Planning and developing a new Palestinian urban Core under conditional Israeli Occupation: Ramallah City

Introduction

In spite of the ancient traditions of urban development in Palestine, the development of the Palestinian cities have veered from these traditions and suffered greatly since the middle of the twentieth century. Since 1967, the territories administered by Jordan and Egypt came under Israeli occupation rule. The Palestinian urban centers under Israeli occupation became disconnected from the urban cores of other Arab States. The Palestinian urban centers resumed their growth under Israeli occupation. Since the Palestinian cities passed to Palestinians Authorities (PA) in 1995, these urban centers have flourished to some degree.

During the process of establishing a new Palestinian statehood since the beginning of the peace process between the Palestinians and Israelis, the city of Ramallah has changed and transformed from district city to national core. According to this process Ramallah has grown and developed to be the de facto capital of the PA, in spite of Palestinian claims of East Jerusalem as core and capital of the emerging Palestinian State. This paper will describe and discuss the geo-political arena in this circumstance, which lead and guided the city transformation, and analyze the planning process of this city, including the number of planning dilemmas.

The paper has three main foci. First is the description of the development of Ramallah and the surrounding area - surroundings that have become a part of metropolitan Jerusalem. Ramallah is one of the main Palestinian centers, whose growth increased particularly after Israeli closure in 1993 and after the establishment of the PA, the subsequent establishment its official institutions, and other international economic agencies in Ramallah. The second focus is a discussion and analysis of the implications and consequences of internal and external factors, their direct impact on the crystallization of the urban fabric of the city, which is changing from a small tourist town to the main city in West Bank, and on the core of the Palestinian State. The third point of the paper presents the dilemmas and the obstacles of the spatial urban planning of the city, whose development occurred under semi-occupation, the dichotomy between the traditional and the modern, and the effect outsider intervention. Much of the development occurred by using the method of up - down opposed to organic development which claimed by the "native" and land-ownership, using the method of down up development. The paper summarizes the process of developing a master plan for the City of Ramallah. The writer of this article was the head of the planning staff and manages the planning process for the City.

General Framework

Urban planning is not disconnected from the geo-political, social, political and building of a nation. The opposite, spatial planning and reorganization of the distribution of the hierarchy of urban centers, towns and villages, includes urban planning as a part of the missions and strategies of the state to promote development, secure a national balancing of integration and continuity according relative advantages of the localities on one side, while facing outsider challenges and competition in the regional and global world on the other. The reorganization of population distribution and spatial organization of localities within the state is an integral part of the national security of a state (Cave, 1992). Different countries adapted the approach of centrality in spatial planning for reorganization of the space within their borders. Others countries let market forces determine the structure dispersal of the localities, including the urban centers in the state. In some countries, governments crystallized policies

of decentralization, and allow competitions between cities according their relative advantages and disadvantages, and according the development strategies demarcated and defined by local municipalities and local forces, with limited intervention of the central forces. The planning process occurs after a state is established and gains sovereignty. Thus, the new nation state reorganizes its population and economic activities within its spatial boundaries, including the creation of an urban core, if one is absent prior to the establishment of the new state.

The creation of nation state results in the creation of a new urban core, consisting of the capital of the new state with hospitality towards the institutions of the national movement after self-determination. The urban core hospitality may include a representative political system and institutions such as Parliament, Executive House and offices, Governmental ministries, foreign representatives, ambassadors and agencies. The core may be based on an existing urban center, or a new one may be developed. The urban core attracts economic activity, the concentration of public, private, and financial institutions, and workers and population immigrants benefiting from new opportunity. A change from the status of town to urban core and center for national and international activities shifts the urban structure and urban fabric of a town.

Since the mid twentieth century, a large number of states gained independence, especially within the Middle East. The global arena witnessed, as catalyzed by the emergence of new states in the last century, the creation of urban cores such as Amman, Tel-Aviv, Kuwait and Manama. Changing from the status of regional town or district urban center to national urban center created a need to prepare land-use planning by local institutions, including the community and municipality, to cope with new larger needs, including the need for allocation of land for regional and national facilities.

The late 1930' partition of Palestine according to ethno-national demographics for distinct Jewish and Arab states grew out of the colonial British rule of the area and was promoted by the international geo-political system. During the British Mandate of Palestine, Jerusalem developed as a political, economic, and national urban center, evolving into the political and economic core of the area, as well as the cultural and religious core. In 1947, the United Nations Assembly partitioned Palestine into two states, Arab and Jewish, under Resolution 181. The War of 1948 between the Arabs and the Jewish, as an aftermath of this resolution, lead to the establishment of a viable, functional sovereign Jewish state with Tel-Aviv its urban core. This urban core began to develop in the 1930's even though the Israelis aspired to establish Jerusalem as its Political core after the War of 1948, and according to the Rhodes ceasefire agreement of 1949. The Arab Palestinian state failed to establish, with Palestinian territory outside the Israeli state fragmented into two units lacking territorial continuity. As a result of this war, known as "Nakba" [disaster] to the Palestinians, and territorial fragmentation, the normal growth of Palestinian cities and towns changed in the wake of the establishment of the State of Israel. Israel divided Mandate Palestine under Jordanian rule (West Bank, "WB) and Egyptian administration (Gaza Strip, "GS"). Between 1948-1967 the Palestinians lost their urban centers in territories within the newly established Israel proper, and the urban centers outside Israel's borders, ruled by foreign Arab States, remained relatively small and dependent on the Jordanian core and the Egyptian core, Amman and Cairo, respectively. Jerusalem, which had previously functioned as the Palestinian core, was divided into West Jerusalem, under the sovereignty of the State of Israel, while East Jerusalem was under Jordanian sovereignty and dependent on Amman. Since 1967, Israel has occupied WS/GS, thus interrupting the political, functional and economic dependence of the Palestinians towns from the foreigner's cores.

The development of Arab Palestinian towns is characterized by localism and similarity. Each town functions as an administrative and commercial center in its district or sub-district. Israel did not allow for the development of a Palestinian central city through control of their

development and expansion, while the Palestinians looked to Jerusalem as its main city and future core. Until the mid 1980's, the Palestinian cities and towns developed according to the Master and Outline plan prepared during the Mandate period such as al-Khalel, or the Jordanians period such as Ramallah and Al-Bireh. The limit of resources and restrictions, imposed by the Israeli occupation, decreased the possible rapid development in the Palestinian territories (WB, GS and East Jerusalem) "below PT". Parallel to these restrictions, the economic and population growth occurred in the Palestinian territory, which pushed the urbanization process of the Palestinian villages, and led to sprawl beside socio-economic changes after the opening of the Israeli market for Palestinian workers and services (Khan, Giacaman, and Amundsen, 2004),

On the other side of the Palestinian territory, violence and the first Intefada (Uprising), (1987-1993), reduced and limited the development of the Palestinians cities and villages, while strengthened the Israeli occupation and control over the Palestinians. These controls include economic development, confinement of institutionalizations, and the limiting of accessibility and mobility between the localities. Such Israeli actions coincided with increased development of Israeli settlements in the PT, which continue to surround Palestinian cities and limits their expansion and development.

In 1988 the Palestinians National Council authorized the Palestinians Liberalization Organization (PLO) to establish a Palestinian state in the PT beside Israel. The peace process began in Madrid in 1990, lead to a formal recognition between the PLO and Israeli government in 1993, establishing a Palestinian State in the PT according to the United Nation Resolutions no.242, and 338. Interim agreements were signed between the two parties. According to these agreements, some issues such as future of Jerusalem, the final geo-political boundaries, the allocation of water resources, the issue of refugees and the Israeli settlements were postponed to final negotiations. While the PA was established after a national election, which elected the President and Parliaments, governmental ministries and public institutions established prior to the agreement continued to manage and govern Palestinians in the territories Israel handed to the PA.

