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East Jerusalem: Palestine: Tourism as a Tool for Colonization, Segregation, Displacement

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Abstract:

Although ethnically based segregation is by no means a new phenomenon in cities (Nightingale 2012), the urban studies literature in recent decades has paid specific attention to class-based segregation corresponding to the worldwide neo-liberal turn (Castells 1996 ; Davis 2007). Enclaves are often subject to special governance regimes and access and movement restrictions, their etymological root in the Latin word *clavis* (key) pointing to the fact that their closed-off perimeter is a defining characteristic. Therefore, the emergence of rich gated communities alongside marginal areas is understood to have created new forms of inclusion and exclusion in post-industrial cities and towns (Douglas, Wissink, & van Kempen 2012). Despite the recent 'mobilities turn' (Sheller 2004; Urry 2007), the literature on urban segregation, borders and enclaves has paid scant attention to activities and im/mobilities, focusing its analyses mainly on residential patterns (Kwan 2009, 2013). In this context, Palestine has experienced division and occupation for several decades with severe effects on its tourism, particularly to the holy cities of Bethlehem, Jericho, Nablus, Ramallah and East Jerusalem (Isaac, Hall, & Higgins-Desbiolles 2016).

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Palestine has seen complicated changes in its political circumstances. These have included the creation of Israel in 1948 and the 1967 war. Consequent to the latter, Israel occupied the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. These events have created catastrophic political, economic, psychological and social impacts that have deeply affected the lives of Palestinians, many of whom became refugees dislocated to neighbouring countries and indeed throughout the world as part of the Palestinian diaspora. In many ways, Palestine itself was wiped off the map (Isaac 2010a, 2010b), with much of historic Palestine becoming known as Israel. In this context, tourism became a political tool in the supremacy and domination of the Israeli establishment over land and people, and an instrument for preventing Palestinians from enjoying the fruits of the cultural and human exchanges that tourism provides. Edward Said (1995: 7) noted that 'only by first projecting an idea of Jerusalem could Israel then proceed to the changes on the ground [which] would then correspond to the images and projections.' Israel's idea of Jerusalem, as elaborated in its master plans—for ethnic cleansing—involves maximising the number of Jews and reducing the number of Palestinians through a gradual process of colonisation, displacement and dispossession. Therefore, this paper examines how Israeli master plans for Jerusalem aim to shape the city into a tourism and high-tech centre, and the ways in which urban planning is used to reshape the city's demography. It also sheds light on Israel's deliberate economic breakdown of East Jerusalem, which renders the city essentially unliveable for Palestinians to ensure Jewish control

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over it. Tourism in this context is used as a tool to control the narrative and ensure the projection of Jerusalem in the outside world as a 'Jewish city.'