said that the armed resistance from Gaza supported the non-violence resistance in Jerusalem, the West Bank and historic Palestine which completed the traits of the unity image despite Israeli strategies to divide the Palestinians and break their will.

## ISRAEL'S POLICIES AND SUBSEQUENT PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE

The Israeli response to the Palestinian resistance has been applied through different organs of the Israeli system: The judicial system, the political decision-making institution and the military institution. The policies of these organs are explained below.

### **The utilisation of law to justify the expulsion decisions against the Palestinian families in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood**

Israel maintains a policy of "politicising" the law, as it uses the rule of law as a tool to advance its objective to obliterate the Palestinian people and establish the Jewish state. Israel's master plans, the legal and administrative issues law from 1970, the recent laws issued by the Israeli Parliament and the absentee's property law from 1950 all play a role in the decision to expel the Palestinians from the Sheikh Jarrah district. These regulations have a colonial undertone, hinting at Israel's plan for colonisation, and a bias against Palestinians.

The Palestinians were made absentees by a 1950 statute, and the Jewish people now held the estates that the Palestinians had previously owned but had been forcibly ejected from in 1948. By denying the Palestinians the same right, this rule additionally granted Jews the freedom to reclaim the homes they asserted they owned before 1948 (Baheth Center for Palestinian and Strategic Studies, 2011). This law's application was expanded to include the laws of 1970 and the years that followed, which made it easier for Israel's government and settler organisations to work together to rob Palestinians of their homes and lands (Marshi, 2022).

These discriminatory regulations are based on master plans created by various Israeli governmental bodies that envision Jerusalem as the capital of the Jewish state by erecting tourist and educational facilities at the expense of Palestinians who are denied building permits. These plans are employed as a political tool to maintain the Jewish majority and reduce the presence of Palestinians (Arafah, 2016).

The "Regularisation Law" of 2017 is one of the laws passed by Knesset to further the settlement enterprise. It legalises Jewish settlements constructed on Palestinian-owned land retroactively (Fisher, 2016). The following year, the Knesset passed a law titled "Amending the administrative courts Act on land petitions" that transfers the responsibility for West Bank land petitions from the Supreme Court of Justice to the administrative courts, which are biased in favour of Israeli settlers since the Supreme Court of Justice might impose restrictions on settlement activity while the administrative courts give the settlers a greater freedom to expand it (Sharif, 2020).

The systemic colonial control that attempts to deny the Palestinians any opportunity to expect justice also includes Israel's courts as essential components. The property records that the Palestinians have are not considered by these courts, but they pay close attention to the ones that the settlers present without any form of scrutiny. Law was also utilised as a psychological tool to damage the Palestinian morale through the continuous procrastination of the trials and hearing sessions and the half solutions policy which has a hidden agenda of suppression and denial of rights. The last court decision was considering Sheikh Jarrah families as "protected tenants" which is a new version of dispossession in which they are not considered as the original owners but rather as residents who have to pay rent to the settler organisations, a decision that was totally refused by the Palestinian families (Mohsen, 2021).

### **The unjust policies of the Israeli politicians and the Israeli political institutions**

Israel's decision to expel the Palestinians in the Sheikh Jarrah area is the culmination of the long-standing Israeli settlement policies applied by the Israeli governments and leaders. Since its founding, Israel has had a different perspective on the Palestinians due to the state of Israel's proclamation, which calls for the creation of the Jewish State. Regardless of their political inclinations, Israeli leaders and politicians have emphasised the need of maintaining the nation-state's Jewish identity (Amnesty International, 2022). Maintaining Israel's Jewish identity required ongoing settlement building, which was a top priority for the Israeli governments, particularly after 1967, when they heavily invested in efforts to entice Jews from Israel and abroad to settle in Jerusalem in order to advance their demographic goals (Dumper, 1991).

The Knesset, Israel's legislative body made up of representatives from a variety of political and religious backgrounds and orientations, serves as a forum for Israeli political parties to propose laws that aim to thwart the creation of a viable Palestinian state, appease Israeli electorates, and even annex the West

Bank, criminalise the political activity of the Palestinians in North Palestine, demolish Palestinian homes, suppress the Palestinian resistance and force feed the Palestinian prisoners (Abu Ramouz, 2016). Additionally, the situation was made worse by the activities of Knesset members, particularly the ultranationalists from the far-right parties.

