

Hundred-and-fourth Session

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Item 5.1.5 of the Agenda

IMPLEMENTATION OF 18 C/RESOLUTION 13.1 AND 19 C/RESOLUTION 15.1
CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE
OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES : REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL
ON THE MISSION HE SENT TO THE ARAB TERRITORIES OCCUPIED
BY ISRAEL TO COLLECT ON-THE-SPOT INFORMATION ON THE
EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL SITUATION

The General Conference has, on several occasions, been called upon to examine the problems of the educational and cultural institutions in the Arab territories occupied by Israel.

In that connection, it adopted the following two resolutions:

- (a) resolution 13.1 at its eighteenth session;
- (b) resolution 15.1 at its nineteenth session,

both of which are reproduced in annexes to this document.

In resolution 15.1, which it adopted at its nineteenth session, the General Conference invited me inter alia "to implement as soon as possible (my) decision to send a fact-finding mission to the Arab territories occupied by Israel, whose terms of reference would be to collect on-the-spot information" on the educational and cultural situation.

In order to implement the resolution, I approached the Israeli Government on a number of occasions with a view to enabling a mission to be sent to that country.

In particular, I provided the Israeli Government by letter dated 6 August 1976 with the list of persons whom I intended at that time to send on a fact-finding mission to the occupied Arab territories, together with the mission's terms of reference as provided under the terms of 19 C/Resolution 15.1, namely:

"1. To collect on-the-spot information on:

the general conditions under which the right to education is ensured
instruction provided in the occupied Arab territories, with
reference to:

ment,



the nature, origin and content of the textbooks used,
 the numbers, origin, situation and qualifications of teachers,
 the number and state of educational premises, and
 the school enrolment trend;

the conditions of cultural life and, in particular, cultural and artistic means of expression and self-fulfilment ensured for the populations of those territories; freedom in the matter of religious instruction and access to places of worship; freedom of access to external sources of culture and, in particular, to varied sources of information;

and, generally speaking, all factors permitting an assessment of the extent to which the populations of the occupied territories enjoy their natural right to an education and culture which accord with their national identity.

2. To study and submit suggestions on activities that Unesco might undertake, in its fields of competence, to assist the populations concerned".

The Israeli Government informed me, by letter dated 14 September 1976, that it agreed in principle to the sending of the mission, and that it was ready to provide it with the facilities necessary for carrying out the task I had entrusted to it.

It was possible, after further consultations, to fix the date of the mission - from 30 November to 9 December 1977 - and I decided on its composition, as follows:

Mr. Paul Marc HENRY (France) Special Consultant, International Development Research Centre, Paris (Chief of mission);

Mr. Samuel COOKEY (Nigeria), former member of the Executive Board of Unesco and former Director of the Department of Education, Commonwealth Secretariat, London;

Mrs. Jacqueline HENIN (France), Professor at the Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales, Paris;

Mr. Joaquin RUIZ-GIMENEZ (Spain), Professor of Philosophy of Law, University of Madrid;

Mr. Pierre de SENARCLENS (Switzerland), Professor of Contemporary History at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Lausanne;

Mr. Vladimir VELEBIT (Yugoslavia), former Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

Before leaving Paris on 30 November 1977, the members of the mission obtained information from the competent services of the Secretariat, paid visits to the permanent delegations of Egypt, Israel, Jordan and Syria, and had interviews with the representative of ALECSO and the observer of the PLO.

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The mission - whose working conditions are described in a separate report drawn up by one of its members - visited the occupied territories - Cisjordan, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, the Sinai Peninsular - but was not able to inspect Jerusalem itself. In each of the regions to which they were able to go, the members of the mission visited educational establishments at all levels, examined textbooks and questioned the principals and teaching staff, in the presence of Israeli officials belonging either to the military administration or to the Ministries of Education and of Labour, who had been appointed by the Israeli authorities to ensure co-ordination with the military authorities.

The Director-General submits to the Executive Board the following reports, presented to him by the members of the mission:

Report on the execution of the Director-General's mission of investigation, by Vladimir Velebit (Annex I);

Education in Arab Territories occupied by Israel, by Samuel Cookey (Annex II);

Higher Education in Arab Territories occupied by Israel, by Joaquin Ruiz-Gimenez (Annex III);

Report to the Director-General on multi-purpose centres for research and creative work, cultural radio and television programmes, publications, festivals and exhibitions, and school textbooks and libraries in the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, by Jacqueline Héning (Annex IV).

The Director-General intends to submit to the Executive Board, in the light of these reports, such recommendations as are calculated, in his view, to further the implementation of resolution 15.1 of the nineteenth session of the General Conference.

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ANNEX I

Report on the execution of the
Director-General's mission of investigation

by Mr. Vladimir VELEBIT



The General Conference of Unesco examined on several occasions the situation created in the territories which as a result of the war between Israel and its neighbours in 1967 remained under occupation by the Israeli armed forces. The resolutions resulting from this examination are:

- (a) Resolution 13.1 adopted at the eighteenth session; and
- (b) Resolution 15.1 adopted at the nineteenth session of the General Conference.

The Government of Israel refused resolutely to accept the criticism contained in both resolutions with regard to the attitude and comportment of its military administration which was set up to govern these territories. The Government also refused to allow the Director-General of Unesco to carry out the role assigned to him in the above-mentioned resolutions in respect of the territories under Israeli military administration.

In spite of the somewhat negative attitude of the Israeli Government, the Director-General continued patiently his efforts to persuade the Government to make it possible for him to send a group of impartial persons, who enjoy his personal confidence, to the occupied territories, in order to get a report based on first-hand knowledge gathered on the spot. The information should cover the educational field, particularly the content of school programmes, the nature and origin of textbooks which are being used, the number, origin and qualifications of the teachers, the number and condition of the premises used, and the development of the school attendance.

This group should also study the conditions prevailing in the cultural life, especially the means of cultural expression and development available to the population of these territories, the freedom of religious teaching, the freedom of access to sources of culture and information.

In general, the task of the group was to appreciate in what measure the population of the occupied Arab territories enjoyed the right to education and culture in conformity with its national identity.

After prolonged negotiations, the Israeli Government, still reserving its position concerning the above-mentioned resolutions, informed the Director-General that a group of experts selected and appointed by him would be permitted to visit the occupied territories in order to be able to submit to the Director-General a report based on information collected on the spot.

This attitude taken by the Government of Israel was confirmed after the arrival of the group in Jerusalem during the first meeting of the representatives of the military government of the occupied territories and representatives of various Israeli ministries present on that occasion. Indeed, when Mr. Paul-Marc Henry, head of this group, mentioned the link with the General Conference resolution 15.1 of the nineteenth session in his opening remarks, he was told that the Government of Israel does not recognize this resolution, and he and his group are accepted in Israel and the occupied territories only as a sign of goodwill of the Israeli Government, without prejudging the issues involved in the resolution.



