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The Position of Palestinian Jerusalem Christians and Patriarchates on the Status of Jerusalem – comparison and analysis of research findings¹

Jerusalem, despite its unique multicultural heritage, continues to be deeply affected by political polarisation and ethnic antagonism. Since 1967 so called Jerusalem question gradually evolved into one of the most complex problems of the modern Middle East. Not only does it remain the core issue of the Israeli-Palestinian political impasse conflict but has also developed into an ethnic antagonism between Jewish and Palestinian inhabitants of the city.

As argued, persistence of Jerusalem polarization can be partly attributed to the ethnocratic nature of Israeli regime. In this sense the polarization is perceived as a direct consequence of ethnocratic pattern that structurally privileges one ethnic (Jewish) nation contributing to social inequality.² Noteworthy, since when ethnocracy has been the very part of the Israeli collective state identity it can be supposed that Jerusalem ethnic polarization will not be defused but will drift toward further intensification.

The conflict poses a particular threat to the existence of Palestinian Jerusalem Christians (hereafter: PJCh) as they constitute a small, hence vulnerable community.³ The problem seems to be particularly relevant in the light of the high rate of emigration.⁴

¹ The article is based on the researches financed by the Polish National Science Centre, *project* number 2012/05/N/HS5/02642.

² O. Yiftachel, *Understanding 'Ethnocratic' Regimes: the Politics of Seizing Contested Territories*, "Political Geography" 2004 No. 23, p. 647–676.

³ The number of PJCh is estimated to be 8000, see: *A Diyar Consortium Survey on "The Christian Presence in the West Bank, And Christian Attitudes towards Church-Related Organizations"*, Bethlehem 2008.

⁴ The problem has been illustrated by the latest research of B. Sabella on emigration of PJCh. 62% of the respondents of his research expressed a wish to emigrate. One third of respondents

Political polarisation in Jerusalem has become a serious challenge for advocacy as well as political and religious agendas of Jerusalem Patriarchates representing Christian communities.⁵ Beginning from the early 90's Jerusalem Patriarchs have not hesitated to issue significant, bold statements condemning Israeli policies. Particularly important, in this context, have been joint statements of patriarchs as they helped to unite and conceptualize Christian position toward Israeli presence in the city.

This background has provoked me to ask questions: what is so called common PJCh perception of the conflict, what their preferences are when it comes to the status of Jerusalem and, most importantly, whether their preferences are in accordance with the solution promoted by Jerusalem patriarchs. The purpose of this paper is to present results of the research which was undertaken to examine this problem. The research was conducted between May and July 2014 in Jerusalem and included the analysis of written sources issued by church institutions and Christian NGO's based in Jerusalem; qualitative and quantitative methods represented by techniques of an in-depth interview and a survey correspondingly. In-depth interviews targeted local community leaders who were chosen through a targeted sampling. The survey targeted 200 respondents and was conducted by a team of native Jerusalem Christian interviewers and targeted respondents chosen through snow-ball technique.⁶

The first part of the paper briefly deals with a political context of Israeli policies. The second section presents attitude toward the problem of Jerusalem status from the perspective of Jerusalem Patriarchates. The conclusive part of the paper presents the most important results of the research together with analysis of the findings.⁷

indicated that they know of an entire family of relatives, neighbors or friends who have emigrated during the last five years. Majority of the respondents indicated lack of employment opportunities, Israeli laws and measures that affect their lives and bad political situation as a main reasons for emigration. 81% of the respondents indicated Israeli occupation as a greatest challenge to PJCh. *Palestinian Christians in Jerusalem, Results of a Survey – April 2014*, in print.

⁵ Christians in Jerusalem belong to following communities: Latins (Roman Catholics) 29%, Greek Orthodox 27%, Greek Catholics (Melkites) 14%, Armenian Orthodox 2%, Armenian Catholics 7%, Syriac Orthodox 8%, Syriac Catholics 3%, Copts 4%, Protestants 4%, Maronites 2% and Others 1%. *Palestinian Christians in Jerusalem, Results of a Survey – April 2014*, in print.

⁶ The problem discussed in the paper are of many issues undertaken during the research. A full analysis of the research will be included in a paper that is being prepared as an outcome of Diyar Conference: Shifting Identities: „Changes in the Social, Political, and Religious Structures in the Arab World” that was held in Paphos, Cyprus (3–5 of July 2015).

