

Jerusalem

Dec 1, 1990



In-Depth Reports

Executive Summary

Jerusalem's transcendent characteristic is its uniqueness -- different from that of any other city or community. It remains, after 4,000 years, a magnetic focus of mystic, historical, emotional, religious, cultural, political and strategic attention. The city retains undimmed significance for adherents of the world's three great monotheistic religions -- Judaism, Christianity and Islam -- each of which stamped its imprint on it.

Through the centuries it has been subjected to more than a dozen destructive invasions, each remolding the city in a different political or cultural pattern. During the transient Crusader Kingdom phase it was a mini-state on its own, and for the British colonial Mandate it was the administrative and governmental center. Only twice has it served as a national capital: for the Biblical Kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and for the modern-day resurrected State of Israel. In between, it has existed as a provincial township, sometimes no more than an overgrown village.

Its religious significance has engendered various attempts in modern times to internationalize the city -- perhaps "denationalize" would describe the concept more accurately -- with the UN 1947 General Assembly resolution typifying the approach designed to detach control from the national or ethnic populations in the area.

The 1948 war over the establishment of Israel provided its share of renewed conflict over Jerusalem, resulting in a physical division of the city, with the western, modern part in Israel and the eastern part in Jordan. This division was to last almost two decades--the only occasion in the city's history when it was hermetically split (by minefields, barbed wire and concrete walls, resembling the Berlin Wall). Only after the Six Day War in 1967 did the city resume the status of a unified, albeit heterogeneous, community with all its inherent difficulties.

Israel's claim to Jerusalem goes back to time immemorial, bolstered by a continuous Jewish presence, swelling in modern times to Jewish majority in the population since the middle of the last century, culminating in 1947-1948 in a struggle for the very survival of the Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem.

The juridical status of Jerusalem has been the subject of research and controversy, particularly since the city's emergence from the status of a provincial backwater town once again into a major multinational metropolis.

With Israel's assumption of control in 1967 and the subsequent Jerusalem Law adopted by the Israeli Knesset defining the reunified status of the city, Arab and Palestinian reactions and counter-attitudes found expression in

segments of the international community; reactions were also forthcoming in official international, religious, American and other policies and positions.

Central to the issue of control and governance has been the freedom of worship and access for all and protection of the holy places of the various faiths. This is where, in fact, the Israeli administration has applied meticulous measures and practices to ensure such freedom and protection to a maximal degree.

The post-1967 demographic situation and development programs initiated and carried out by the municipality are described in detail in this survey, which concludes with an articulation of the author's perception of Jerusalem in the foreseeable future, based on a conviction of the need for peaceful coexistence prevailing in a unified, though heterogeneous, community of half a million people.

The Appendix includes a selection of maps designed to illustrate highlights of the events and kaleidoscope presented herein.



ISBN: 0-944029-07-8

Pages: 66

Distributor: WINEP

RECOMMENDED



BRIEF ANALYSIS

[Iran Takes Next Steps on Rocket Technology](#)

Feb 11, 2022

◆
Farzin Nadimi

(/policy-analysis/iran-takes-next-steps-rocket-technology)



BRIEF ANALYSIS

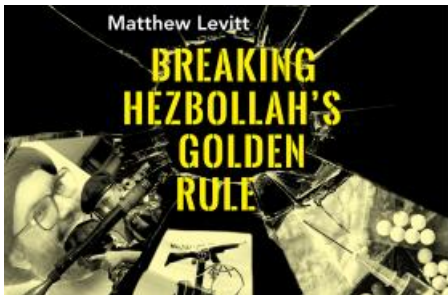
[Saudi Arabia Adjusts Its History, Diminishing the Role of Wahhabism](#)

Feb 11, 2022



Simon Henderson

[\(/policy-analysis/saudi-arabia-adjusts-its-history-diminishing-role-wahhabism\)](#)



ARTICLES & TESTIMONY

[Podcast: Breaking Hezbollah's Golden Rule](#)

Feb 9, 2022



Matthew Levitt

[\(/policy-analysis/podcast-breaking-hezbollahs-golden-rule\)](#)

TOPICS

[Arab-Israeli Relations \(/policy-analysis/arab-israeli-relations\)](#)

[Peace Process \(/policy-analysis/peace-process\)](#)

REGIONS & COUNTRIES

[Israel \(/policy-analysis/israel\)](#)

[Palestinians \(/policy-analysis/palestinians\)](#)