Even before the visit of the Director-General's group to Israel, the question arose about what methods the group should use in order to collect all the information necessary to produce a realistic and complete report on the items listed in the General Conference resolutions. In particular, what could be done in the way of data collection to ensure an accurate, meaningful and, as far as possible, complete set of information for the preparation of an objective and unbiased report.

The group selected by the Director-General had little forehand knowledge about the educational system in the occupied territories and was in no position to prepare a programme for its visit or to select specific schools and interviews with specific persons from the teaching staff or persons having knowledge about the cultural condition in these territories.

On the other hand, the Israeli Ambassador accredited to Unesco proposed a ready programme for the visit of this group. His proposal was declined by the Assistant Director-General, Mr. Najman, for the reason that the Director-General's group should be an entirely independent and free body which would select the areas they liked to visit without any suggestion or influence from the Government of Israel. The Ambassador did not further insist on the content of the programme which he proposed, but limited himself to saying on behalf of his Government, that the group was expected to arrive in Jerusalem on 30 November 1977, and that the departure of the group from Israel was planned for 9 December. In this way, the Israeli Government determined to a certain extent the length of the visit of the Director-General's group and limited in a certain way any programme the group would have wished to adopt. The itinerary of the group inside the occupied territories, the visits to educational institutions and the contacts with persons in the occupied territories was to be left to the discretion of the group.

At the first meeting which the group had with the commander of the occupied territories and some of his assistants on the evening of the day the group arrived in Jerusalem, the same position, which had been previously held by the Ambassador, was reiterated by the military commander. He pointed out, however, that for reasons of security he requested to be given timely warning about the desired movements of the group and meetings which would take place in the territories under his responsibility.

The group and its leader were thus put before a difficult dilemma. They had no previous knowledge about the schools and other institutions which ought to be visited, nor about the place and locations of these institutions, neither did they have the names of reliable educationalists or persons prominent in the field of general culture, active on information media or in particular cultural branches.

Confronted with such a situation, Mr. Paul-Marc Henry and his colleagues had little choice other than to accept the programme for the visit as proposed by the military commander. The programme was to serve only as general orientation for the visit and Mr. P.-M. Henry stipulated that the group would be at liberty at any moment during their visit to omit or change any item which was listed in the programme, or to add other items if they thought it useful for the accomplishment of their task. General Orly, the military commander of the occupied territories endorsed this request without any further discussion, but insisted once more on the security element emphasizing that the safety of the group was his exclusive responsibility.

Such an arrangement was obviously not the most satisfactory, from the point of view of gathering objective and unbiased information about the situation in the educational and cultural field prevailing in the occupied territories. Mr. Henry and his colleagues were very much aware of these shortcomings, but considering the short time at their disposal for visiting the occupied territories,

and having also in view the hasty preparations for the mission and the slight knowledge of the members of the group regarding the educational and cultural situations in the occupied territories, the arrangement reached with General Orly was the only practical one.

In all fairness, it has to be said that the military authorities were most helpful in providing transportation for the group, which included the supply of military aircraft for the visit to far away areas as, for instance, the Golan Heights and Southern Sinai. The military authorities also promptly made all necessary arrangements for visiting schools, religious communities, cultural institutions, and a number of personalities active in either educational or the cultural field. All requests formulated by the group were efficiently fulfilled.

They showed some hesitation and reticence only in three instances:

- (a) they had been visibly embarrassed and reluctant to take the group to Bir-Zeit to visit the existing college-university. It took repeated requests before Dr. Cari Baraski, Vice-Chancellor of the University, was summoned to the Hotel Moriah, where the group resided during its stay in Israel;
- (b) on the question of meeting the governmental commission which was appointed by the Israeli Government to censor the textbooks and other printed matter which is imported from the Arab countries to Israel. Several approaches were made by the group to the liaison officer with requests to enable the group to meet with this commission or at least with a member of it in order to be informed about the methods of work of this commission and of the criteria used by it in permitting the importation of books and other printed matter. It is regrettable that the group was not given the opportunity for such a meeting. On one occasion, the liaison officer reported that the commission members had fallen ill, and were therefore unable to make the appointment. On another occasion, the liaison officer to whom this question was again submitted, just chose to ignore it. The group had, therefore, to leave the country after the end of the official programme without having any contact with this important commission and without having learned anything about their method of work and criteria;
- (c) the third point which sprang to the eye was the deliberate ignoring of UNRWA education work. The programme which the occupying authorities proposed to the Director-General's group made no mention of the UNRWA's schools nor did the tight schedules allow any time for visiting UNRWA officials, educational establishments or having interviews with UNRWA teaching staff.

Nevertheless, several members of the group established contacts with UNRWA educational departments and visited some of the UNRWA schools, but, as said above, all these arrangements were made without any co-operation from the Israeli side.

On the other hand, it must also be said that the military administration did not prevent nor forbid these contacts which were undoubtedly known to them. The Israeli authorities preferred simply to ignore them. This attitude of the Israeli authorities seems to prove their aloofness from UNRWA operations and appears as marked evidence of their disapproval of the presence of UNRWA in the occupied territories.



It must be emphasized that the representatives of the military authorities of Israel and persons attached to them, were constantly present during the visit of the Director-General's group to educational or cultural institutions in the occupied territories, and were also on the spot when members of the group interviewed local authorities, the teaching staff, or on some occasions, grown-up pupils. They were far from playing the role of discreet organizers of the visit, on the contrary, they were always present and only too noticeable. On one occasion in West Bank school when the group was for a moment left alone with the Director of this school, he turned in anger towards the group saying:

"You should not have come at all if you are not able to arrange talks with us without the presence of the Israelis".

On more than one occasion the group tried to make this point clear to the Israeli officers who accompanied them. The Israeli officers showed a certain amount of astonishment and promised to comply with the wish of the group in this respect, but half an hour later everything was forgotten and they were back and present in all the meetings and not rarely even offered their unwanted comments.

It may, at this point, be interesting to point out that nothing seems to have changed over the years in the attitude of the Israeli Government with respect to fact-finding missions.

In the summer of 1967, immediately after the end of the so-called "six-day war", the Secretary-General of the United Nations appointed Mr. Hils-Goren Gussing as his special representative for the visit of the newly occupied territories of Jordan, Egypt and Syria, with the purpose of submitting a report in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 2252 (ES-V) and Security Council Resolution 237 (1967). In Article 9 of the introduction of the report, Mr. Gussing writes:

"... in all his travel the special representative could not meet representatives of the civil population, displaced persons, prisoners of war and local authorities without the presence of the representatives of the (Israeli) Government. From a psychological standpoint it would have been desirable to have these interviews without witnesses.

This had been said to the representatives of the Government, but remained unheeded.

Otherwise they enjoyed full freedom of movement and benefited from the assistance offered to him, particularly in supplying means of transportation and making necessary arrangements for the visit".

It is rather difficult to assess to what extent the military administration was anxious for the safety of the Director-General's group. However, this concern should not lightly be discarded. It seems quite certain that any incident which may have involved the group or any of its members would have been most unwelcome to the Israeli Government.