Bezalel Smotrich is one of the most involved Knesset members in parliamentary legislation related to settlement strengthening. He supports the iron fist approach and disputes the existence of a Palestinian National Movement. He claimed that the May revolt, which was sparked by the Sheikh Jarrah incident, was not between equal parties but rather against terrorists and that Palestinians in the Green Line lands, whom he refers to as the 'Arabs of Israel', were working with Hamas (Shulhut, 2023). Itamar Ben Gevir, another ultranationalist personality, frequently emphasises the Jewish name of the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood, which is the "Tomb Shimon Hatazadik". He committed himself to organising the settlers and said that the Israeli army was not adequately protecting them (Najib, 2022). In a provocative move that transformed the neighbourhood into a battleground, he also moved his office to the Sheikh Jarrah (Abu Sneineh, 2022).

Netanyahu also showed a strict pro-settlement stance and claimed that the crisis is not being caused by the ongoing construction of settlements but rather by the Palestinians' reluctance to recognise the so-called Jewish state. Additionally, Netanyahu demonstrated his steadfast stance on the settlements issue by declaring that Israel is ready to advance to the next level of annexing the occupied areas and that it rejects the removal of any of the previously constructed settlements, which he sees as being an essential part of Israel. He said: *"I don't distinguish between the settlement blocs and the lone settlements. For me, every settlement like that is Israel"* (Shany, 2019).

The conflict in Sheikh Jarrah and Gaza was something that Netanyahu had a political stake in escalating, as he had struggled to shape the government during the most recent elections due to allegations of corruption. In order to increase his prospects of remaining in power, Netanyahu increased the oppression of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, Jerusalem, and the green line regions. Netanyahu also benefited from Israel's aggression on Gaza in 2021 in particular, as it served as a political survival tactic against the "No Bibi group" in which Netanyahu sought to present an image of a strong leader who the Israeli people would support (Porat, 2021).

### **The employment of military tools to silence Palestinians in Sheikh Jarrah and the other fronts**

Israel repressed the Palestinians and stifled their resistance by using excessive force. Since its occupation of the Palestinian land, Israel perceived the Palestinians as permanent threats and dealt them with them with a securitisation mentality manifested in the development of an iron fist policy against them including arbitrary arrests, homes' destruction, erecting military barriers, waging wars against Gaza, the penetration of the West Bank cities and more in a continuation

of Rabin's breaking bones policy in the first Intifada (Nahhas, 2021). The way Israel responded to the Sheikh Jarrah incident and the subsequent widespread revolt is an instance of these historical deliberate Israeli policies to crush the Palestinian resistance.

By erecting road blocks at the neighbourhood's entrance, Israel turned the it into a heavily militarised zone, keeping out Palestinians and journalists while allowing settlers to enter the area unchecked and unaccountable, a case that was resembled to the Martyr's Street in Hebron (Rajoub, 2021). Additionally, Israeli police used violent physical techniques to subdue the demonstrators, including grenades, skunk water, and rubber bullets, as they proceeded to beat and tread people underfoot with their massive horses (Amnesty International UK, 2021).

Additionally, the Israeli military proclaimed a state of emergency in the areas along the green line, particularly in the city of Lod (al-Naami, 2021). Declaring a state of emergency poses a risk because it empowers the military to take whatever action it deems necessary to restore peace and order. The Israeli military has been given unrestricted power in the context of what Israel refers to as a "Law and order campaign," which is used to detain Palestinians and accuse them of destroying the tranquillity of so-called "mixed cities". Israel's military employed excessive force in Gaza, justifying its actions by saying it was defending itself by firing missiles at Hamas's military targets. In reality, it was razing populated skyscrapers to the ground, ruining the Strip's infrastructure, and demolishing Palestinian homes. Israel pushed the narrative that Hamas should take responsibility for using Gazans as human shields.

## REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL REACTIONS TOWARDS THE ISSUE

Despite the lack of a coordinated, decisive response from governments or international organisations to offer a comprehensive solution for the Sheikh Jarrah issue, the issue managed to shatter the long-standing silence surrounding the Palestinian issue which came again to the forefront.