Figure no.1: Location of Ramallah within the West Band and Gaza Stripe, and the division of PT A, B, and C area according the Intirm peace agreements.
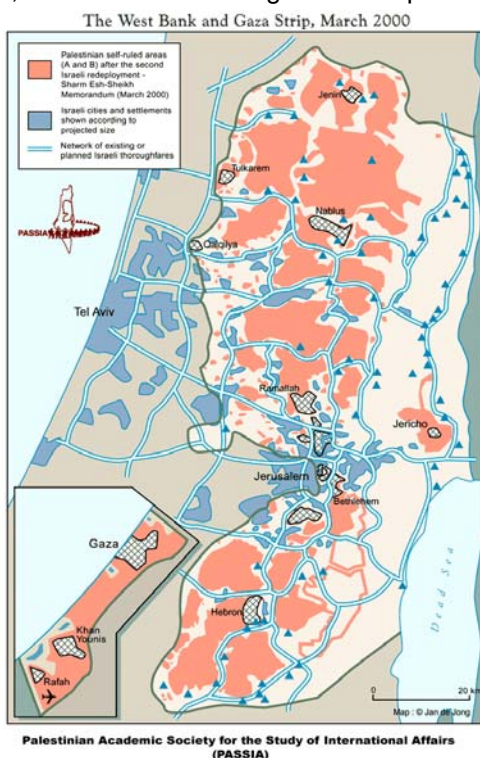
According to the Interim agreements between 1993 and 1995, the PT divided into three areas. Area A, including most of the jurisdictions of the main large Palestinian cities, consisted of about 3 percent of the PT initially, but extended to include 18 percent after 2000. In this area, the PA was granted authority over civic issues and security. B areas consist of about 22 percent of the PT, including the jurisdictions of smaller towns and built up villages, while area C, including the vast majority of the empty PT (60 percent) *plus* the Israeli settlements, remained under Israeli occupational control (Ishaq, 2005).

Due to the postponement of Jerusalem's geo-political future to final peace negotiations, the Palestinians chose to temporarily establish most governmental institutions in the Ramallah-Al-Bera twin cities, with other branches established in Gaza city. The dual establishment of governmental and public institutions, and the division between Gaza and Ramallah cities came as a result of an existing division of the PT between the WB, with Ramallah functioning as the core and "capital", and the GS, with Gaza functioning as the core and its capital. From the Palestinian point of view, this situation is temporary until the future of Jerusalem is determined. Despite an unclear future of Jerusalem, Israel began to implement active policies of control over the Palestinians in East Jerusalem, to reduce to potential possibility of change in the status quo of the city as capital of Israel state and prohibit the possibility of re-division. These policies include closure, prohibition of any Palestinian from the PT to enter Jerusalem without permit, control over the establishment of Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem, and since 2003, Israel began to built separate wall surrounding the area were Israel define Jerusalem and achieve its interests (Brook et, al. 2005).

These geo-political and national circumstances after the interim agreements, which include establishing of the official governmental institutions of PA located in Ramallah, imposed rapid transformations and changes on the small city, which previously developed organically according its population needs. The city began to cope the new challenge of rapid growth necessary to function as the core of the new nation state, Palestine. The challenges, which put forward Ramallal planning activities and process, will be describe below.

Passing from small village to a large urban center

Ottoman archives circa 16th century show Ramallah as a well-established agricultural village of about four hundred people. With time Ramallah became a prosperous town attracting families to the area. It developed as any ordinary village; notable only for the fact it was predominately Christian. The 19th century brought about an influx of church representatives and missionaries to the area, resulting in the development of church institutions such as schools and hospitals (Algube and Bisharah, 2002).

At around the same time, Ramallah began to grow and spread beyond the boundaries of the original village, or old city. New houses appeared with enclosed gardens and beautiful stone and masonry work. This was a time of social development. New money from relatives in America, together with employment prospects under the British Mandate government, created a new Ramallah bourgeoisie who moved from the old village to the area around it and their new villas. Ramallah grew, particularly along the main roads and in the direction of Al-Bireh, bringing the two villages yet closer. During the 1920s and 30s the empty houses in the old city were taken by families from the Hebron area who came to work for mandate officials. To this day many of the people living in the older houses in this area are originally from around Hebron (Riwaq, 1998).

Emigration continued, and by 1946, 1,500 of Ramallah's 6000 residents had gone. However, in 1948, there was an influx of refugees to Ramallah from families forced to flee from their homes in Jaffa, Lydda and Ramleh by Israeli forces. So even though the *population had*

doubled by 1953, one third of the native population had left and were living in America.

Ramallah has witnessed rapid growth in the last two decades as a result of internal and external factors. Below I will try to summarize such factors.

A. Urbanization

Until the 1960's, Ramallah was a small Christian locality, developed organically from a built-up core. This village core was located about two miles west from the historical main road connecting north Palestine through   Jerusalem to south Palestine, while the twin village of Al-Bireh, a Moslem locality, was located four miles East of this important main road. In 1908, the Municipality of Ramallah was established when its population reached about 3300 persons. The town growth as center of sub-district Ramallah served the villages. The village land was 17858 dunames. The town expanded slowly without an official outline plan. In the mid twentieth century, it suffered from negative migration abroad (America, Europe, and Australia).   During the Jordanian period (1950-1967), Ramallah evolved into a tourist destination, due to its good weather particularly in the summer, and its open, welcoming community and good hospitality. During this period, the town began to grow as a result of population growth based on positive immigration from the rest of the WB and on natural increase. The figures 4 below summarize the population growth in Ramallah (Ramallah Municipality,2000).

The figure shows Ramallah population doubly increased between 1992-2004. This population growth was a result of natural increases and immigration; including Palestinians returnee that comes after establishing of the PA. Needless to say, these numbers include those who registered according to the municipality and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Actually the population who reside in Ramallah city is more and today municipality the estimation is about 50 thousands persons (PCBS, 2004). In addition, the population of the inner belt Ramallah metropolitan (Ramallah, Al-Bireh and Beituniya cities) estimated about 130 thousands persons. The population growth in Ramallah occurred in the surrounding localities such Al-Bierh and Beituniya, Jerusalem and surrounding villages such as Al-Ram. These population growths join with growth demand of housing and public facilities and create economic activities as will describe in short below. This urbanization process have had occurred a transformation and changing of urban social, community, economic and institutions fabric, this beside the physical structure of the city which change it to be part or core of urban conglomerate or semi-metropolitan.