Furthermore, it can be assumed that the Government was most eager to avoid any political demonstrations staged from the population or the students which would have been observed by the Director-General's group. A certain nervousness and tension from the Israeli side is therefore readily understandable.



On the other hand, there is little doubt that the authorities wished to impress the members of the group favourably by arranging social gatherings with very intelligent and friendly Israeli scholars and high governmental dignitaries who did their best in trying to explain the benevolent intentions of the Israeli Government and its concern for the prosperity and progress of the occupied territories.

The members of the group who spent their days in the occupied territories, where the strict discipline of the military administration could very well be felt, had a distinct feeling of sharp contrast when they met, on several evenings, the soft voices of representatives of the Israeli élite who very cleverly explained to the group the precarious position of the Israeli nation and its government and justified the measures they have introduced in order to be able to survive.

There is no doubt about it that the Director-General's group was, during the entire period of its visit to Israel, well aware that the atmosphere of war still persisted, that many of the measures taken by Israel were dictated by the fear of renewed hostilities and the understandable apprehension of a population of only 3 million inhabitants which held under its jurisdiction over 1.5 million people belonging to a hostile nation which was ready to turn against them at the first given opportunity.

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ANNEX II

EDUCATION IN ARAB TERRITORIES OCCUPIED BY ISRAEL

by Samuel COOKEY

One of the terms of reference of the nineteenth General Conference for the Mission to Arab territories occupied by Israel is "to collect on-the-spot information on:

the general conditions under which the right to education is ensured and instruction provided in the occupied Arab territories, with particular reference to curriculum content; the nature, origin and content of the textbooks used; the numbers, origin, situation and qualifications of teachers; the number and state of educational premises, together with the school-enrolment trend".

This section of the report will deal mainly with the topics underlined above, touching only briefly on the question of textbooks and higher education which will be dealt with in more detail in other sections. Nor will the work of UNRWA in the field of education be discussed, as there is an up-to-date United Nations report on this. Tribute must however be paid to the excellent educational work of UNRWA.

GENERAL CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH EDUCATION IS GIVEN

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No country or people who are occupied can be truly happy, or satisfied with the conditions of occupation, even if the occupying authorities are benevolent.

Before going into details about education in the occupied territories it is well to bear the following considerations in mind:

- (a) All activities in the Israeli occupied territories are conditioned by the fact of occupation. Throughout history occupation has always led to restrictions of all kinds in nearly all fields - restrictions of movement, assembly, speech, cultural activities, etc. Military occupation usually overrides the niceties of civil laws and procedures, the overriding concern being for security. Even in countries with military governments where there is no occupation by a foreign power the military are supreme and often override civil laws and regulations by decrees. Arbitrary arrests and detention are common and decisions by civil courts are sometimes ignored in the name of national security.
- (b) This fact of occupation, therefore, affects schools in the Israeli occupied territories. As has earlier been pointed out, we were restricted in our inquiries by the constant presence of either the military or government representatives. Naturally the people



interviewed were unable to speak as freely as they would have liked to do. Even on the one or two occasions when the Mission was able to talk to groups of students and teachers without the military or government presence, people did not feel entirely free to speak candidly.

- (c) Reference has already been made to the visits some of us paid to Bir-Zeit University. Throughout the two or three hours of discussion which we had with the President of the University and some of his staff, most of the complaints were against things like censorship of textbooks, difficulties of engaging staff from outside the West Bank, frequent incursions of the army into schools and the university campus, and the difficulty of acquiring books for the university library.
- (d) It would appear that the dissatisfaction against the education being given in the occupied territories is part of the resentment against an occupying power, no matter who that occupying power might be. The quotation below, from a paper published by Bir-Zeit University, supports this view. This quotation is from a paper entitled "Contemporary Palestinian Literature under Occupation":
- "The Hashemite rule over the West Bank was overtly and directly involved in suppressing the publication of any worthwhile literature, especially that of political or social significance. Direct censorship plus control over educational and social institutions, clubs, and all cultural activities along with relentless political persecution succeeded in maintaining a standard of ignorance and superficiality of alarming dimensions. Only the regime's mouthpieces or writers of trashy third-rate literature succeeded in getting their works published, while underground literature remained scarce and did not reach a significant audience".
- (e) No curriculum now in use in the occupied territories can be satisfactory. It is impossible to arrive at any satisfactory and effective curricula in the absence of national educational goals. Using Jordanian and Egyptian curricula and syllabuses for the schools in occupied territories is only a palliative. Curricula for the various levels of education in any country must be geared to the social, political and economic needs of that country. In the occupied territories these needs cannot be formulated at present in the absence of a Palestinian government. Students who are being educated on the basis of the Jordanian or Egyptian curricula are in fact being trained for employment in the two countries where the curricula originate. For this reason educational and manpower planning in the occupied territories will be difficult, and guidance and counselling in educational institutions would be unrealistic.





THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Gaza Strip and Sinai

The educational system, which follows the system in Egypt (including the curricula), includes kindergartens, elementary schools, preparatory schools and secondary schools as well as teacher-training seminaries. There are six years of elementary education. Post-elementary education is divided into three years of preparatory education and three years of full secondary education. Those who complete the full secondary education take the school-leaving certificate known as the Tawjihi. This examination is also referred to as Matriculation, since those who have high grades in it could be admitted into the universities.

In the Gaza Strip and Sinai, education has expanded between 1967 and 1977. The number of educational institutions rose from 199 in 1967/1968 to 347 in 1976/1977. Of the 347 institutions, 152 are run by the government, 152 by UNRWA and 43 by private organizations. All the kindergartens are run by private organizations made up of Women's Associations and religious groups.

The number of students and pupils in the Gaza Strip alone has risen from 80,000 in 1967/1968 to about 136,800 in 1977. Of the total for 1977, 44.5 per cent attend government schools, 3 per cent private schools and 52.5 per cent UNRWA schools.

The Golan Heights

In the West Bank, the educational system follows closely the system in Jordan, and in the Gaza Strip education follows the Egyptian system, but in the Golan Heights the educational system was fundamentally changed, since it was not easy to maintain close ties with the Syrian educational authorities. The system of education in the Golan Heights is the same as in Israel. Apparently the population of the Golan Heights, mostly Druze, prefer to follow the Israeli system.

The students, however, find it difficult to get into universities because of the difficulties of mastering English and Hebrew.

Although there seem to be enough teachers in the system, much has to be done to improve their quality and they would require outside help in the fields of English, Science and Mathematics.

The West Bank

Education in the West Bank follows the system in Jordan. According to the Jordanian education code of 1964 education in elementary and preparatory schools should be free and compulsory. According to the Israeli authorities, this code is still in effect in the West Bank and is being observed. This claim was confirmed by some of the Mayors interviewed, though a few others dispute the claim.

The structure of education is similar to that already described for the Gaza Strip: there are six grades in the elementary school, three in the preparatory and three in the secondary school. The whole of the West Bank is divided into six administrative units, each having its own director who serves as supervisor for the educational institutions in the district. The directors we met were all local residents, as were the vast majority of the other employees in the regional offices.



