

Mechanisms of the Israeli Occupation to Control and Seize the Palestinian Lands

Agricultural/Pastoral Colonial Outposts

Although the Israeli occupation uses two drastically different strategies to establish agricultural/pastoral colonial outposts on Palestinian lands, these two strategies are identical.

First: the official strategy. The "Israeli Occupation Government" seizes the Palestinian lands through official methods & mechanisms, through alleged "legal" pretexts & justifications that it deliberately enacted for this specific purpose. On this regard, the "Israeli Occupation Government" resorted to a series of procedures and methods to control the lands under its belligerent occupation since 1967, as evidenced by the annexation of East Jerusalem and the ongoing "Judaization" process of the occupied city. These procedures include as the declarations for the so called "state lands" or "natural reserves", by issuing land expropriation and seizure orders, closing areas on military pretexts, declarations of lands as "areas of influence" for colonies, expanding the Annexation and Expansion Wall with isolating large areas behind it, issuing construction moratorium orders against Palestinians' construction, building more colonies, allocating land for colonial expansion, controlling water resources, and exploiting what is known as the "Absentees Property Law" to control Palestinian property and lands, as happened in Sheikh Jarrah in the city of Jerusalem. This resulted in the control and expropriation of approx. 2,380 km² in Area called "C" in the occupied West Bank.

The different executive and legislation arms of the "Israeli Occupation Government" have also attempted to encourage Israeli colonizers to relocate in the West Bank's & Jerusalem colonies and to establish and develop economic initiatives in these colonies to flourish them. The "Israeli state", through official and unofficial channels, grants plenty of privileges, subsidies and incentives to colonizers' population and their colonies, including great concessions and discounts in the field of housing, to enable low-income segments to own houses in the colonies and subsequently to encourage their relocation. These privileges are among the factors for the rapid increase in the population of the Orthodox & ultraorthodox Jewish in colonies of the occupied West Bank such as (Modi'in Illit and Beitar Illit), where the number of colonizers in them have reached approx. 140,000. In addition, there are about 30 colonies that despite the fact that their residents are economically & financially fit, they still receive large tax discounts and concessions amounting to approx. 200,000 Israeli shekels (NIS) annually for each settler/ individual.

The Israeli authorities also offer concessions and incentives to the colonial industrial zones in the occupied West Bank by reducing land prices and supporting the workforce employment. This in turn encourages the continuous increase in the number of factories in the Israeli industrial zones in the occupied West Bank. The "Israeli state" also encourages

the Jews to establish new agricultural/pastoral colonial outposts in the occupied West Bank and to unleash them to seize large areas of Palestinian agricultural and pastures lands. During the last decade, about 59 agricultural/pastoral colonial outposts have been established that actually control tens of thousands of dunums of Palestinian lands (dunum= 1000m²).

Second: the unofficial strategy/channel (that is conducted directly through the Israeli colonizers').

With the direct and strong support and protection provided by the "Israeli Occupation Government", the colonizers are granted the green light to seize and control Palestinians' lands, especially for those lands that the "Israeli official strategies" can't deal with, . As this is part of the strategy of the Israeli apartheid regime, which seeks to annex and gnaw more Palestinian lands. Thus, the colonizers'/settlers' attacks on Palestinians and their property are part of this colonial policy and complements the role of the Israeli official establishment. The "Israeli Occupation Government" unleashes the colonizers to control more Palestinian lands by forcible means through facilitating & sponsoring the proliferation of colonial outposts that do not differ in purpose, compared to the other big colonies, except that they are often established without an official license/permit from the "Israeli Government" or "an official approved plan" that allows "*publicly*" their establishment in the areas where they are (often, later they are "legitimized" by the Israeli Gov't). The "Israeli Occupation Government" supports the colonizers by providing all kinds of incentives, protection and security services, and infrastructure facilities including water and electricity networks.