To provide housing for the rapid population growth and building to the economic activities in addition to the officers for the new institutions and governmental officers, the municipality which functioned as the Local Planning Committee was issued numbers of building permits. The table no. 1 summarizes the growth of building permit issued by Ramallah municipality in the last decade.
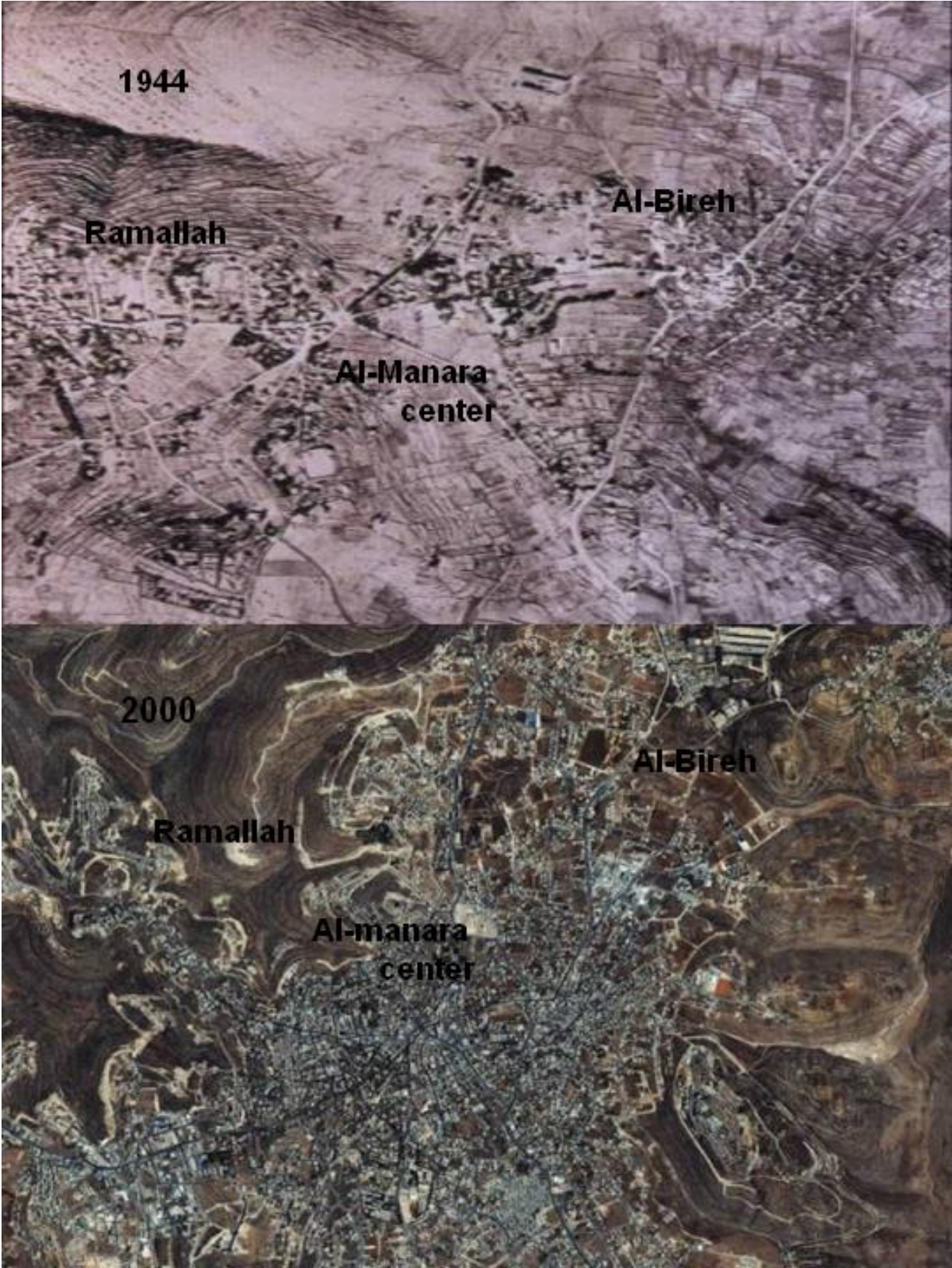
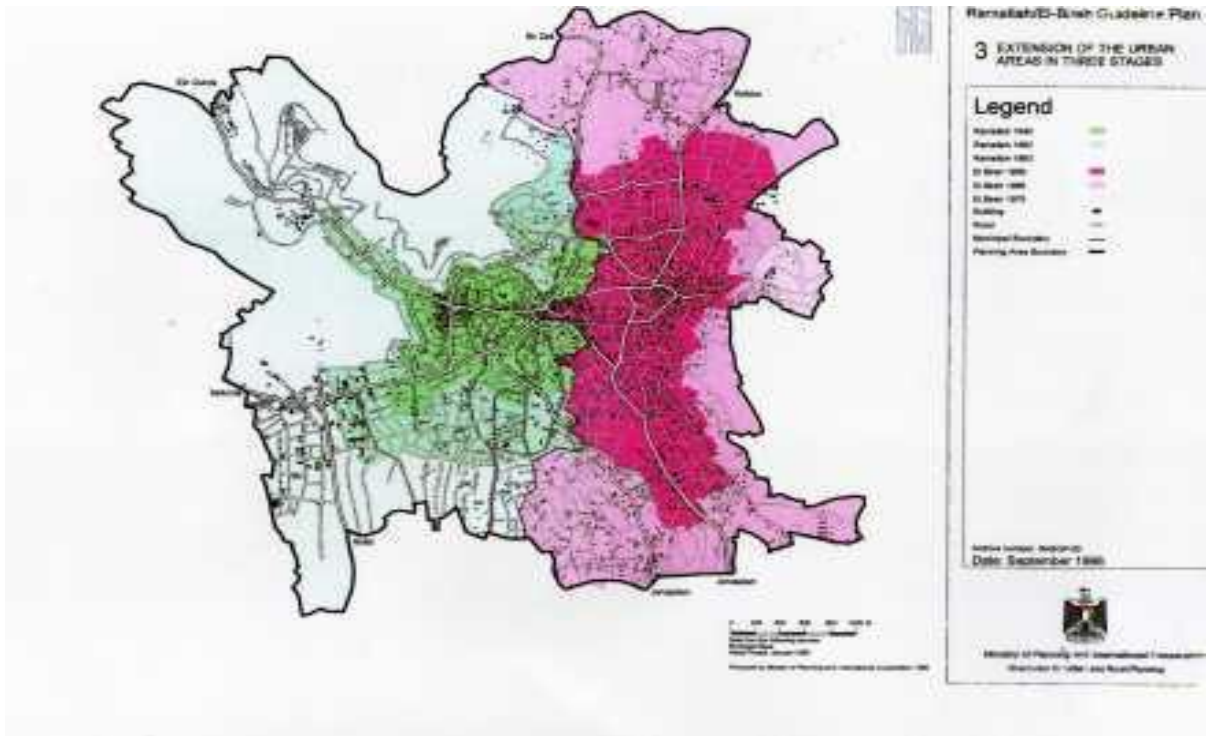Figure no. 2: Arial photo of Ramallah and Al-Bireh in 1944 and 2000

**Figure no. 3: The area of approved outline plan in during   British Mandate
and Jordanians periods (source: MPIC, 1998)**