There has been some 30 per cent expansion in the number of institutions in the territory; from 1,188 in 1967/1968 the number rose to 1,548 in 1976/1977. Of this number 73 per cent are controlled by the government, 10 per cent by UNRWA and 17 per cent by private organizations.

Some rise has also been recorded in the student population. From 154,216 in 1967/1968 the number of pupils and students in all institutions, including UNRWA, rose to 230,736 in the year 1976/1977, an increase of about 50 per cent. In government institutions there is a 40 per cent increase of pupils in elementary schools, a 65 per cent increase in preparatory schools and a 44 per cent increase in secondary schools.

CURRICULUM CONTENT

Reference has already been made to this aspect of education in the occupied territories. There is an agreement, which the occupying authorities claim to observe, that schools in the Gaza Strip and Sinai should use the Egyptian curricula and those in the West Bank the Jordanian curricula. The limitations of this arrangement have already been pointed out. There is a further limitation: curriculum changes in the host countries take a long time to be reflected in schools in the occupied territories because of the need for censorship. These difficulties do not exist in the Golan Heights where the Israeli curriculum is preferred, according to the Israeli authorities and the principals and staff we spoke to. It must be pointed out, however, that the Syrian Government is not happy about this, claiming that the Druze were being educated away from their own culture.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

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In 1967 there were two vocational schools, a big drop from the thirteen in existence in 1966. However, in the 1976/1977 school year the number rose to six, of which two are government.

We visited the vocational secondary school in Nablus as well as a training centre. Requirement for admission is six years of elementary education and four years of secondary, and the main subjects studied are building, surveying, electricity and auto mechanics. The workshops were well equipped but we did not have much information about the number and qualification of staff.

The training centre was set up mainly to deal with drop-outs from the primary and secondary cycles. Studies concentrate on technical subjects like woodwork and metalwork and no accountancy or language is taught.

The common complaint about technical education is that it is not geared to job opportunities, and especially that commercial subjects are not taught.

EXAMINATIONS

Gaza Strip

As has already been mentioned the matriculation examination serves as a secondary school leaving examination as well as the university entrance examination. The numbers taking this examination have risen and the rate of passes continues to be fairly good. Students can specialize in either the Humanities or what is termed "Realistic Discipline" which includes Science and Mathematics. It would

seem from the figures available that in the 1976/1977 examination there was a drop in the numbers offering the Realistic Discipline, compared with the figures for 1967/1968. In general, however, candidates for the humanities are more than those for the realistic discipline.

Beginning with the 1968/1969 school year Unesco got involved with the organizing of the examinations. Unesco officials go to the Gaza Strip and make all the arrangements necessary. Questions are set by the Ministry of Education in Egypt, the examinations are supervised by Unesco and the scripts returned to Egypt for marking. Judging from the percentage of passes which varies from 64 per cent to 82 per cent, it would seem that the quality of education being given in the secondary schools in the Gaza Strip and Sinai compares favourably with that given in Egypt, assuming that the question papers for the examinations are identical.

Opportunities are open to students who have high grades in their matriculation examination to pursue university education in Egypt, Europe or the United States of America as well as in other Arab countries. Egypt reserves a quota of about a thousand Gaza Strip students each year for admission into its universities. No tuition fees are charged but parents have to send money for hostel and boarding accommodation. The Egyptian Government offers a grant of £10 (Egyptian) a term as pocket money.

West Bank

The position in the West Bank is different from that in the Gaza Strip. While in the Gaza Strip question papers are set and the scripts marked by the Egyptian Ministry of Education, in the West Bank the Supreme Examining Board in Nablus is responsible for conducting examinations at the preparatory and matriculation levels. This Board comprises local educators, directors of the six administrative units and some school principals. The Board arranges for setting the examination papers, marking the scripts and making the final awards. The matriculation certificates issued by the Board are recognized by the Government of Jordan and by Arab universities.

The figures provided indicate that the pass rate in these examinations has remained fairly good compared with 1967/1968. The numbers offering Realistic Discipline subjects have continued to be much lower than those offering the Humanities, although about 75 per cent of the 2,589 candidates who offered the Realistic Discipline in 1976/1977 passed.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Students who have successfully completed their secondary education and have good grades in their matriculation examination have a choice of either going to the University of Amman or seeking admission in other Arab universities. The new University in Jordan, the Yarmouk University, also accepts students from the West Bank. Some students from the West Bank also seek admission in European and American universities.

There were no universities in the West Bank before 1967. We were informed that Jordan had planned to start a second university in Jerusalem in 1966, but nothing was done before the war of 1967 intervened. Bir-Zeit started as a secondary school, and did not begin university work until 1972. Although students from the West Bank could attend Israeli universities, very few of them do so, possibly because of language difficulties and the rather stiff entrance requirements.



Unfortunately there is no university in the West Bank which is recognized by the Arab world. There are four institutions of higher learning, some of which are sometimes referred to as universities. The oldest of these is Bir-Zeit and is the one that comes closest to being accepted as a university, being a member of the Association of Arab Universities (AAU), as is the university in Nablus. The universities in Bethlehem and Hébron, however, are not likely to gain recognition for a long time from the AAU, as they have still not been able to satisfy the three conditions of membership required by the AAU. However, as pointed out by the Secretary-General of the AAU, it is one thing for a university to be a member of the AAU and another to have its degrees recognized by other Arab universities, each university reserving the right to decide on which university degrees to recognize.

TEACHER EDUCATION

There are still some questions to be answered regarding teacher education in the occupied territories. One knows that there are two methods of qualifying as a professional teacher: either through a university degree or by training in a teacher-training seminary. Since it is alleged that the quality of teachers is low, one would have liked to know, for each cycle of education, what proportion of teachers are graduates, what proportion have had the two-year training in a seminary and what proportion have had no training at all. We were unable to obtain this information and are now awaiting a reply to a questionnaire which we have sent to Israel. Still one can report briefly on teacher education in the occupied territories.

The Gaza Strip and Golan Heights

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Before 1967 there were three levels of teachers - graduates, teachers with seminary training and a few with only high-school certificates. Until 1967 nearly all the graduates teaching in the Gaza Strip came from Egypt; but these returned to Egypt in 1967 and efforts were made to raise the standards of teaching by sending more teachers into the seminaries and to the Arab Teacher-Training Seminary in Haifa, and by organizing refresher courses. There has been some improvement in the quality of teachers in the elementary and preparatory schools but not so much in the secondary schools. Because of the shortage of well-qualified secondary school teachers the work-load of qualified teachers has increased from 36 to 45 hours a week. The following figures will show clearly what effect the 1967 war had on staffing. In 1966 there were 2,825 teachers, but after the 1967 war there were only 1,137. Although great improvement has been made in the last ten years, the total number of teachers now available (2,094 teachers in the 1977/1978 school year) is still over 700 below the number in 1966. While there were only 60 students in seminaries in 1967, there are now 433 in the present academic year.