⁷ The research itself had a broader scope. The problem presented in this paper is one of the many issues undertaken. As a consequence I am not presenting full analysis of the findings but considering only aspects related to the problem of patriarchates position on Jerusalem and its correspondence to preferences of the respondents targeted through the questionnaire.

Part I

Legal and political status of PJCh does not differ from status of Muslim Palestinian Jerusalemites and as such have been defined on two levels. Above all Palestinian Jerusalemites (PJ) exist in a context of Israeli ethnocracy. Secondly their status was determined by so called residency regime – a set of legal⁸ measures applied in the wake of East Jerusalem (EJ) *de facto* annexation in June 1967.⁹ Following the redrawing of the city borders, Israel conducted a census and granted permanent residency status to some of 66 000 of Palestinians who were present within the newly defined municipal borders. Palestinians of the ‘territories’¹⁰ who remained outside these borders were excluded from the right to be physically present in the city without obtaining temporary entry permits.¹¹ The changes introduced by Israel have brought two significant consequences: isolation of East Jerusalem Palestinians from their compatriots from ‘territories’ and integration of East Jerusalem Palestinians into broader Israeli socio-political framework. It is worth emphasizing that both the isolation and the integration have been facilitated through a series of Israeli administrative measures applied with an aim to secure Israel’s *de facto* sovereignty over the city.¹²

Last but not least, social and cultural context of the existence of PJ has been affected by direct Israeli policies applied to maintain Jewish demographical dominance. Of particular significance has been policies promoting Jewish demography through developing settlements projects.¹³

⁸ Accomplished through The Law and Administration Ordinance (Amendment No.11 Law, 5727 – 1967), and *The Jerusalem Declaration*, 1967.

⁹ Israel never formally annexed EJ, but extended the city’s municipal boundaries and passed legislation authorizing the application of Israeli law. According to Israel the boundaries extension didn’t constitute annexation but municipal fusion. *Extreme Makeover: Israel’s Politics of Land and Faith in East Jerusalem*, Crisis Group Middle East Report, 2012 No. 134, p. 4; G. Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire*, New York 2006, p. 63.

¹⁰ The West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

¹¹ More in: I. Lustick, *Yerushalayim, al-Quds, and the Wizard of Oz: Facing the Problem of Jerusalem after Camp David*, “The Journal of Israeli History” 23 (Autumn 2004) No. 2, p. 200–215. *Legal status of East Jerusalem Population since 1967*, ed. O. Halabi, Jerusalem 2008, p. 11, *Forbidden Families: Family Unification and Child Registration in East Jerusalem*, B’Tselem and Hamoked, January 2004, www.hamoked.org.il/items/12600_eng.pdf. [16.09.2013].

¹² *De facto* designate an action happening in practice and as such is used in contrast to *de iure* which refers to a legal situation. In the context of Jerusalem the *de facto* sovereignty status is related to the Israeli jurisdiction executed as a consequence of an armed conflict, hence, limited by the law of the belligerent occupation. The main limitation of the current *de facto* status is a prohibition of annexation, since occupation itself is limited by its temporary character. *The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949. Commentary*, ed. J. Pictet, ICRC: Geneva 1958, p. 275. *Law of Belligerent Occupation*, The Judge Advocate General’s School, Ann Arbor 1945, p. 23, C. Phillipson, *Termination of War and Treaties of Peace*, New York 1916, p. 279.

¹³ More on settlement policy in: *By Hook and by Crook. Israeli Settlement Policy in the West Bank*, B’Tselem, Jerusalem 2010; *Policy of Discrimination: Land Expropriation, Planning and*

Part II

The Israeli ethnic policy has been criticized by Patriarchates on numerous occasions. This criticism has been a direct response to measures aimed to manage demographic and cultural landscape of the city, be it israelisation or judaisation.¹⁴ Of particular importance has been the criticism of the measures undermining Palestinian demography and posing a threat to integrity of the Palestinian family.¹⁵ Patriarchates' standpoint on Israeli policies however included not only condemnation of particular measures but also alternatives to Israeli power monopolisation.

Since the early 90's Jerusalem patriarchates' standpoint on Jerusalem status has gradually transformed toward Palestinian national agenda. Of significant importance has been a departure from a traditional understanding of basic concepts of *sovereignty*, the concept of status quo and special status in particular. This tendency can be exemplified by joint patriarchal statements that were issued between 1990 and 2005.