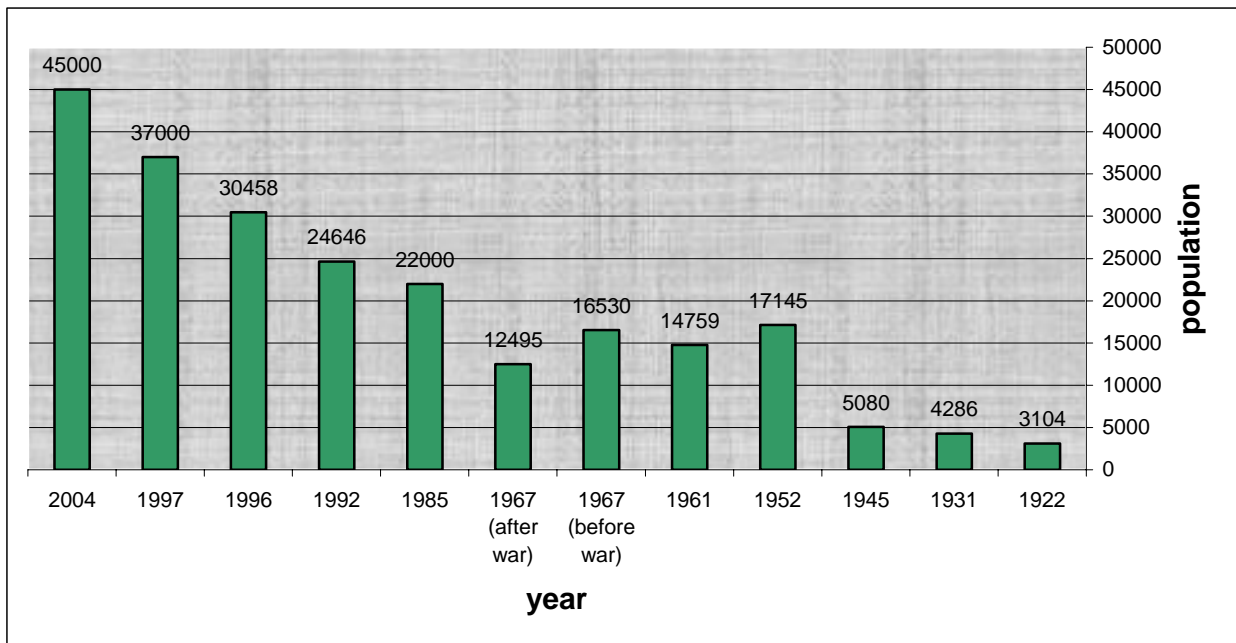**Figure 4: population growth in Ramallah city between 1922-2004**

Table no. 1: number of the building permit issued by municipality of Ramallah between 1991-2004 according building use and area square meters.

Total		Industrial		**Commercial		*Housing		Year
Area	No/	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	
20550	52	6420	10	1695	3	12435	39	1991
49167	91	14674	19	10423	16	24070	56	1992
77529	100	16723	14	16620	14	44186	72	1993
119056	122	19254	16	49582	28	50220	78	1994
130188	116	15900	14	1170	6	113119	96	1995
90498	116	16056	17	11100	13	63342	86	1996
149320	189	37595	21	19835	22	91890	146	1997
124457	207	23778	27	15260	17	85419	163	1998
147417	198	19197	38	5735	8	123485	163	1999
153636	205	13940	17	25640	13	114253	175	2000
84729	139	14422	17	1729	5	68578	117	2001
52437	86	3946	11	1609	5	46882	70	2002
126588	169	7838	5	7816	10	110934	154	2003
131408	149	3163	4	11655	8	116704	137	2004

Source: Engineering department, Ramallah Municipality.
- Housing since 2000 include public housing.
- Commercial since 2001 include tourist building.

Figure no. 5: number of the building permit issued by municipality of Ramallah between 1991-2004 according building use and area square meters.
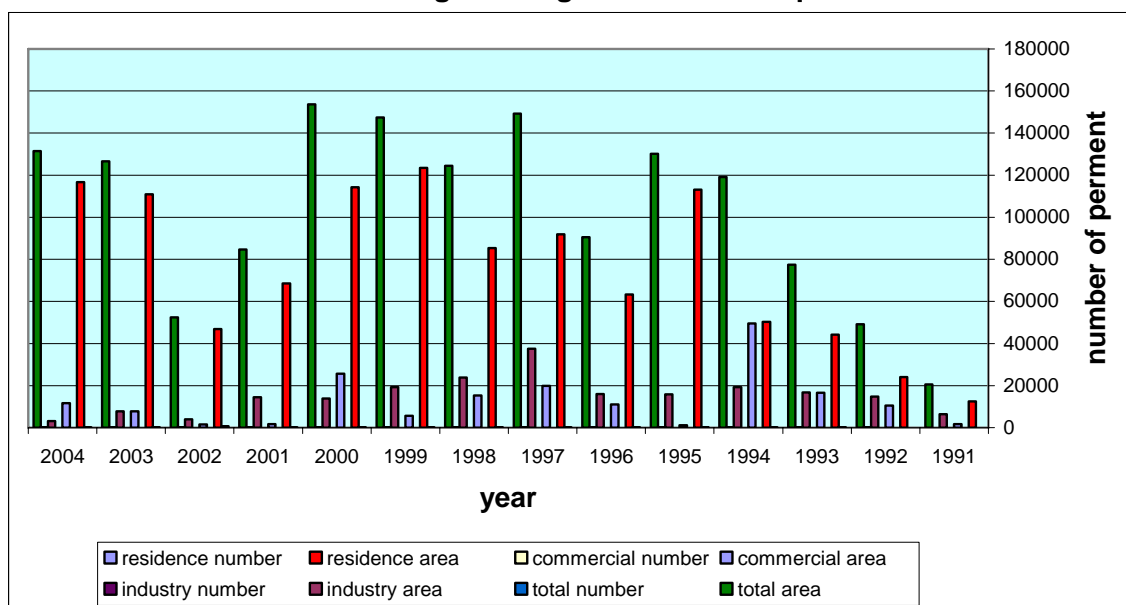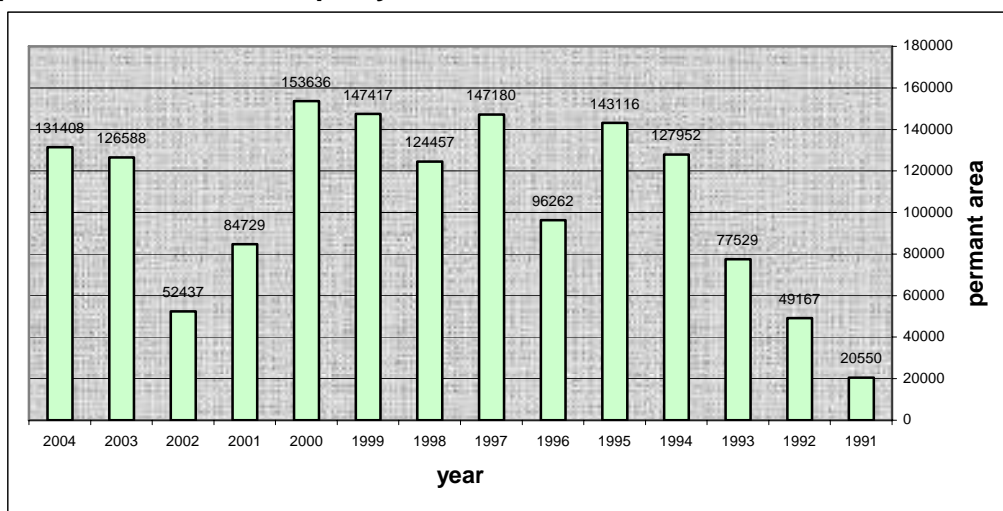
Figure No. 6: Development of building area in square meters, which get building permit from the municipality between 1991-2004

The rapid urbanization in Ramallah includes concentration of the economic establishments in the city. In 2004 in Ramallah were about 2659 economic establishments with 10845 employees (see table no.2).

Table no. 2: Number of establishments in Ramallah compeer with Al- Bireh as twin cities by kind of economic activities and no. of employees in 2004

Kind of economic activities	Ramallah		Al-Bireh	
	No. of establishments	No. of employees	No. of establishments	No. of employees
Agriculture, hunting and forestry	15	36	18	34
Manufacturing	301	1652	235	1218
Electric and water supply	1	200	2	172
Construction	53	223	22	562
Wholesale and retail and repairs	1189	3141	826	2262
Hotels and restaurants	155	717	109	377
Transport, storage and communication	76	538	39	806
Financial intermediation	48	732	34	1066
Real estate, renting and business	331	1148	130	706
Education	67	667	30	344
Health and social work	198	693	66	496
Other community social and personal	225	1098	129	658
Total	2659	10845	1640	8701

 Source: PCBS, unpublished date, in Makhool, B. and Others, (2005) pp.6, 33-35.