The supply of teachers in the Golan Heights appeared to be adequate. In the whole area there were 146 teachers but a lot of them require up-grading, as about 50 per cent of all the teachers have only twelfth-grade qualification. There were enough teachers in the schools we visited. One of the schools had 446 pupils and 18 teachers, a ratio of one teacher to 25 pupils. However, in a few elementary schools classes were larger, with a ratio of one teacher to 40 pupils.

The West Bank

As in the Gaza Strip teachers in the secondary schools were university graduates until 1967. We were informed that the situation has remained the same, but we have no official figures to show what proportion of secondary school



teachers are indeed graduates. However, there does not seem to be any shortage of teachers since 1968, although efforts are being made to raise the quality of teachers graduating from the teacher-training seminaries.

It would seem, however, from the figures supplied that only about 73 per cent of all teaching posts are actually filled. This would seem to support the information we received in some places that some classes were crowded. Yet, in the schools we visited we did not notice any overcrowded classes, the figures ranging from 29 to 35 pupils per teacher. Efforts are, however, being made to train more teachers. The numbers have risen from 3,900 in 1967 to 6,400 in 1977, an average increase of 73 per cent.

THE QUALITY, EMPLOYMENT AND RETENTION OF TEACHERS

It would seem that although there might be enough teachers in the various types of schools there are difficulties in recruiting well-qualified and able teachers. The teaching profession seems to be unpopular partly because it is poorly paid and partly because of poor prospects. It is claimed that teachers are poorly paid not only in the occupied territories but also in Israel itself. It is common for a teacher to take on a second job in order to survive. This kind of situation will certainly militate against conscientious work on the part of the teachers. Things got worse when the Israeli pound was devalued.

The salaries paid in the West Bank vary between Jordanians employed and paid by the Jordanian Ministry of Education and Palestinians employed locally. The Jordanian teachers enjoy two salaries, one paid by the Jordanian Government in Jordanian Dinars, and the other by the Israeli authorities in Israeli pounds, while the locally recruited teachers have only the local salary paid in Israeli pounds. Thus it is the locally recruited staff who suffer much and on whom the pressure to get additional jobs is greater.

According to figures quoted in a study published in July 1977 by the Education and Psychology Department of Bir-Zeit University (WEST BANK EDUCATION in Government Schools, 1967-1977), the overall distribution of qualified and unqualified teachers in 1975/1976 is given below. To quote from the study

"According to the Jordanian Education Act of 1964, No. 16, a qualified teacher in the compulsory cycle is the one who holds a degree from a teacher-training institute or its equivalent. This degree usually takes two years' higher education after the completion of the secondary cycle. A qualified teacher in the secondary cycle is the one who holds a bachelor's degree in a field of teaching. All teachers who do not hold any of these two degrees are considered unqualified and should be offered teacher training while being in service."

Subject	Teachers	
	% Qualified	% Unqualified
English	71.5	28.5
Arabic	58.7	41.3
Social Sciences	70.5	29.5
Science	63.0	37.0
Mathematics	58.2	41.8
Religion	52.0	48.0
Physical Education	53.7	46.3
Fine Art	46.0	54.0
Home Economics	60.8	39.2
Agriculture	81.8	18.2
Average	61.62	38.38

(These percentages are of a total of 6,887 teachers)



The weakness of these figures is that they cover both the compulsory and secondary cycles, and it is not easy to know in what cycle most of the unqualified teachers are. Still the overall figure of 62 per cent qualified and 38 per cent unqualified is not bad, compared with what obtains in many developing countries.

Quite apart from the figures quoted above, our impression is that there is weakness in the teaching of English, Science and Mathematics; clearly efforts should be made to improve the quality of teaching in these fields.

As mentioned above, the salaries paid in the West Bank vary between Jordanians enjoying two salaries and the locally employed Palestinians who only receive the local salary. Both categories of teachers, however, look enviously upon teachers employed by UNRWA, who not only have a more attractive salary scale, but are also paid in U.S. dollars.

Teachers in the Gaza Strip do not receive the same kind of encouragement from Egypt as some teachers in the West Bank receive from Jordan. Nevertheless, we were informed that teachers' salaries in the area were better than are paid in Egypt to teachers of comparable qualifications and experience, but not as good as the UNRWA scale.

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APPEX III

Higher education in Arab territories occupied by Israel

by Joaquin RUIZ-GIMENEZ

HIGHER EDUCATION

1. The situation of higher education in the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip and Sinai

1.1 General characteristics

The respective situations in these zones are very similar (without being identical) due to three common features regarding higher education:

- (a) Firstly, the former dependence on another Arab State with all that that implies in the administrative, political and cultural fields: the Golan Heights being formerly dependent on Syria; the Gaza Strip and Sinai on Egypt.
- (b) Secondly, the non-existence of university centres in these zones. Even before 1967, those students who wished to undertake higher studies were obliged to go to the universities of the respective States concerned (mainly the universities of Damascus, Cairo and Alexandria).
- (c) Thirdly, the need to solve the economic problem, which was patent even then, created by this situation (and which still exists), by the means of grants to the majority of the population who have only very modest material means.

1.2 Present day concrete problems

These are the same as we have just mentioned, but aggravated by the social and political situation arising from the military occupation by Israel since 1967, and also by their proximity to the cease-fire lines.

1.2.1 The Golan Heights. With regard to this zone the information supplied to us reveals the small number of pupils who finish secondary school and who are in a position to undertake higher grade education. The number is, nevertheless, greater than in 1967, 244 pupils in the 1976-1977 year as against 31 pupils in the 1967-1968 year, cf. the Ministry of Defence for Israel dossier already mentioned, page 46.

The main obstacle that this small number of pupils come up against, when they wish to study in a Syrian university, is economic; but this problem is apparently solved, in so far as possible, either by Arab grants on the one hand, or by UNRWA on the other (cf. the "Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East" 1976-1977, mentioned above; and the typewritten notes which were supplied to us on the "United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East").

Sometimes, however, there are obstacles of a political nature, particularly where the Druze are concerned, even though they are given the opportunity to enter Israeli universities (cf. the Ministry of Defence dossier already mentioned on this subject, page 46).

1.2.2 The Gaza Strip and Sinai. The problems of the scholastic population in these zones is similar but, as has already been pointed out, not identical.



In the first place, the starting point of reference for these zones is the Arab Republic of Egypt, which "administered" these two zones until 1967. At that time the Egyptian Education Code (legalized constitutionally in 1964 and amended in 1971 to include the compulsory aspect of education and the incorporation of a curriculum of religious instruction, etc.) was in force in these zones.

Besides this, the number of pupils of secondary level is much greater and increasing more and more in the two zones: there were some 5,000 pupils in the 1967-1968 school year, and some 14,000 in the 1976-1977 school year. All this contributes to the urgency for finding a solution to facilitate access to higher education (cf. the Ministry of Defence dossier, November 1977, quoted above, pages 7 and 8).