Status Quo concept (as referred to Jerusalem) can have at least two meanings: The Status Quo of the Holy Places in the narrow sense – referring to a particular

Building in East Jerusalem, B'Tselem, Jerusalem, January 1997; M. Dumper, *The Politics of Jerusalem since 1967*, Colombia University Press, 1997; Alison Hodgkins, *Israel Settlement Policy in Jerusalem*, Jerusalem 1998; *Negotiation Deadlock. The Isolation of Jerusalem and its Ramifications*, "Rocznik Ostrowieckiego Towarzystwa Naukowego" 2014 No. 3–4; A. Mosely Lesch, *Israeli Settlements In the Occupied Territories, 1967–1977*, "Journal of Palestine Studies" 7 (1977) No. 1.

¹⁴ Israelisation is here understood as a policy aimed at partial assimilation of Palestinians into socio-political framework of Israel exercised through modernisation and isolation of PJ from Palestinians of the 'territories'. This understanding has been presented *inter alia* by M. Amirav, see M. Amirav, *Israel's Policy in Jerusalem Since 1967*, Stanford Center on Conflict and Negotiation, Stanford 1992. Judaisation is understood as a process of monopolizing cultural heritage of Jerusalem being undertaken to support an argument for Jewish sovereignty as well as strengthening Israel's territorial and political control of Jerusalem being exercised by expansion of Jewish settlement and securing Jewish demographical dominance See: K. Maguire, *The Israelisation of Jerusalem*, "Arab Papers" 1981 No. 7; *Extreme Makeover: Israel's Politics of Land and Faith in East Jerusalem*, Crisis Group Middle East Report, 2012 No. 134; A. Latendresse, *Jerusalem: Palestinian Dynamics of Resistance and Urban Change, 1967–94*, PASSIA on-line publication, 1995. The condemnation of judaisation has been expressed for the first in 1996. In the Statement "Call for Peace and Justice in the Holy Land" 1996 (Statement 1996) patriarchs stated: "We, therefore, call on the Israeli government to bring all its discriminatory policies to an end [...] If Israel maintains an exclusive sovereignty over the city, and continues its 'Judaisation,' Jerusalem will never be the city of peace".

¹⁵ Noteworthy, imposing of the restrictions on Palestinian Jerusalem families prompted Jerusalem Patriarchs to issue the first joint document regarding ethnic policies – Memorandum from the Heads of the Christian Communities in Jerusalem on the Significance of Jerusalem for Christians, 14 November 1994 (Memorandum 1994). Israeli policies regarding the Palestinian families has been repeatedly condemned by the heads of Jerusalem patriarchates also in the subsequent years.

sui generis legal regime established by promulgation through Ottoman firmans and applied to manage disputes between different Christian denominations; a cultural *status quo* – concerning broadly defined relations between the recognized religious communities (Christians, Muslims, Jews).¹⁶ Traditionally the Status Quo was understood in narrow, *sui generis*, sense.¹⁷ Beginning from the 90's, however, the patriarchates have been gradually changing¹⁸ this approach toward broader, cultural dimension of the concept.

Similar revision relates to the understanding of special status. In this regard the concept transformed from being perceived as a *corpus separatum*,¹⁹ to a legal measure securing both Churches' privileges and Palestinian right to self-determination.²⁰ Special status is also understood as an instrument of prevention of power monopolisation and a mechanism of preservation of the city heritage²¹ as well as a notion endorsing internationalization of negotiations and an involvement of Jerusalem's religious leaders.²²

Patriarchal criticism on Israeli measures together with a change regarding understanding of Jerusalem status should be perceived as an important developments. In broader sense it might have helped to connect Patriarchates with the expectations of a lay community. On the other hand however, the joint statements did not express a stance regarding envisioned state belonging of the city. Since the special status itself does not predestine regime affiliation it is justifiable to argue that any solution to Jerusalem is its internationalisation, a joint Israeli-Palestinian control or even re-division, that would plead freedom of worship and maintenance at least the narrow sense the Status Quo can be in patriarchal optics regarded as satisfactory.²³

¹⁶ E. Mollinaro, *Negotiating Jerusalem. Preconditions for Drawing Scenarios Based on Territorial Compromises*, Jerusalem 2002.

¹⁷ F. Elodie, *The Vatican and Jerusalem*, Jerusalem 2013, p. 7–14.