### **The formal attitude of the Arab and Muslim governments**

The governments of Arab, Muslim, and Western nations interacted extensively with the Sheikh Jarrah issue. Given its proximity to Palestine and historical role as a trustee over the Islamic sacred sites in Jerusalem, Jordan was one of most sought countries to settle the conflict. Jordan has emphasised the significance of upholding the Sheikh Jarrah families' legal rights and encouraged the international community to take serious action to stop the removal of the families (Kuna, 2022). Jordan also gave the Palestinian Authority the document it possessed, which was important because it shows that before Israel captured Jerusalem in 1967, Jordan was the city's governor and that it made promises to the local families that they would own the homes in the area (Palestinian Return Centre, 2021a).

Before the General Assembly, some Arab nations demanded the protection of Jerusalem, observance of the site's sacred sites, cessation of settlement



activity, and protection for the Palestinian people. Additionally, they condemned Israel's efforts to alter the status quo in Jerusalem and said that they believed that Israel was committing war crimes and breaking international law by doing so. These points were stressed by Algeria, Qatar, Tunisia, Morocco, Kuwait, Iraq and Bahrain (UN News, 2021).

Another important attitude was that of Turkiye, which made clear that it supports the Palestinians by criticising Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. The Israeli government's strategy of displacing Palestinians living in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood was denounced by the Turkish parliament as a flagrant breach of international law (Avunduklouđlu, 2022). Turkiye has also urged the international community to act quickly to stop Israel's waves of assault in response to the subsequent developments in Gaza. These speeches were delivered by the Turkish president, the Turkish vice president, and important members of the Turkish administration who underlined that Turkiye could not remain silent in the face of the atrocities experienced by the Palestinians (Hürriyet Daily News, 2022).

Sheikh Jarrah issue has also highlighted the decisive role of Turkiye in the issue. Its role is inspired by the historic legacy of the Ottomans. The Sheikh Jarrah issue has also drawn attention to the crucial part Turkiye played. The historical legacy of the Ottoman Empire serves as inspiration for Turkiye's position. The Ottoman archive is very significant to the Palestinian lawyers' case. Turkiye made it easier for the Palestinian journalists to conduct a thorough search for records regarded to be essential proof of the rights of the Palestinians (Yousef & Thabet, 2021). Turkiye has also given the relevant documentation to the Palestinian national government in order to assist Palestinians in refuting Zionist settlers' propagandistic assertions (Salam, 2020).

Another Muslim nation that exhibited a strong pro-Palestinian position was Malaysia. The Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Malaysia also called on the Muslim World to take severe measures to oppose Israel's policies and strongly denounced the brutal attack Israel carried out on the Palestinians in al-Aqsa Mosque and Sheikh Jarrah (Abu Rass, 2021). Additionally, the leader of the Coordination Council of Islamic Organisations in Malaysia sent a message of support to the families of Sheikh Jarrah and described them as an inspiration for those who value freedom and peace. He also invited free people around the world to help the Palestinian people end the occupation and save the neighbourhood (Alawi, 2021).

### **The supportive Western attitudes for the Palestinians**

The Sheikh Jarrah issue managed to attract the attention of several western nations as prominent voices supporting the Palestinians started to emerge. For example, the critical nature of the Sheikh Jarrah issue has also pushed European delegation to visit the neighbourhood to listen to the people themselves (Arna'out, 2021). This step proved that the European role is not confined to the financial aid and that it can be more supportive by closely monitoring the developments in the holy city. Furthermore, some US lawmakers adopted a

stance in opposition to the country's customary unconditional support of Israel and urged the administration to exert pressure on Israel to stop violating international law (Wafa News, 2022) marking another notable shift in the formal western responses to Israel's treatment of the Palestinians.

Similarly, there were several people who expressed their support for the people of Sheikh Jarrah in both words and action. Some voices have resurrected the comparison between the systemic practices of apartheid used by Israel against the Palestinians and those used by the United States against minorities and black people. This insightful analogy suggests that the Israeli occupation is a continuation of the global system of discrimination. These voices also emphasised the link between American support for Israel, which is unqualified, and the taxes paid by Americans, which fund this support, and Israel's expanding dominance. *"Those who prevent free Palestinians are the same people who exploit regular Americans"*, said Rashida Talib, a Palestinian American member of Congress (Harsanyi, 2021).

Following the Sheikh Jarrah event and the subsequent developments, Ireland was one of the first countries whose members of parliament submitted a proposal for the expulsion of the Israeli ambassador (Al-Jazeera, 2021c). Before the Security Council, the Irish ambassador emphasised that Israel should stop the settlement project because it threatens the future geopolitical relationship of the Palestinian state and serves as a reminder of its obligations as an occupying power. France and Estonia both agreed with this approach (UN News, 2022).