Lastly since, either for economic or for political reasons, the Israeli Government has neither founded a single university centre officially in these zones, nor has allowed any private foundation, the only solution during this period - which is undoubtedly imperfect - remains that of facilitating the movement of pupils, who wish to obtain a university grade, to the universities in the neighbouring Arab countries (mainly those in Egypt), with the help of the "Open Bridges" policy and the granting of awards from international sources. (cf. the Ministry of Defence for Israel dossier, pages 28 and 29; the Israeli brochure already quoted "The Administered Territories", page 10 and those following; the Israeli report "Information Briefing" 362/23-10-1977, page 5 and following; the information published in the UNRWA publications already mentioned concerning the number of grants awarded during the academic year 1976-1977, with particular regard to Table 14, page 75 of the "Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East"; and the supplementary notes which appear in our own dossier.)

2. The situation of higher education in the West Bank

2.1 General characteristics

In contrast with the situation in the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip and Sinai, there are now three centres of higher education in the West Bank (Hébron, Bethlehem and Bir-Zeit) which can be classified as universities, particularly from the legal point of view; although they have certain lacunae which will be mentioned later on. In addition to these centres, there is also the beginnings of an establishment for higher education, which has only just started.

Before describing the structure and the running of these university centres in detail, I should like to make two general observations:

- (a) it must be recognized from the quantitative point of view that the situation of higher education in the West Bank has improved in comparison with that existing before 1967, since three of the centres (Hébron, Bethlehem and the embryo Nablus) were established under the occupation regime. The fourth centre, that of Bir-Zeit, is the most important; during this period it has expanded considerably (as we shall see) and attained university rank in 1974;
- (b) on the other hand, from the qualitative point of view (freedom of teaching, importation of books, the choice of professors, the possibility of creating other faculties and research institutes, the editing and diffusion of publications, cultural expansion, etc.), one cannot but be well aware of the serious limitations and problems that still need to be overcome.



2.2
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2.2 The Islamic University of Hébron

2.2.1 Characteristics

This University was the first centre of higher education visited by our Group, on 5 December 1977 (in actual fact it was the only one which appeared on the "official programme" originally prepared by the Israeli Government).

- (a) We were very kindly received by the Director - or Rector - who was accompanied by the then Mayor of Hébron, Muhammad Ali El-Jaaberi, by several professors and some delegates (both military and civilian) from the zone.

The Director read us a summary of the history, the structure and the functioning of the Centre.

The Centre had been founded in 1971 through the initiative of a private Arab organization which had raised the capital necessary for the creation of a "College for the Study of Islam" (cf. the Ministry of Defence for Israel on this point, quoted above, page 29 and Appendix No.7), that is to say a university for the teaching of the sciences, of religious subjects and of languages (Arabic, Hebrew, English ...) which would serve to mould the necessary religious teachers of the future.

The Centre was opened temporarily in another building, but, the space proving too restricted and - as the Director underlined - with the help of the Israeli Government, by 1974 it was possible to begin building the premises which we actually visited. The Centre is still expanding, as we were well able to appreciate.

The curriculum consists of four courses (roughly 15 subjects); at the completion of which, the students receive their diploma or qualification. The programmes run concurrently with those of the University of Amman but at that point (December 1977) - according to the Director - the diplomas were not recognized by the Jordanian Government. It is hoped, nevertheless, that these diplomas will be recognized in the near future, particularly as there is no political reason to prevent this happening.

- (b) In answer to several questions put by the Group, we were told that:

the financing is autonomous, that is to say that no funds are received from Jordan, since their diplomas are not yet recognized;

the level of admission for pupils is not strict; all that is needed is to have completed the normal secondary education grades;

the appointment of professors (with adequate qualifications) is made by a management committee, counterchecked by the Ministry of Education (which pays the salaries);

the "recognition of parity" by the Association of Arab Universities was pending. They were eagerly awaiting the visit by a Commission from this Association, which would check the necessary data with a view to acknowledging that the level of formation in this Centre was equal to that obtaining in other Arab universities;



the curriculum contains absolutely no subjects of a "profane" character (that is to say specific, natural or social sciences), but only those of a religious character (with their necessary historical-type complements), while including the teaching of languages. The possibility of organizing other studies in higher research has not been excluded once they have the necessary means at their disposal;

students are allowed to enrol in this Centre irrespective of their place of origin; this can equally be one of the occupied territories or Israel itself; but in this case they need grants and other economic benefits. In the present academic year, 1977-1978, there are already 250 students;

there is a library at the Centre, with appropriate books - but it needs amplification;

normally speaking, the originals of the textbooks come from Jordan, as do their innovations and changes; it is, however, the Israeli authorities, who undertake the printing and defray the costs. As far as the teaching of English is concerned, they even receive some books from Great Britain;

it is generally admitted that the imported books are revised by the occupation authorities, but they only suppress tendentious or anti-Israeli passages (cf. the Ministry of Defence for Israel dossier already quoted, page 30).

2.2.2 Evaluation of this Centre

(a) The foundation of this Centre can be considered as positive, not only because it is one of the rare establishments for higher education in the West Bank, but also - and specifically - because it respects and encourages the religious, Islamic, character inherent to the "cultural identity" of the Arab population of these territories. From this point of view, praise is certainly due to the economic backing that the Israeli Government has given to the College.

(b) It is most desirable that recognition of parity and complete approval of this University should be awarded rapidly by the Jordanian State, together with full ratification of all its awards, and also appropriate financial backing.

(c) Although there still seems to be a certain ambiguity when it comes to affirming that the "Islamic University of Hébron" has already been "fully recognized" by the Association of Arab Universities (as already mentioned, it had not yet been recognized when we visited it on 5 December 1977), it must be admitted that shortly afterwards - when the Mission visited Cairo at the beginning of March - Dr. Mohamed Morsi Ahmed, the Secretary-General of the Association, assured us (during our visit of 6 March) that this University had just been recognized by the Association. He also told us that the University is considered as a "full member" of the Association. As a result, the graduates of this College may, if they so wish, pursue complementary studies in other Arab universities, given the fact that, on the one hand, the Israeli State does not prevent students from leaving the occupied territories and, on the other hand, that the Arab States do not refuse these students admission to their universities. Dr. Morsi explained, however, that any validity credited by each of the Arab States to the awards from the West Bank Universities - in so far as any professional undertaking by any of the holders of these diplomas is concerned - is quite another matter; since this depends on political rather than academic reasons.



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(d) In spite of the positive aspects mentioned above, it is indispensable that the Israeli Government should respect the autonomy of this College more fully, both with regard to the use without censorship of the texts considered necessary by the College, and with regard to the freedom of teaching and of the critical evaluation of social realities by the professors and by the students.

2.3 Bethlehem University

2.3.1 Characteristics

Although the visit to this University was not included in the initial "official programme", the Israeli authorities accepted our request favourably and set up a meeting with the directors of this University Centre on Monday, 5 December (on our return from Hébron).