¹⁸ Beginning from the Memorandum 1994.

¹⁹ An international regime that would protect heritage and the rights of the Churches. F. Elodie, *The Vatican and Jerusalem*, op. cit., p. 15–17.

²⁰ Transformation of the concept can be observed through gradual change developed through the following documents: Statement by the Heads of Christian Churches and Communities in Jerusalem on the Jewish Settlement Attempt in East Jerusalem, Jerusalem, 23 April 1990; Statement by the Heads of the Churches in the Holy Land, Jerusalem, 14 January 1992 (Statement 1992), Memorandum 1994, Statement 1996, Chancellor of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Statement on the Church's Position on the Final Status of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, August 2000 (Latin Chancellor's Statement 2000); Patriarchs and Heads of the Local Christian Churches in Jerusalem, Statement on the Status of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, 29 September 2006 (Statement on Jerusalem 2006).

²¹ As in Statement 1996 and Statement on Jerusalem 2006.

²² As in Letter from Christian Patriarchs to President Yasser Arafat, Prime Minister Ehud Barak, and US President Bill Clinton, 17 July 2000 (Letter 2000); Statement on Jerusalem 2006.

²³ The notion of division was officially sanctioned in Statement on Jerusalem 2006.

Lack of clear-cut agenda can be partly attributed to differences of various patriarchates. It seems to be especially the case when comparing approaches of Greek Orthodox and Latin Patriarchates. Whereas in the perspective of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate the role of the church in the Holy Land is purely spiritual and, as such, not involved in promotion of political goals,²⁴ Latin Patriarchate has not hesitated to express sensitive political statements.²⁵ Needless to say, different understanding of the patriarchal role has determined views on the legal status of Jerusalem and political concerns of its habitants. The position of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate has limited to a promotion of its own patriarchal rights and a protection of the freedom of worship with no advocacy for political solutions. Latin Patriarchate, by contrast, perceived the promotion of the *status quo* in a wider sense and included protection of the cultural and political rights of the Christian communities.²⁶

An additional aspect of the defragmentation refers to a sphere of inner-denomination relationships. These relationships are, to some extent, determined by a gap between a performance of churches and expectations of lay communities. This phenomenon has developed partly due to the fact that local Christianity has been represented at two separate, often not corresponding, levels – an official level of the hierarchy and a practical level represented by common people. An interesting opinion on this problem has been expressed by Rev. J. Khader who perceived quietism of Churches as a serious drawback hindering advocacy for the social and political rights of the Palestinian communities.²⁷

Part III

One of the aims of the research was to find out whether position of the patriarchates on Jerusalem question was in accordance with a solution to Jerusalem preferred by so called common PJCh. To assess the problem I applied a questionnaire which

²⁴ *The Greek Orthodox Church and the Future of Jerusalem*, "Palestine-Israel Journal" 17 (2011) No. 12, p. 230–236.

²⁵ Such an approach was particularly relevant to the office of Patriarch Michel Sabbah who, as a native Palestinian, perceived his position through the lens of political commitment. During his office Latin Patriarchate issued few politically important statements e.g. *Jerusalem First – A Message by Michel Sabbah*, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, 29 September 1996.

²⁶ Urgent Appeal by the Commission for Justice and Peace of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem for Assistance and Action to the Bishops of the World, 10 October 1996; Chancellor of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Statement on the Church's Position on the Final Status of Jerusalem, Jerusalem August 2000. For study on M. Sabbah writings see: Ch. H. Miller, *Jerusalem the Holy City in Selected Documents of the Holy See and in Writings of Michel Sabbah, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem*, [in:] *Christianity and Jerusalem: Studies in Modern Theology and Politics in the Holy Land*, ed. A. O'Mahony, Leominster 2010.

²⁷ Author's interview with J. Khader, 10.11.2013. The interview was made as a one of the 16 in-depth research interviews. Similar opinions were expressed by the other informants.

included series of open and closed questions. The most relevant questions that address the problem discussed in the paper are presented below²⁸.

The status question (question no. 1, tables no. 2 and 3) was formulated as follows: ‘Which option do you prefer as a solution to Jerusalem’. The aim of the question was to explore whether there was a preferred alternative to Israeli de facto sovereignty. In that sense the question regarded not only a favoured solution but also respondents’ perspective on the current Israeli ethnocratic political framework.