Even though there are thousands of documented colonizer violations against Palestinians and their property in the occupied West Bank, which have since become a standard practice by the colonizers, under the full protection of the Israeli occupation regime, nothing has changed, as these attacks continued extensively throughout the occupied West Bank & Jerusalem; which includes, killings, corporal attacks including beatings, vandalism and sabotage acts, stone-throwing, burning fields and pastures, torching and trees' uprooting, theft of crops, banning farmers & shepherds, and controlling water & other natural sources.

The Israeli occupation regime, which occupies the entire historical Palestine, seeks to achieve Jewish supremacy on all the lands of Palestine. In order to achieve this goal; they have divided the Palestinian lands into various units and geographical segments, with different dual legal systems, the first is customized for Palestinians while the other is tailored for the Jews. Within this discriminative policy, Palestinians were stripped of many rights & entitlements, including the right for life and right for self-determination.

The Israeli occupation policy is based on engineering space in several ways, one of which is the demographic engineering of space through laws and orders that are in favor of the Jewish community, including the right for Israeli citizenship for all Jews around the world while denying Palestinians access to the same right. Another policy adopted by the Israeli occupation is the configuration of space (spatial physical formation), through the control and appropriation of millions of dunums of land, and the non-stop establishment of colonies/ settlements & colonial outposts, and neighborhoods, exclusively for Jews, while speeding the isolation process of Palestinian communities and expulsion of Palestinians in separate and geographically disconnected ghettos and cantons, which affect and restrict not only the freedom of access & movement and movement of the Palestinians, but also puts an end for their dream of an independent and viable Palestinian state.

The Israeli apartheid regime seeks, through its racist laws & policies and the organized aggression campaign on Palestinians and their lands, to achieve and maintain the superiority of one ethnic group on another in an apartheid practice. This "regime" hasn't popped up in sudden but rather it grows and evolved gradually since this "occupation state" was born on the lands of Palestine.

The "Israeli Knesset" has passed the Basic Law in 2018 that recognizes "the right to national self-determination in the State of Israel" as a unique right to the Jewish People." This Basic Law enshrines the distinction between Jews and non-Jews population, as a fundamental legal distinction, not only in the occupied territories but throughout the world. The Israeli occupation also voiced their intentions to carry out the official annexation of additional parts of the occupied West Bank. These intentions were declared publicly by senior Israeli officials. Even though the government discourse on annexation seems faint currently, but on real terms, facts on the ground show that the practice of silent annexation is still on-going.

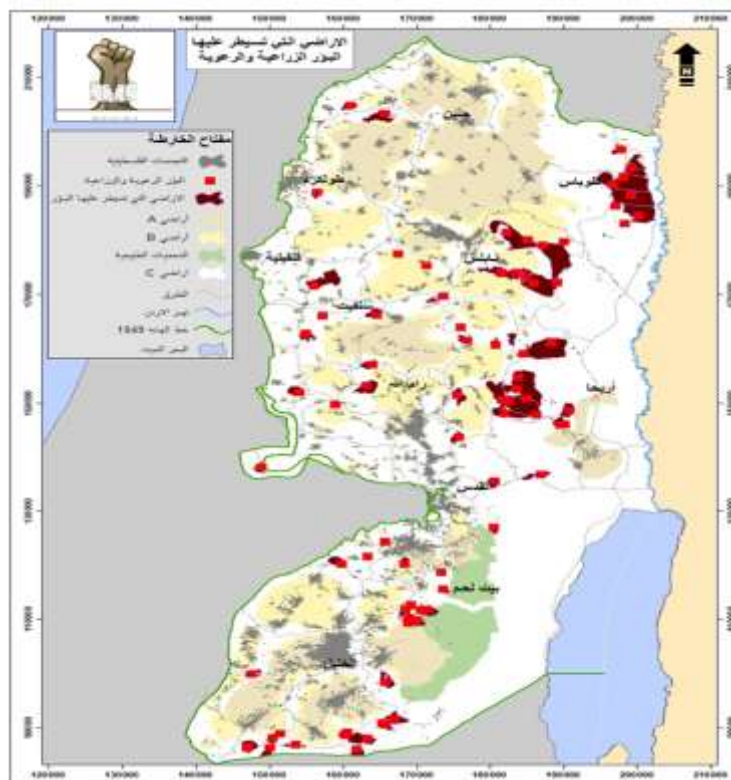
The Pastoral Colonial Outpost (Um Zuka) North of Jordan Valley