(a) After the pleasant lunch offered us by the Mayor of Bethlehem, Mayor Elias M. Freij, we went to his home to have coffee; it was there that a working meeting was organized which was attended by the Arab educational delegate for the zone, several civilian officials and Brother Dr. Joseph Loewenstein, President of Bethlehem University. (It is worth noting that Brother Loewenstein is American, belongs to the Religious Order of the Brothers of Christian Schools (de La Salle) and comes from the University of California (Los Angeles). It should also be noted that the Mayor of Bethlehem, Mayor Elias Freij holds the position of Chairman of the University Board of Advisors).

During his opening speech, Mayor Elias Freij particularly underlined the respect and help offered by the Israeli authorities to the Arab schools in the zone since 1967, and also to what extent they had facilitated the creation of the University in 1972

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(b) Immediately afterwards, Brother Dr. Loewenstein resumed the history and characteristics of the University for us. From his words (which I noted down) and also from certain brochures he gave me personally after the meeting, when I was able to speak to him alone for a while, one can extract the following information:

after the 1967 war, the need for a centre of higher education in this zone became more and more apparent. The local authorities in Bethlehem and several important personalities therefore began the preparatory work. During the autumn of 1972, the Catholic Archbishop, Monsignor Pio Laghi, Apostolic Delegate in Jerusalem, founded an organizing committee, made up of directors of schools from the West Bank and from East Jerusalem. This committee decided to found a university in Bethlehem which would be dedicated to a "broad and high-level education in arts and sciences".

Following this initial impulse, and with the indispensable economic aid and the administrative co-operation of the de La Salle Brothers, the project was set in motion and the University of Bethlehem opened its doors on an appropriate campus (17,000 square metres) on 1 October 1973.

The initial professorial body was made up by Brothers of the Order mentioned above and, also, by 15 highly-qualified professors whose number has since increased. The teaching staff now (1977-1978) consists of 35 professors.



Initially there were only 50 students, but this year there are already 370 full-time students, with 300 more in the teachers' college.

According to the official brochure, the aims of the University are as follows:

PURPOSE: In the widest sense, the purpose of Bethlehem University is to serve the people of the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a centre of learning for the advancement, preservation, dissemination, and use of knowledge. The highest aspiration of the University is to imbue the human mind with knowledge in a spirit of understanding and ethical vision, and moral principles held in highest esteem throughout the world.

In the stricter sense, the purpose of the University is to provide on the West Bank and Gaza Strip a centre of higher learning easily accessible to promising young students, thereby making it possible for them to obtain higher education at good standards without going abroad.

BASIC FUNCTIONS AND OBJECTIVES: The basic functions of Bethlehem University are viewed as threefold: teaching, research, and service. The broad objectives relating to these functions are:

- (a) to offer academic programmes of excellent quality in the arts, sciences, business administration, hotel management, nursing and in other fields, so that qualified students may be prepared to assume responsible positions in society;
- (b) to add to knowledge through research, scholarship and creative activities in both fundamental and applied fields, and to seek ways of applying that knowledge to betterment and enrichment of the people on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip;
- (c) to make available the results of their research and rich heritage of human culture embodied in the arts and sciences.

GENERAL PUBLIC: In relation to the general public the University will:

- (a) contribute to the cultural and intellectual life of the West Bank by such means as: lectures, symposia, concerts, theatre, folklore and exhibits;
- (b) extend all possible assistance to the elementary and secondary schools upon request".

From the structural point of view, the University consists of the following departments and courses: Faculty of Arts (English; Arabic; Psychology, Sociology and Social Work; Education; and courses on French, History, Music and Spanish); Faculty of Sciences (Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, Physics); School of Business Administration; Institute of Hotel Management; Teachers' College; School of Nursing.

The curriculum is developed over four academic years (there being two semesters lasting fifteen weeks each year).

There is a close collaboration with the Social University of Canada for the "official standardization of academic programmes"; and, indeed, there are good relations with the universities in the U.S.A.



- (c) During a discussion on the subject, and following several questions put by members of the Group, the President of Bethlehem University underlined certain aspects:

there is a constant effort made to improve the level of the professorial body and of the educational material used, and also towards the creation of new faculties; but in order to achieve this, considerable economic resources are indispensable and also "a certain security in the situation";

the students are Arabs, coming from all the schools in the West Bank with the ordinary secondary school certificate; there is absolutely no discrimination of a religious character. Even though the foundation was of Catholic inspiration, and the Order of the de La Salle Brothers (one of whose members is the President of the University) is also Catholic, its basic character is ecumenical and it is at the service of the entire Arab population of the West Bank;

it is for this reason that the curriculum contains no subjects of a religious order;

at the time in question (December 1977), the Association of Arab Universities was in the process of examining the diplomas awarded by the University, in order to establish their total recognition of parity with the others (see below);

in reply to our question concerning the state of education and the Arab cultural identity in the occupied territories since 1967, the President of the University, Professor J. Loewenstein replied that "due to the fact that he had been in his particular position of responsibility for only the last three years, he felt unable to express a valid opinion with regard to what had taken place during the preceding ten years; Mayor Elias M. Freij was in a better position to do this than he was". Mayor Freij denied that the situation had deteriorated; he went so far as to state emphatically that it had improved, and that it was basically sound. He nevertheless wished to see it further improved and also hoped that it would soon be possible to resolve the problem of finding subsequent employment for the University's graduates. The Mayor expressed his wish that the teaching system in the West Bank universities should be widened and improved (particularly with regard to economic resources, teaching equipment, etc.), and should gain support from other countries, since that which the Arab world is able to offer is truly insufficient. In conclusion, Mayor Elias M. Freij suggested the possibility of setting up a bank of international co-operation to promote the cultural aims of the West Bank.

2.3.2 Evaluation of this Centre

(a) Our comments on the Islamic University of Hébron are also applicable here. The fact that Bethlehem University was founded after 1967 makes it even more of a positive achievement.



This part of the report is complete.

Although we have no information concerning the economic support offered by the Israeli Government, it is clear that it puts no obstacles in the way either of the foundation or of the development of this University.

(b) The fact of "non-discrimination in religious matters" also seems undeniably positive, as does the fact that the University is open to all students from the West Bank.

(c) For all these reasons, and particularly to ensure the highest degree possible of educational neutrality (in religious matters) of this Centre and the help it gives towards the "Arab cultural identity", it is most urgent that its qualifications should be fully recognized by the other universities in the Arab world, and also that it should receive a generous economic subsidy from these States, from ALECSO, from UERWA and from Unesco.

(d) Following this particular line of thought, it is important that we should have the confirmation of what Dr. Mohamed Morsi Ahmed, Secretary-General of the Association of Arab Universities, told us specifically during our interview with him in Cairo on 5 March 1978 (cf. above).

In reply to our questions, Dr. Morsi had in fact maintained that recently (that is to say after our visit to the occupied territories in December 1977) the Association had recognized, or awarded "parity" to the Arab universities in the West Bank. (In my own notes this point is quite clear as far as Bir-Zeit and Hébron are concerned. I am not so certain about the status of Bethlehem University, but after what Brother Loewenstein told us during our meeting on 5 December in Bethlehem - that the negotiations with the Association of Arab Universities were well under way - I am prepared to interpret the facts in an affirmative manner.)