The respondents were asked to choose from following options

- A. Jerusalem must be united and undivided under full sovereignty of Israel as well as recognized as its capital.
- B. Jerusalem must be united and undivided under full sovereignty of Palestine as well as recognized as its capital.
- C. Jerusalem must be united and undivided but neighbourhoods inhabited by Palestinians must be recognized as the capital of Palestine and neighbourhoods inhabited by Jews must be recognized as the capital of Israel.
- D. Jerusalem must be united and undivided under sovereignty of international authority consisting of representatives of Israel, independent Palestine, United Nations as well as representatives of Islam, Judaism and Christianity.
- E. Jerusalem must be divided as it was before June 1967 so the eastern part would become the capital of an independent Palestine and the western part would become the capital of Israel.
- F. There is no reason to change the current situation.
- G. Other.

Each respondent was additionally ask to justify its answer. This procedure allowed me to ascertain the motifs behind respondents’ choices. The reasons were consecutively grouped in general categories and subcategories.

Question no. 1 – preferred solution to Jerusalem

Table no. 1 – preferred solution to Jerusalem

Preferred solution	Number of choices	%
A. Solution no. 4, independent Jerusalem	84	42,4%
B. Solution no. 1, Israeli Jerusalem	34	17,2%
C. Solution no. 5, divided Jerusalem	30	15,2%
D. Solution no. 2, Palestinian Jerusalem	16	8,1%
E. Solution no. 3, shared Jerusalem	13	6,6%

²⁸ The results of the status question as well as a description of a procedure applied to obtain the answers will be included in a paper that is being prepared as an outcome on Diyar Conference: Shifting Identities: „Changes in the Social, Political, and Religious Structures in the Arab World” that was held in Paphos, Cyprus (3-5 of July 2015).

F. Solution no. 6, status quo	13	6,6%
G. Solution no. 7, other	8	4%
H. Total	198	

The results indicated strong support for an idea of the city without distinct national or political boundaries. This tendency can be additionally exemplified by:

- A. Strong support for the idea of Jerusalem independency
- B. 92 respondents (solution no. 4. and no. 7 – 46,4%) have chosen independent Jerusalem regime,
- C. 148 respondents (74,7%) haven't chosen Israeli regime,
- D. 136 respondents (68,7%) haven't chosen Palestinian regime.
- E. Moderate support for exclusive (Palestinian or Israeli) control
- F. 46 (solution no. 2 and 5 – 23,2%) have been in favour of Palestinian regime,
- G. 36 (solution no. 1 and partly no. 6 – 18,1%) have been in favour of Israeli regime.

Secondly, respondents were clearly in favour of an inclusive vision of Jerusalem, that is a vision involving cooperation and coexistence with Muslims and Jews – 97 respondents (49%) have chosen solution no. 4. and solution no. 3.

An analysis of the qualitative component (table no. 2) of the question indicated that status preferences were attributed to such needs as: an equal socio-political status for all religions; Christian rights protection; protection of Jerusalem universal heritage; social safety; stability and security. In this sense, the respondents have chosen inclusive solution to Jerusalem as most coherent with their collective needs.

Table no. 2 – Reasons for the most popular status solution given by the respondents

Solution no. 4, independent Jerusalem

Reason	Number of answers
A. equality of rights for all religions	26
B. Christian rights protection	14
C. peace, safety, cooperation	12
D. universality of Jerusalem heritage	6
E. protection from Israel or/and Jews	6
F. protection of holly cites	5
G. third party involvement in a peace process	4
Other	8
Total	81
No explanation given	3

Question no. 2 – opinion on negotiations

The analysis of the question show strong disappointment and lack of trust toward negotiation process. 139 respondents (70%) have not labelled negotiation process as contributing to PJCh interest. Majority of these respondents who have labelled negotiations as partly responding to PJCh needs referred only to the religious or cultural aspects. At the same time only 20 respondents (10%) responded to the question affirmatively (table no. 3).

In general, 62 respondents felt they had been in some way omitted or neglected due to minority status or that their rights were respected. (points A, C, D in ‘yes’ section of the table no. 3). 20 respondents expressed disappointment with the performance of Palestinian negotiators.

The feeling of disappointment correlates with the preference toward independent Jerusalem. It can be expected that PJCh do not trust Israeli or Palestinian side of the conflict. As much they are Palestinians they do not believe in Palestinian agenda represented by PLO.