The establishment of Pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts started in 1984. The first agricultural outpost that was constructed is the "Har Sinai" outpost which was established on citizens' lands in Hebron governorate. At the time, it had a population of 850 colonizers.



The number of pastoral /agricultural colonial outposts that have already been established has reached 82 colonial outposts up to date. These colonial outposts control an area of approximately 270,000 dunums, of which 6 colonial outposts with multiple uses (housing, agriculture, grazing & others).

Map () Illustrates the distribution of pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts in the occupied West Bank



Goals of Establishing Pastoral/ Agricultural Colonial Outposts

I: Connecting colonies together by controlling vast areas of land.

II: Isolating Palestinian towns from each other and suffocating Palestinian urban development in addition to preventing Palestinian citizens from reaching natural resources including water.

III: Forcibly displacing Palestinians and changing the demographic balance in favor of Jewish people, especially in the Jordan Valley.

IV: Creating new settler-colonial enclaves that besieges the Palestinians and constitutes a vast extension of the colonial project.

V: Controlling the Palestinian natural resources including water, particularly in the eastern slopes of the occupied West Bank.

VI: On later stages, most of these colonial outposts turn to be big colonies after being "legalized" by the Israeli occupation Gov't.

The pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts control 270 km² of the West Bank area and make up 8% of area called "C".

To know level of magnitude of these colonial outposts on controlling lands, there are (6) pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts that control an area of more than 49 km² east of Tubas.

The Acceleration of Establishing Pastoral/Agricultural Colonial Outposts in Occupied West Bank & Jerusalem

The establishment of pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts started in 1984, with the colonial outpost that was constructed is the "Har Sinai" on citizens' lands in Hebron Governorate. At the time, it had a population of 850 colonizers. The construction of pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts continued systematically until they reached 18 colonial outposts in 2012, distributed over the occupied West Bank area. In 2013, one pastoral/agricultural colonial outpost was established on lands of Nablus Governorate.

In 2014, 2 pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts were established on citizens' lands in the Bethlehem and (1) in Tubas Governorates. During 2015-2016, 4 pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts were established in the Jerusalem, Ramallah, Salfit, and Tubas governorates. During 2017-2018, another 12 pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts were established on Palestinians' lands; of which, (6) in Hebron Governorate, (2) in Tubas, (2) in Ramallah and (2) in Nablus Governorates.

In 2019 alone, 15 pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts were established on citizens' lands, of which, (8) in Ramallah, (2) in Bethlehem, (1) in Jericho, (1) in Jerusalem, (1) in Jenin, (1) in Hebron, and (1) in Tulkarm Governorates.

In 2020, 11 pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts were established on citizens' lands, of which, (4) in Hebron, (3) Nablus, (4) in Ramallah, and (1) in Salfit Governorates.

In 2021, 7 pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts on citizens lands were established, of which, (3) in Hebron, (2) in Bethlehem, (1) in Jericho, (1) in Ramallah, and (1) in Salfit Governorates.

In 2022, 6 pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts were established on citizens' lands, of which, (1) in Hebron, (1) in Ramallah, (1) in Nablus, (1) in Salfit, and (2) in Tubas Governorates.

Examples on Pastoral/Agricultural Colonial Outposts:

- The Um Zuka pastoral/agricultural colonial outpost in the Upper Jordan Valley.