Increases of economic activities in Ramallah leads for sprawl of the building and expanding of the built-up area as part of urbanization. According the result of Ishaq et.al. (2005), who are analyses an aerial photo of the expanding built up area in the WB, he found that the built up area of Ramallah was expanded during the period of 1989-1994 in 16.1 percents, the built

up area growth in average of 397 dunames per year. While in the period between 1994-2000, the built up area of Ramalllah was grow in 24.5 percents, the built up area growth in average of 585 dunames per year.

The above indicators guide us to say that Ramallah with the surrounding cities consist one urban unit as a result of urbanization process accelerated after the establishing of the PA which located in Ramallah metropolitan. The transformation and changes include the landscape of the city, from a non-density city, with low-rise buildings not more than four stories, to high-rise buildings reaching about twenty stories.

B. Location

Ramallah located in the approximate middle of the WB, alongside the main road crossing the WB in Al-Bierh, Ramallah's twin city, close to Jerusalem. The process of urbanization that occurred in the PT in the last four decades expanded the built-up areas of the villages and cities in the middle WB. Today, the built up area of metropolitan Jerusalem and Ramallah remains within this area, flanked by Beth-Leham in the south and Berzite in the north. This Palestinian Jerusalem metropolitan is truncated because of geo-political conflict (Khamaisi, 2003). The location of Ramallah in this urban conglomerate contributed to its rapid growth, and attracted the governmental institutions currently located in it, and became a major influencing factor for its development and expansion.

C. Physical Morphology

Ramallah located in a mountainous area. This physical morphology has had a direct impact of the direction of the physical development of the city. The development and urban expansion in Ramallah follows the main regional road system connecting the city with surrounding roads such as the road to Berzite in north, Beituniya in the west south, Jerusalem in the south. As previously stated, the core of the city began to grow from a flat area in the beginning eastward, connecting Al-Bierh city by Al-Manara which consist the main center of Ramallah connected with commercial center of Al-Bierh, together consist the central business district CBD of the twin cities. The valley in the west of the city guides the development on the top of the hill called Altera, and restricts development in the valleys.

D. Mosaic community

The community in Ramallah characterized by diversity. The town opened to immigration in the mid twentieth century. The influx of visitors and tourists to the city resulted in the permanent relocation of some visitors. The city functioned as an administrative center, attracting nearby villagers to visit the city, contributing to the urbanization of the community within the city. The housing and land market developed in Ramallah contributed to development mosaic communities in Ramallah, along with the establishment of the PA and the expansion of the urbanism process within the city. Today, the affiliation is not for the kinship of Hamaola, while the affiliation is more for the socio-economic class or groups. The functional and spatial mobilization of the individual and the household contributed to creation of mosaic communities in Ramallah.

E. Land ownership and housing providing

Most of the land within the jurisdiction of Ramallah municipality is private land. The private land in *the context of a* semi-traditional community, suffers from scarcity of land resources, *thus creating* restrictions and barriers on the front of the planning and the development. Beside that, much of the housing provided is based on the private sector and the householders themselves. This household supplies housing according self-housing approach. D*evelopers build housing with a definite number of apartments for sale or rent.*

Some of the public and governmental institutions rent and use these apartments for officers' use and economic activates.

F. Israeli Restrictive

The Israeli occupation restrictions and control has impacted Ramallah's development in different ways and levels. On the national level, Israel still controls the development and the resources. As of July 2006, a fully sovereign Palestinian state does not exist. From planning point of view, every development in C area should coordinate with the Israeli military government, which still control this area. In situation of Ramallah, the potential land for future development, which can be use for national and regional facilities exists in the C area, which include most of the public land.

Postponement of Jerusalem's geo-political fate according to the interim peace agreements between the PLO and Israeli government, in conjunction with the Israeli restriction and/or prohibition regarding the accessibility of Palestinian institutional development in Jerusalem, creates a dual impact on Ramallah (MachsomWatch, 2004). The establishment of most of the governmental and public institutions, the subsequent economic growth and activity located in Ramallah-Al-Bierh city caused rapid development in the twin cities, who were ill-equipped for handling this kind of developmental demand. Despite Israel's efforts to deter and undermine the potential creation of a Palestinian national core in Jerusalem, Palestinians, including the national leaders and the general public, and the Ramallah municipality, viewed and related to this development as temporary until it could be established in East Jerusalem. Meanwhile, Ramallah continued to function as the "Capital" of the future Palestinian state.

At the local level, the C area consisted of barriers impeding the development of jurisdictions north, west, and south of Ramallah. In addition, the military road that is currently under Israel control passes directly the Ramallah municipality area, confining any development around it.

The Planning Process and Methodology

The planning process began in 1997, when the Ramallah municipality took the initiative to prepare a new outline plan for the city, which included the city center and surrounding area within the jurisdiction of the municipality, approximately 14500 dunames. A new reality emerged and continues to exist in the context within Ramallah's development. One part of the city exists within the official planning on part of the British Mandate and Jordanian periods, while most of jurisdiction in the city is still unplanned. Many private and public developers initiated preparations for a local and detailed plan of their private land. The municipality lacks a general plan to cope with the increase of building permit applications, nor does it have a mechanism for accepting or rejecting, or giving guidelines for local public and private developers. These needs cannot be addressed without the preparation of a new general/master outline plan for the city. The first step in the planning process ended in 1999 after the Palestinians Height Planning Council authorized the main outline plan for Ramallah. The new plan includes the unplanned area in the jurisdiction of the city.

Throughout the planning process, the municipality representatives understood the implications and limitations of possibly changing existing planning rights granted according to the Jordanian authorized outline plan; as a result the municipality requested from the planning staff to work just on the unplanned area, and elected not to disrupt the status quo of the planning in the city center, where the approved outline plan had existed since 1967.

In 2000 the ministry of local government *decided* to expand the jurisdiction of Ramallah, by adding of 2063 dunames in the northwest. The municipality *once again took the initiative to prepare an outlined plan of the new area annexed to Ramallah.* The municipality accepted

this plan in 2006, but the district planning committee and the Palestinians Height Planning
Council has not authorized the additional plan.