### **Massive demonstrations worldwide advocating the Palestinians**

Large-scale protests have always been sparked by the Palestinian issue especially in the western nations (Al-Jazeera, 2021d). In a similar manner, most countries around the world, including the United States, France, Germany, Canada, Spain, Pakistan, Poland, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and many more, planned protests supporting the Palestinians in the Sheikh Jarrah area. These demonstrations carried Palestinian flags and sang slogans like "Gaza is free", "Palestinian lives matter", and "Save Sheikh Jarrah", as well as appeals to hold Israel responsible for its oppressive actions against the Palestinians (Al-Jazeera, 2021d).

The crucial element of the Sheikh Jarrah situation might be summed up as "the prioritising". The problem came up at the same time when Corona was having terrible effects on people's lives all around the world. This did not stop them from organising huge pro-Palestinian protests, which demonstrated that the Palestinian problem remains a global concern. These protests also demonstrated how the world is becoming more aware of the uniqueness of the Palestinian problem, the Israeli government's history of apartheid, and the link between the suffering of Palestinians and the suffering of other victims of racism in other parts of the world, particularly the black lives matter movement (Ziauddin, 2021). Additionally, protesters did not just chant for Palestine as a whole. The presence of Sheikh Jarrah in their speech indicates a growing grasp of the geography of Palestine and the danger that Palestinian neighbourhoods face.

What's more significant is that the Sheikh Jarrah demonstrations highlighted the importance of democratic countries' public opinion in applying downward pressure on the governments to take strong action against Israel. In other words, these actions went beyond mere sentimental sympathies or moral duties. Protesters were vehemently calling for their respective governments to enact military embargos and sanctions to stop the flow of arms to Israel (Darrah, 2021). These demands show that the protestors have moved beyond mere sympathy for the Palestinians and have come to understand the significance of tackling the Israeli occupation, which is the primary factor contributing to the extended crisis the Palestinians are currently experiencing.

### **Prominent voices in the media sites to defend the Palestinians**

Digital activism aims to shape a resistance network and strengthen the social movements to challenge the dominant narratives and structure (AlKooe et al, 2023) been used extensively to clarify the roots and developments of the Sheikh Jarrah issue through continuous Facebook posts about the issue and Instagram lives with journalists and writers. Through social media channels, both common people and celebrities raised their voices by broadcasting live sessions and writing posts to inform others about the issue's developments. These voices emphasised the significance of developing a new type of media that offers an alternative viewpoint to traditional media that is in line with particular agendas. These celebrities included Arab actors and athletes, English Musician Roger Waters, Palestinian supermodel Bella Hadid, and Palestinian blogger Muna Hawwa.

Another crucial issue is that online activity disclosed the policy of social media sites particularly Instagram which started to censor content with Palestinian themes. These policies should be understood in the context of the structurally discriminatory measures used against Palestinians, whose freedom of expression rights have also been taken. Activists asserted that the removal of the Palestinian content could no longer be explained by technical issues (Gebeily, 2021).

International media outlets also denounced the proposed expulsion of the Sheikh Jarrah area and the repression of the protesters. Sheikh Jarrah has evolved into a microcosm of Jerusalem's way of life, according to an article written by Lucy Garbett (2021) for The Guardian. The Time magazine also named the el-Kurd twins among the world's influencers (Palestinian Return Centre, 2021b). These publications started to change their perspectives on the Palestinian problem realising that Israel was the aggressive side and that the Palestinians were the side that was under attack.

## **THE IMPACT OF THE SHEIKH JARRAH ISSUE ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE**

### **Shaping the narratives of the Palestinian and Israelis in a more detailed manner**

Palestinian and Zionists' narratives are the flipside of each other. In the past, these stories were described in broad terms. The Zionists clung to the idea of the Promised Land and the Jewish nature of the state, while the Palestinians emphasised the deprivation of their basic rights and the theft of their lands by the

colonial settler state of Israel. The Sheikh Jarrah issue highlighted the stark disparity between these narratives and demonstrated how the two sides built them in order to be more specific, as they competed to present their own legal frameworks, oral histories, and written accounts of the issue's history. People from other places were interested in this scenario and wanted to know the truth and look into these specifics. The problem gave rise to a competition between the two sides to create in-depth narratives about their ownership claims to the land.