The "Um Zuka" pastoral/agricultural colonial outpost is one amongst other 6 pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts established by colonizers in the Upper Jordan Valley in the past five years. This "natural reserve" was established in 2016 in place of Khirbet Al-Muzoqah, a Palestinian village destroyed by Israel Army after the occupation of West Bank in 1967. The pastoral/agricultural colonial outpost controls over 14,000 dunums of land, and prohibits Palestinians from entering or grazing their herds in the area.

Map (): Um Zuka pastoral/agricultural colonial agricultural outpost



- The pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts "Mor" and "Shabtai", south of Hebron.

The colonial outposts "Mor" and "Shabtai" were established in the south of Hebron by the colonizers in order to displace the Palestinian citizens and prevent farmers from reaching their lands. "Mor" farm was established in 1999, while "Shabtai" was established in 2017, as both colonial outposts control more than 3,180 dunums of land.



Map ():"Mor" and "Shabtai" pastoral/agricultural colonial agricultural outposts

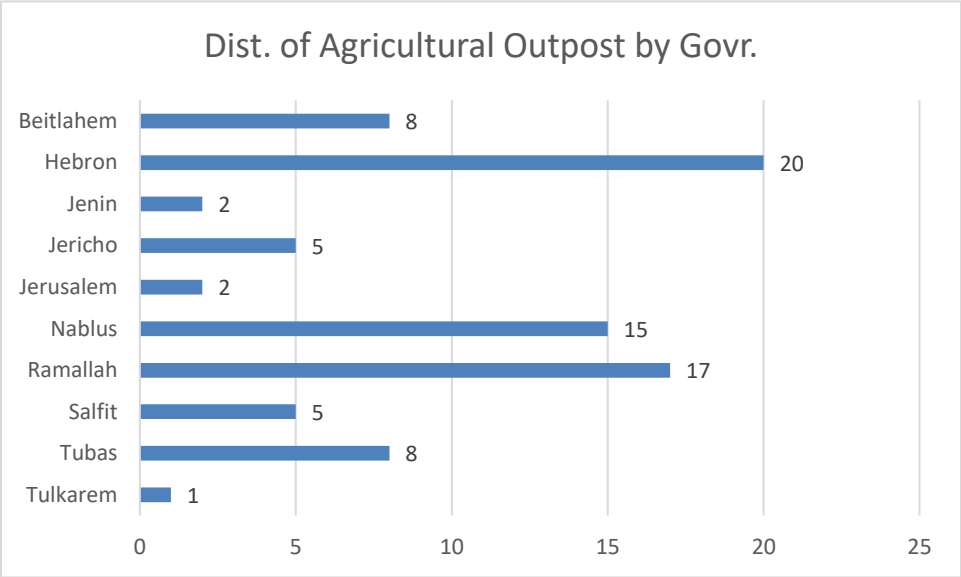
- Sde Bar pastoral/agricultural colonial outpost, in Al Risan, west of Ramallah

The "Sde Bar" colonial outpost is established by the Israeli colonizers in Al-Risan area, west of Ramallah. This "farm" was established in 2017 on citizens' lands in Villages of Kifr Ne'meh and Deir Ibzai'. This colonial outpost controls an area of 750 dunums already declared as "state land". The Palestinian citizens are prohibited from access to these lands, including land reclamation or cultivation.



**Map ():"Sde Bar"
pastoral/agricultural colonial
outpost**

These pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts are primarily concentrated in some Palestinian governorates, where Hebron Governorate has the big portion, with 20 pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts, followed by Ramallah Governorate, with 17 colonial outposts, then Nablus Governorate, with 13, Bethlehem Governorate with 8 outposts, Tubas Governorate with 6 colonial outposts, Salfit Governorate with 5 outposts, Jericho Governorate with 4 outposts, Jenin Governorate with 2 colonial outposts, and finally Tulkarm Governorate with 1 colonial outpost.



Distribution of pastoral/agricultural colonial outposts across West Bank