The planning methodology

The multi-dispensary planning staff works according *a* comprehensive and Incremental
approach. The aim *is* to create *blueprint of the physical land use and outline*. *The process
consists of different steps.* First, is the *examination of the existing situation, problems and
needs.* This step includes studying and *investigation* the various plans on different levels, *all
of which have impacted* Ramallah city. The second step is to accept the matters of the plan
and the future program that presents the land-use based on *projections that by 2020, 90
thousand persons would reside in Ramallah.* The third step *includes the suggestion of an
alternative* by the municipality council. The *fourth* step *is the selection of* one of the
suggested alternative by the municipality council. The planning staff developed the
alternative plan chosen by the municipality to such detail, *including appendices for road and
transportation plans,* in addition to the regulations and policies for implementation. The
planning methodology *is* based on parallel process, which consist from five channels of out
puts.
1. Development of the " planning discourse and languages" by researching and
   learning of exist plans in different tiers. This was Facilitate channel.
2. Developing general future vision for Ramallah city and its district. This was a
   Creative channel.
3. Shaping physical land use plan which developed and change exist one
   according to the Palestinians planning law 1996, and the Jordanian planning
   Law 1966, which continue to be exist during the Israeli occupation of the PT
   after 1967. This was a Regulative channel.
4. Developed and shaped a principles for implementation and achieves the goals
   of the plan by creating action plan. This channel based on initiatives and
   Operative approach (Hamdi and Goethert,1997).
5. Putting tools and mechanisms to follow up and mad a feedback to the action plan and
   the regulative plan. This channel is function as Dynamic and Feedback to the process
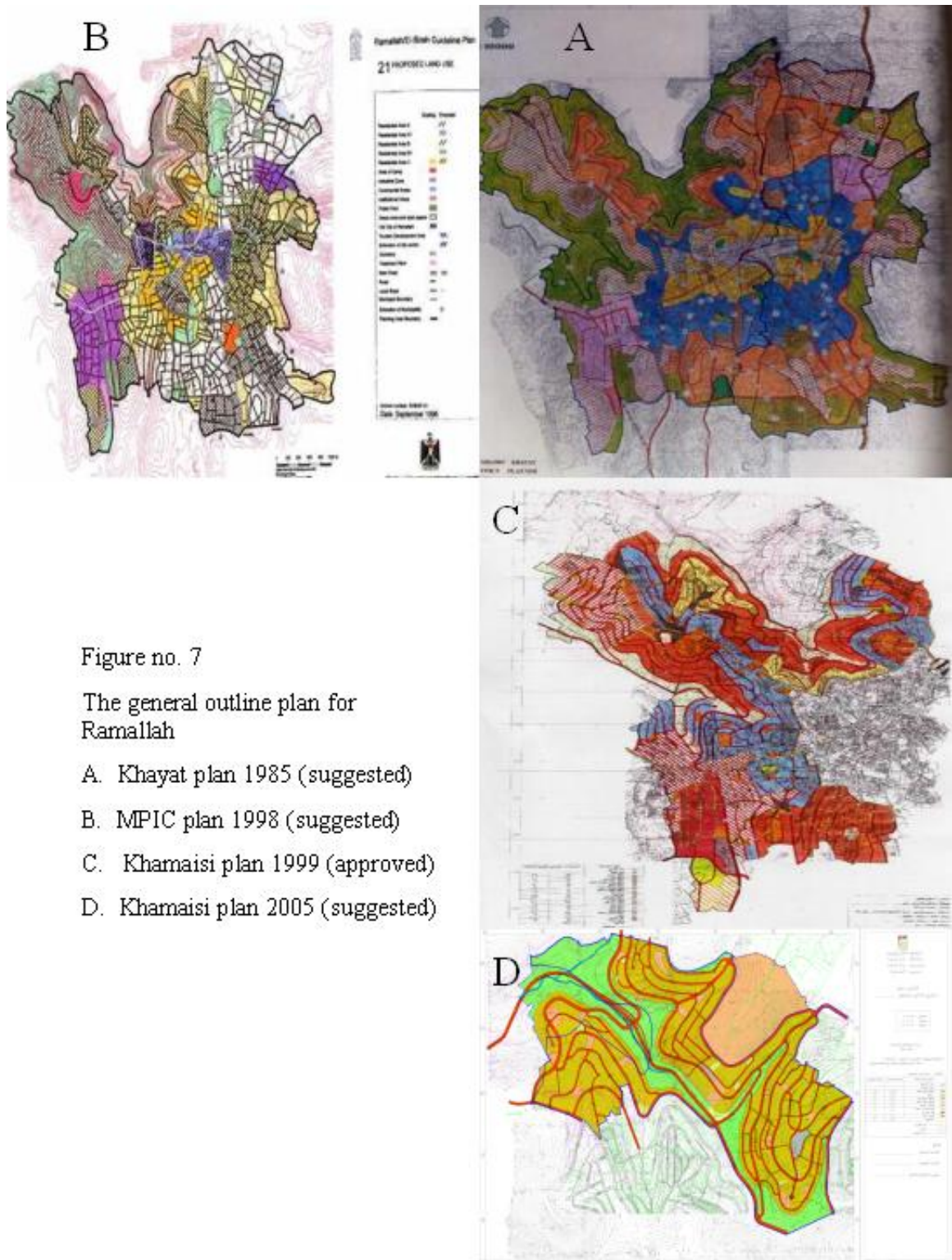   of planning and implementation.

Figure no. 7

The general outline plan for
Ramallah

A. Khayat plan 1985 (suggested)

B. MPIC plan 1998 (suggested)

C. Khamaisi plan 1999 (approved)

D. Khamaisi plan 2005 (suggested)

Developing these multi dimensions channels in parallel way lets the planning staff to suggest
plan with the municipality representatives, according the approach from bottom to up.

The planning process was open to the public; in spite of the planning staff did not adapt a systematic methodology for public participations. The Limit of public participation or adapted a participatory planning approach according systematic ways was output of the nature of the adapted planning approach, and follow the assumptions, that municipality council represent the need of the population. In addition, one of the planning matters was to avoid possible of rising land price during the planning process or the landowner made pressure on the municipality or the planning staff to consider their interests. In spite of that the alternative plan was presented for different interest groups and to the public in different occasions and meeting. The planning staff made a lot of amendment to the plan after getting comments from the public, municipality council members, members of the district planning committee and from other different experts after official meeting.

Description of the suggested land use plan

The suggested plan for Ramallah consists actually from two-steps. The first include physical outline which was authorized by the Palestinians planning system in 1999, which include area of 9360 dunames. The second one was incremental to the first one and includes the area, which added to the city jurisdiction in 2000, and it's planed but still not full authorized by the national planning system. This plan which named Ramallah incremental outline 2005, and include area of 2760 dunames. Below we summarized the planning principles and goals of the Ramallah plans. In addition to short summary description of the suggested land use plans.

The planning principles

Below I try to summarize the planning principles, which accepted after dialogue between the municipality representatives and the planning staff. These principles guide the planning activities according to the five channels defined in the methodology.

1. Development a unique city include neighborhoods according to low density housing and allocated for the high and middle class, include allocation area for villas use which preserver the uniqueness of Ramallah through securing housing quality in the satellite neighborhoods.
2. Future development must avoid the valleys, which should be remained a green open space or agricultural areas to respond for an environmental, functional, economic and beautiful considerations.
3. Create good heretical transportation connections between the neighborhoods and the center city by arterial roads, which connect Ramallah to the outsider regional and national road system.
4. To avoid creation other center for Ramallah city to compete with the exist one. The new neighborhoods function as satellite to main functional center.
5. Adapted exist parcielation schemes and detail plans and consider the landownership when demarcation the road system and allocation land for public facilities.
6. Possible implementation of the plan by stages and according the ability of the municipality to provide services.
7. Development a regional governmental and public center to serve the district.

The planning goals based on the above principles were:

1. Preparing an outline plan for Ramallah to cope and guide the future needs and development of the city, and which be a base for preparing detailed plans.
2. Re-organization and guide of the future land use in the city.
3. Put a regulation and guides for using the zones.

4. The plan will consider tools how to preserve the nature of the city, and allocated residential zones to absorb the population growth in suitable housing conditions.
5. Plan a heretical new roads or expand exit roads for secure a good connection and quite mobility between the different parts of the city.
6. Plan and allocated land for public facilities in appropriate location and distribution.
7. Put an outline plan (statutory plan) that consider the balancing between housing, public uses, commercial, economic and pleasures zoning.

The planning concept

The physical plan consider different traditional conceptual Alternatives, based on:

A. The circular concept or organic concept, where the city developed in organic way like a circles around main center.
B. The linear concept, where the cities developed in linear such as rectangular alongside main arterial road were the center exists.
C. The grade concept, where the city developed such as grades of road. This road consist the arterial road, the hierarchical functional centers located in the cross of the main roads.
D. The spread or radiation concept, where the city began to developed for organic core, and spread from this organic core, which change to be the commercial and functional centers. The development spared and sprawl alongside main roads that derange the mobility from the surrounding to the main center.