### **The demonstration of the real nature of players in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict**

Israel and the Palestine are placed on an equal footing by the terminology commonly employed to describe the Palestinian issue. The Sheikh Jarrah issue, however, revealed the actual nature of the two sides. It demonstrated how Israel is made up of a vast network of Israeli politicians, Israeli occupation forces, Israeli courts, and Israeli settlement groups. It also emphasised the intrinsic link between the settlers and the state which refutes the idea that the settlers as extremists that the so-called democratic state of Israel wants to curtail. The Palestinians were the families in danger, the Palestinian protesters and the Palestinian activists inside and outside Palestine who formed a concerted effort to thwart the Israeli project of Judaisation of Jerusalem and wiping out the Palestinian presence. The issue helped people comprehend the facts of the fight better. This was clear in the position of the UN high commissioner for human rights who called on Israel to cease the dispossession policies against the Palestinians (Committee for Justice, 2021). This was a reminder that Eastern Jerusalem is an occupied territory according to the International Law which means Israel does not have the right to impose any of its policies in Sheikh Jarrah (Quigley, 1994).

### **The interconnectedness of Israeli policies and collective Palestinian resistance**

The policy of the political and physical fragmentation that Israel seeks to divert the Palestinians and undermine any attempt at unification among them is one of the baffling issues that makes it difficult to comprehend the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Sheikh Jarrah issue originated in Jerusalem, but its impact quickly spread to every region of historic Palestine. Palestinian resistance to Israel's discriminatory policies has been pervasive, it was emphasised that the Palestinian issue has to be understood in light of Israel's actions and the Palestinians' natural responses.

### **The enhancement of the level of internationalisation of the conflict**

The Sheikh Jarrah issue demonstrated how deeply concerning events in Palestine are for people throughout the globe. It demonstrated that the Palestinian issue is not entirely peripheral and that there is no hesitation on the part of the international community to denounce Israel and express support for Palestinians. The world's nations are gradually realising Israel as a terrorist state that violates humanitarian principles, despite the fact that it still has some of its old allies still on its side. The issue of Sheikh Jarrah gained a universal humanitarian dimension, and the political and existential dimensions of the problem, which means that the

Israeli-Palestinian conflict's core is a political struggle for existence between two sides with conflicting narratives over the ownership of the land, were better understood internationally.

## CONCLUSION

The analysis presented in this article focused on the continuous Israel's institutionalised apartheid system that targeted the Palestinian families in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood in Jerusalem by the end of 2020. This system and its accompanying Israeli policies ignited a nationwide Palestinian resistance. Although the suppression of the Israeli state and the consequent Palestinian resistance is not a novel situation, the Sheikh Jarrah case both deepened the colonial coordination between different organs of the Israeli establishment to further the expansionist goals of the Jewish state and increased the cooperation between various Palestinian actors to improve the effectiveness resistance.

Different branches of the Israeli system including the judiciary, the legislature, the executive and the military implemented Israel's arbitrary policies. The Israeli authorities stepped up the protection of the Zionist settlers, supported their assertions and escalated its campaign of arresting Palestinians and suppressing their protests. For the Palestinians, the creativeness of their fighting back lies in the growth of the Palestinians reliance on themselves to speaking up for their issue, the emergence of talented Palestinian individuals who enriched the resistance means and steadfastly defended the collective issues of their people, the unprecedented unification of efforts of all the Palestinians across historic Palestine and the diversification of resistance means.

Israel tried to silence Palestinians' voices by acting harshly toward them, but it was unsuccessful. As a result of foreign media coverage of Israel's oppression and the Palestinian response, both governments and individual citizens of the world have taken various actions. The Palestinian issue garnered global attention, took over social media platforms, and raised unprecedented awareness of the realities of life for Palestinians living under occupation.

It can be said that the issue of Sheikh Jarrah was not hostage to the time or location. It has several impacts on the trajectory of the Palestinian issue and its dynamics. It managed to broaden the perspectives of both the Palestinians and the Zionists, increased awareness of the various players on both sides, enhanced the comprehension of the reality of the Israeli occupation and the tactics used by the Palestinian resistance. This helped the issue become internalised and brought it back into the spotlight. We don't yet know what will happen to the Sheikh Jarrah area at the end. However so far, the persistence of Israel's institutionalised racism and the Palestinians' unwavering astonishing resolve, on the other hand, are abundantly seen.

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