Table no. 3 – the opinion on negotiations

‘No’ answers (139 answers)

Reason	Number of answers
A. We are too small / weak / powerless to be considered by negotiators	25
B. Palestinian negotiators cared more about Muslim holy sites / Aqsa mosque	20
C. Nobody consider us as having rights / nobody respect our rights	20
D. Nobody cares what we want	17
E. Negotiators cared about land only	11
F. Nobody recognized the fact that we live here	7
G. Negotiations were designed to reflect interest of Muslims	7
H. We were too weak due to internal division, we didn’t have a representation / support from patriarchates	7
Other	19
No comment	6
Total	139

‘To some extent’ answers (36 answers)

Reason	Number of answers
A. We are able to pray at holy sites, participate in Christian events, it allowed institutions to function	9
B. Negotiators focused only on holy sites and omitted social and political rights	7
C. Only officially from the side of PA	4
D. It didn’t secured religious rights	4

Other	10
No comment	2
Total	36
‘Yes’ answers (20 answers)	
Reason	Number of answers
A. We remained a part of Palestinian case	7
B. It allowed churches and Christian institutions to perform their functions and protected holy sites	3
C. Other	6
D. No comment	4
E. Total	20

Question no. 3 – the opinion on Church involvement

The majority ,112 respondents, expected church representatives to be involved in the negotiation process (table no. 4). The analysis of the open part of the question showed that PJCh perceived the church involvement as a tool of defending their collective identity, securing their collective rights and preservation the very existence of their community.

Table no. 4 – the opinion on Church involvement

‘Yes’ answers (112)

Reason	Number of answers
A. To fight for Christian rights	41
B. So we can have a Christian voice and Christian view	15
C. To preserve existence of Christians in Jerusalem	13
D. To secure access to the holy sites and right to pray / participate in religious events	9
E. To bring peace between religions	6
F. To advocate worldwide about problems of Christians	6
G. To facilitate negotiation efforts	6
Other	11
No comment	3
Total:	112

‘No’ answers (74)

Reason	Number of answers
A. Religion and politics should be separated	30
B. They should devote themselves to religious duties	12
C. They should focus on social issues	9
D. Because it’s a waste of time / nothing will change anyway / nobody will listen	9
Other	8

No comment	6
Total	74

Conclusion

Patriarchates' perception on the Jerusalem conflict has undergone important changes, especially when it comes to the position toward Israeli policies. The dynamics that came with the shift in the understanding of the special status and the *status quo* concepts has become a response to the very particular Israeli measures aimed at power monopolisation.

This approach appears to be in accordance with the expectations of so called common PJCh who are looking at the status question from the perspective of their socio-political vulnerability. Given the persistence of the Israeli ethnocracy as well as the negotiation impasse, PJCh are more open to alternatives that would secure their collective rights and individual well-being. Even though the probability of the solution of independent Jerusalem regime is low the very needs that are behind this choice can still be addressed. PJCh are clearly in favour of an inclusive vision of Jerusalem which would not only secure their rights but also would respect the rights of other ethnicities. Such an approach can be perceived as being rooted not only in the desire to search for alternatives to the Israeli exclusivity but also as emanating from the Christian values.

Both contexts, political and axiological, should be in the attention of Jerusalem Patriarchates.

At the same time, it seems that PJCh expectations toward the role of church in Jerusalem include not only spiritual dimension but also a political one. Because of the high level of disappointment with hitherto, undertaken peace process, as well as, lack of political leadership, it's safe to argue that the patriarchates can play a vital role in political mobilization. Despite the fact that the political agenda of the Patriarchates has its limits any attempt to address political preferences of PJCh that would respond to their needs in the sphere of collective rights will be received with appreciation.

Abstract

The paper discusses a question of Palestinian Jerusalem Christian (PJCh) position on the problem of Jerusalem status. It presents a part of findings of a research that was undertaken to investigate PJCh preferable solution to Jerusalem problem. The main aim of the paper is to discuss similarities and differences of official and common level perspective of the problem. The problem has been approached through the analysis of written sources issued by Jerusalem patriarchates and analysis of the questionnaire that had been used to investigate common PJCh position of Jerusalem status.

Keywords

Status of Jerusalem; Palestinian Christians; Jerusalem patriarchates; Israeli-Palestinian negotiations; status quo in Jerusalem; judaisation; Israeli ethnic policy

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