These planning concepts guide us to develop various physical planning models. After adaptation of the concept to reality or realization of existing situations and possible development, then the planning concepts and models driven out from the appropriate concept are applied to the appropriate needs of the city. Specifically in Ramallah, the planning staff researches the planning concepts and models to deal with the city challenges and integrates them in the metropolitan area by change the city to be regional center.

The physical planning concepts and models of Ramallah consider below components, which addressed in the planning process.

1. The mounting topographic and physical structure of the city.
2. The organic directions of city development.
3. The future need of the city in the local, regional and national levels, this besides dealing with the challenges of the possible integration in surrounding area.
4. The authorized exist statutory zoning plans on the area, where it gives the landowners right of building.
5. The private land, in addition to the formation of the land private parcels.
6. The municipality and public institutions abilities to provide fit services, and secure development.
7. The social norms and values, beside the economic structure, which impact the process of providing housing and services needs of the population.

According to these factors, the planning concept and planning models was:

1. Preserve and strengthening exist urban center, Al-Manara, as the main CBD, this beside allocation development alongside the arterial main road which spread from this center to the regional road and surrounding towns and villages. The idea is to promote the organic developments.
2. Create a functional hierarchy of the public services, include the satellite neighborhoods, such as Al-Krena, Al-Tere.

3. Promoting sprawl development in continuity circles around Al-Mnara center by fill in, and prohibit building in the low area and valleys, which must be green open and agricultural space.
4. Hierarchical road system connecting between the center and the outer neighborhoods, which could integrate between the private transportation and public transportation in the future.
5. Housing providing based on the private sector, which be effected from the private land ownership.
6. The private sector will provide semi-public services, this besides supplying building and infrastructure to the public needs.
7. Preserve the unique characters of Ramallah as middle city (planning capacity is about one hundred thousand inhabitances see table no. 3). The population growth based on natural increase and positive immigration.
8. Separation between the zoning, while securing continuity and complimentary between land use include the neighbor cities such as Al-Bierh.
9. Secure creating a small local sub-center in the satellite neighborhoods, which depend on the main center. The density of housing suggests being low in these neighborhoods.
10. Development of open space and green area in the valleys and surrounding the housing and the public building, by implementing the principle of mule-use or integration in building and land use.

T\able no. 3: The population and households growth in Ramallah city between 1997 to 2020 number and percents.

Year	No. Population	Average size of household no. Persons	No. of households for providing housing
1997	37000	5.3	6981
2000	42800	5.0	8560
2005	47000	4.8	9792
2010	60000	4.4	13636
2020	90000	4.0	22500

Sources: Khamaisi, 1997, p.46; Khamaisi, 2005, p. 29.

The assumptions behind Ramallah population growth are:
1. Little decrease in natural growth as a result of economic and education changes, particularly among the females.
2. Increase immigration to Ramallah, particularly among the young households, which come to the city looking for opportunities, housing and works.

This rapid population comes a result of establishing the PT in Ramallah, and its governmental and public institutions, which provide a lot of mobility opportunities. The new plan of Ramallah will provide zoning for housing, services and economic activities development. Table no. 4 below summarized the suggested zoning plan for Ramallah.

Table no.4: suggested zoning in Ramallah full-approved plan 1999, and
incremental plan 2005 in dunames and percent

Suggested zone in the plan	Approved plan 1999		Suggested plan by municipality 2005	
	Area duname	**Area %**	**Area duname**	**Area %**
Villas zone	422	5,0	1460	42,2
Housing zone A	1943	20,5	----	----
Housing zone B	1681	17,0	----	----
Housing zone C	370	4,0	----	----

Commercial zone	73	0,8	34	0.4
Industrial zone	379	4,0	----	----
Mixed uses zone	665	7,0	----	----
Public building zone	353	4,0	536	15,5
Open public zone	70	0,7	2	0,1
Cemetery zone	31	0,35	----	----
Exhibitions zone	136	1,5	----	----
Tourist facilities zone	60	0.6	----	----
Technical engineering zone	53	0,6	----	----
Transportation center	31	0,35	----	----
Suggested road	1425	15.0	610	17,6
Exist road	850	9.0	----	----
Pedestrian road	25	0,3	12,0	0,3
Housing in agricultural zone	723	7.5	804	23,2
Future development	154	1,6	----	----
Archeological zone	16	0,2	----	----
Total	**9460**	**100.0**	**3460**	**100,0**

Sources: Khamaisi, 1997; Khamaisi, 2005.

The suggest zones table shows how planning principles integrated into the suggested planning concept and model can achieve the goal of the plan. The incremental plan 2005 suggests an area of 450 dunames allocated for a governmental neighborhood.   This governmental neighborhood is still outside the Ramallah jurisdiction in the C area. Because of this, the PLGM representative demands to exclude this area from the plan. In plan 1999, the municipality avoids allocation zones for national facilities such as governmental neighborhoods. The plan suggested zones for villa housing (to attract high and middle class households), along with allocated zones for exhibition and economic activity, indicating the character of the city the plan aims to achieve. The planning municipality policy does not threaten the Palestinians claim of East Jerusalem to be the capital and core of the new State of Palestine, while maintaining a continued effort to strengthen the centrality of Ramallah.

The planning dilemmas and its Implications

The planning process, principles, and goals faced numerous planning dilemmas and problems. These dilemmas may exist in other locals, but gain more significance in the unique situation and circumstance of Ramallah, which is still affected by the Israeli occupation has not ended. These planning dilemmas can be divided to external and internal dilemmas. Between the two types of dilemmas and problems exist a dialectical joining. Below is short presentation and discussion of the main ones.

Despite Ramallah's inclusion in the A area, according to the peace interim agreements from 1994-2000, Ramallah has been occupied by Israeli military forces since 2000. During the second uprising [Intefada], which included violent activities, Israel reinvaded Ramallah. Six years later, the Israeli occupation controls the internal areas of Ramallah, the villages and territories surrounding the city, and the Israeli settlements that continue to exist around the Ramallah metropolitan area. The military government has controlled economic and spatial areas, reducing the development of opportunities for Ramallah to change the city as the existing or future core of the anticipated Palestinian state (the Rand, 2005).

This occupation developed perceptions and situation of scarcity among the Palestinians. These perceptions of scarcity, feeling and existence have had a direct impact on the physical planning of Ramallah, as such other Palestinians cities. In Ramallah this situation created and deepened the dual discourse among the municipality council. On one side, the governmental, public, and finance establishments concentrate in Ramallah area, which could

be developed as center and core. Yet on the other side, the Israeli outside control and occupation limit and restrict these possible development, accessibility and mobilizations. The challenges in the planning process did and still exist in the search for an answer as to how to produce outline plans dealing with the future "one day after" of the occupation by including land outside the jurisdiction area of Ramallah.

 The municipality representatives and Palestinians Local Governmental Ministry (PLGM) refused to accept plans suggesting zoning outside the city jurisdiction, in spite of its need to develop the future city into a national core. The main claim of the Palestinian governmental employees was these territories are still not under Palestinians control according the interims peace agreements, and the Israeli not accepted it to be planned and approved by the Palestinians officers. The Municipality representative argues that these territories are not needed for development the city, and suggests land use which aim to developed national facilities and services are affected and change the character of the city, and made a rapid transformation in the community structure which threatens the existing social ethnic balances in the city. The city council prefers to preserve development for high and middle classes, rather than plan for and provide housing for immigrants from the rest of the PT.

Another outsider dilemma, which has had direct impact of Ramallah, is the relationship between Ramallah and Jerusalem. The Palestinian national and popular claim is to get East Jerusalem as national core and political capital. The Israelis refused this claim, and prohibit Palestinians institutions to establish in East Jerusalem. The closure and building of wall around Jerusalem, achieves Israeli goals to preserve Jerusalem East and West under their control, to prohibit future re-dividing of Jerusalem after Israeli occupation in 1967, and reduce the Palestinians existence in Jerusalem (Brooks, et. al. 2005). On the other hand the Palestinians want to establish their national institutions to manage the new state. In the beginning, these institutions were located in Ramallah area in rented houses. The idea was, in 1999, the final political talks between the Israelis and the Palestinians will began to according the international legitimacy, and East Jerusalem will be under Palestinians rule and developed as core and national center of the new state. These arguments have had impact on the planning zoning of Ramallah area. The municipality council and PLGM officers avoided any planning suggestion, which could be considered or even explained such as transformation of Ramallah to be the Palestinians capital and national core. In the reality, these official governmental and public establishments were physically located and dispersal in Ramallah, but since the situation was viewed as temporary, they did not receive enough planning consideration. The challenges of creating a Palestinians spatial continuity has been overshadowed by the Israeli occupation which has not even allowed the suggestion of continuity by the national conceptual plan for integrated the development between East Jerusalem and Ramallah, see for instate the arc plan (Suisman et. al. 2005).

Other planning dilemma connects to planning hierarchy. In a normalized state building process, the state has full sovereignty over determined territory and organizing settlements. But within the Palestinian circumstances, the PT is fragmented between different rules. In this situation, no official accepted national plan exists due to the challenges that prevent the planning of a concept or model to fit the needs of the city. There are various experiences to develop national and regional plan to re-organize the National physical Planning in Palestine state such as:
- Principle for physical planning in the new state of Palestine (CEP, 1992)
- New town alongside exist one and urbanized strategy for the Palestinians state (Khamaisi, 1996, 1997)
- PNA The Norwegian project 2015 (Ministry of Planning and international cooperation, 1998)
- The arc Project (Suisman et. al. 2005, PLGM, 2005).
- Ramallah metropolitan plan (PLGM, 2005)

These general plans not accepted officially by the Palestinians government and Ramallah municipality. The planners within the municipality council try to crystallize the national and regional assumption to guide the local planning. The absence of official or at lest acceptable planning policies or schemes, has created an difficult situation for providing plans that could integrate the city and surround area, while anticipating the challenges that every planner and developer could potentially face and offering planning solutions.

Beside the above external dilemmas and problems, there are scores of internal ones that have a direct impact of the planning process and output. One of these dilemmas connects to the twin cities of Ramallah, Al-Bierh and Bitounya town. The three municipalities consist one urban functional unit and one opportunities urban space (Khamaisi, 2004). The infrastructures must continue among these municipalities to serve Ramallah. In spite of this situation, the coordination between the three municipalities is limited. The two-municipality continues to develop according the Jordanian outline plan. During the Israeli occupation and prior to establishing the PA prepared a new outline plan (Khayat, 1985), but this plans still did not get final official approval. The complexity of coordination, and the desire of every municipality to locate every public facility in its jurisdiction, creates difficulties on the zonings and planning the road infrastructures, besides creating a duplication of the suggested land use. Every municipality defines and determines its spatial policies, while in the reality the three municipalities' serves as a national core, the functional dispersal between them (Maky, 1997). During the planning process the planners try to coordinate and thus deal the challenges of duplicity and barriers to achieve a more functional integration. But still the competition between the municipalities causes them to work according Back-to-Back approach, instead of working according Face to Face approach. This is furthered complicated by the absent coordination guide from the PLGM in 2005 to initiate preparations master plan for three municipalities area which consist Ramallah metropolitan. Preparing Ramallah outline plan 1999 was before this initiatives, which provide a lot of problems and dilemmas, which can be solvable by the coordination if it is exist.

As told before, most the land within Ramallah municipality jurisdiction is private land. Some of landowner levies in Ramallal and others living in outside of the country. Other landowners authorized legal officers to manage their land. The physical and zoning planning do a land battements or confiscate part of the land for public facilities. In general, dealing with the issue of the land is sensitive among the traditional Palestinian communities, as it is in other traditional communities. The situation becomes more sensitive in situations of occupation, which shrinks the possibility of expanding or allocating planned lands for development. The matter of the planner to secure a transparent planning process, including the opening of the process to the landowner, creates a large pressure on the planning process and potential allocation of land for public facilities. The municipality council pronounces an understanding of the landowner's claim, which further complicates the difficulties in creating a plan that includes enough development opportunity for public use. The absence of public land reduces the public space in Ramallah city, and has shrunk the possibility of allocating land to be confiscated from a private owner. The absence of public land has reduced the possibility of building government centers or public housing. Most governmental and public offices are located in private buildings, thus the limited availability of public lands negatively affects the possible transformation of Ramallah into the national core.

Ramallah municipality was developed to manage and serve a small city. The rapid growth put the municipality council and staff under a large pressure, particularly in situations where the Mayor is appointed by the president, and did not win the popular election. There is also a scarcity of financial resources in Ramallah. These political, financial, and managerial barriers, combined with a scarcity of resources, create dilemmas regarding the legitimacy of the planning process and plan approval. In addition, the municipality council finds itself caught between authorizing the plans and providing necessary infrastructure and services. From the other side, the municipality aims to reduce the land and housing price, which began

to increase due to demand after the establishment of the PA in Ramallah. On the other hand, the municipality wants to guide the private development initiative on private land according to a clear planning policy accepted by landowners and developers, aside for the matter of prohibiting building without permit. The planning of new areas under committed the municipality for providing services and infrastructure, at a time when the municipality did not have enough resources to develop these infrastructures. A typical dilemma resulted, but is more significant due to the limited resources and decreased ability for guiding development as a result of strong interventions of the central government in regards to the development of Ramallah.   The reality of municipality council and Mayors appointed by the central government, and the large politicalization of the professional staff in the municipality led to such a situation where the municipality suffers from weakness. The existing political and military occupation has led to a situation where the spatial planning comes, in some cases, to serve some elites in the local and central levels of government.

Conclusion

The establishing of new nation-state considers the political system, economic activities, social structure and institutions building. Little attention is given to the spatial organization of the towns and village as a main component of state developments. The connection between state building and the need of development an urban core which concentrate the governmental establishments and spread development to surrounding area its realized in many new nation state. The Palestinian statehood declared Jerusalem as its core. While the continuity of the Israeli occupation in Jerusalem lead to development of new city, which function as small edge city and regional center, change to be nation center. The Israeli occupation exists on the surrounding area of Ramallah. This occupation put a lot of limits and restrictive on the mobility and accessibility of the Palestinians to Ramallah city. The duality in the rhetorical discourse and desire of the Palestinians representatives to demand East Jerusalem to be its capital and urban core, while in the practical behaviors Ramallah area transformed to be the core. The suggested general plan to the Palestine state suggested Ramallah area to be the core. The local plan of Ramallah tries to create some balances between the local and national levels. The Israeli occupation is still main factor, which has had a direct impact of the planning process and zoning. The Israeli occupation give more significance to the internal barriers among the community and municipality administration, and in some case used as alibi for avoiding dealing with planning issue which change the city to be a central core. Needles to say, the challenges of planning in such circumstances of geo-political situation exist between the Palestinians and Israeli, which include occupation and violence, threat the possible integration of Ramallah city in the surrounding area and global economic. Exist a fragmentation core of Palestinian state, and prohibit free mobility and accessibility threat the possibility to develop a successful, viable and sustain Palestinian state. The development of appropriate urban core consist an important factor for securing state and society sustainability and regional geo-political stability.

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