(e) On the other side of the scale, however, one is obliged to query the negative attitude that the Arab Governments appear to have against the Bethlehem University and its fidelity to the "Arab cultural identity", particularly taking into account the nature of its foundation, the background of its professors and - above all - the absence in the curriculum of any "Islamic" formative subjects, due precisely to its religious neutrality.

It is nevertheless evident that these difficulties could be overcome with the goodwill of the Board of Advisors and the de La Salle Order; and also by the opening of a faculty of "Islamic studies".

It is furthermore essential that the University should be guaranteed total autonomy with regard to the choice of their professors, the importations of texts, the freedom of teaching and of cultural expansion.

2.4 Bir-Zeit University

In order to be truly objective, I am obliged to point out that one of the greatest problems faced by the Mission - perhaps the "black spot" - was obtaining sufficient and accurate information about the University Centre at Bir-Zeit which is, without any doubt, the most important in the West Bank and that which has the greatest social and political significance for the Arab population of the whole of this region and for the Palestinian organizations abroad.



This is what explains the passive but determined resistance on the part of the Israeli authorities against including a visit to this University in the "official programme" of our tour: We pressed for this opportunity repeatedly, but all we managed to obtain, by way of a substitute, was a conversation held between our Group and the Vice-President of the University, Professor Bari Garanki (who is fulfilling the functions of President or Rector of the Centre since the real President, Professor Hanna Nasir, was deported by the Israeli authorities in November 1974; since when he has been working at the University of Amman).

The conversation with Professor Bari Garanki took place on 6 December 1977, at the Hotel Moriah in Jerusalem, where we were staying. The discussion covered many subjects, during which Professor Bari Garanki showed true sincerity and great moral integrity, by speaking to us with unflinching serenity and clarity in spite of the presence of several military and civilian officials, who accompanied us persistently and who were extremely attentive to all that was being said.

This valuable conversation (together with further meetings we had with Professor Bari Garanki and which I will discuss later) enabled us to appreciate the importance of the University Centre at Bir-Zeit, as well as the dangerous "revolutionary" character which the Israeli occupation authorities accuse it of having. It was precisely this "revolutionary" character which caused the authorities to attempt to prevent our visiting Bir-Zeit, because the Israeli Government felt obliged to be responsible for our security.

2.4.1 Characteristics of Bir-Zeit University

The oral and written information which we were able to collect (cf. mainly the brochure entitled "Bir-Zeit University, Brief Information", October 1977; and a confidential Fundação Cuidar o Futuro dated December 1977, which we were given later) enable us to point out the main features of this University:

- (a) this University is a private foundation of an autonomous character, situated about 15 miles to the north of Jerusalem, very near the town of Ramallah, that is to say in the West Bank occupied by Israel;
- (b) the origins of the University go back to a secondary school founded in 1924 by Nabiha Nasir, specially dedicated to women who wished to devote themselves to the well-being and education of their people. In 1961 it became a "Junior College" and in 1972 a programme consisting of four courses was started with a view to awarding "Bachelors Degrees"; the graduate programme, however, did not start until October 1977;
- (c) the University follows a coeducation regime with 827 students, of whom one-third are women; applications for admission are increasing day by day. This is why the building of a new campus, large enough to accommodate approximately 4,000 students, has been started;
- (d) the University is divided into two Faculties (each with a series of specialized courses: the Faculty of Arts (Arabic, Anthropology, Archaeology, Business Administration, Cultural Studies, Drama, Economics, Education, English, French, History, Journalism, Library, Music, Philosophy, Physical Education, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Middle East Studies) and the Faculty of Sciences (Biology and Biochemistry, Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics);



the Governing Council of the University is aware of the need of completing these departments with others devoted to civil engineering, pharmacy, medicine and agriculture. The first need, however, is to finish the new campus, which was begun in 1976;

- (e) apart from encouraging these subjects, and in spite of many difficulties, the University is endeavouring to fulfil a programme of cultural expansion, and in order to achieve this the University keeps in touch with the schoolteachers in the entire zone, offering them a programme of humanities. The University has also started up a Community Work Programme: the University students devote 120 hours to work of social interest in the country and in the towns (road repairing, preparation of school playing-fields, etc.);
- (f) the University is open not only to students from the West Bank, but also to those from other regions of Palestine who wish to enrol; there are even some non-Arab students;
- (g) its fundamental aim (as is expressed in the pamphlet quoted above) is the following:
- "The basic philosophy of the University is to prepare the young men and women of the country for responsible leadership and useful citizenship in their community. It encourages students to achieve academic excellence and aims to develop in them a sense of social awareness and a co-operative spirit. As a Palestinian institution, Bir-Zeit is also keen on preserving the Palestinian heritage and promoting its appreciation";
- (h) the financing of the University is ensured by great efforts on the part of the Palestinian population. It has even proved possible to set up a Student Scholarship Fund;
- the University is completely non-profit-making. Twenty-five per cent of its budget is covered by students' entrance fees; the rest being provided by private donations given by old students, and foreign aid organizations particularly from the Arab world;
- (i) the University is governed by an autonomous Board of Trustees, consisting of professors and professional people belonging to the Palestinian community;
- (j) the University of Bir-Zeit is fully recognized. It is a member of the International Association of Universities and of the Association of Arab Universities (this important fact is mentioned in the University's own pamphlets, and furthermore it was explicitly confirmed by Dr. Mohamed Mersi Ahmed, Secretary-General of the Association of Arab Universities, during our visit to Cairo on 6 March 1978).

2.4.2 Evaluation of this Centre

- (a) The very existence and structure of Bir-Zeit University can be considered as a very positive fact in itself, and also by comparison with the Universities of Hébron, Bethlehem and Nablus.



In Arab circles both inside the country and abroad, this University is considered to be the one with the greatest influence and future, not only from the scientific but also from the cultural and political points of view.

It must, therefore, be admitted that its inception and its development as a true University took place after 1967, that is to say under the regime of military occupation of the West Bank.

(b) However, in order to be truly impartial, the difficulties of various kinds which Bir-Zeit University is obliged to contend with must be emphasized.

First, the insufficiency of economic means is a grave problem, since the construction of the new campus should be speeded up as much as possible to allow the setting-up of the new scientific and technical faculties which are so necessary for the Palestinian population. The number of grants and scholarships for studies and research should also be increased.

Secondly, it is absolutely indispensable that the "Open Bridges" policy should be made more flexible, in order to ease contact between Bir-Zeit University, Amman University and other universities in the Arab world or elsewhere, in order that the university students from the West Bank be enabled to complete their studies or specialize in subjects that are not yet included in the Bir-Zeit University programmes.

It is particularly important that students from Bir-Zeit who go to Jordan or other places in order to specialize, specially in scientific or technical subjects, should have no obstacles put in their way when they wish to return to Palestine in order to practise their chosen profession.

(c) The complaints and accusations, which we heard from a number of sources, about the violation of the human rights of professors and students at Bir-Zeit University, should be carefully examined (see Annex 1).

(d) During our conversation with the Vice-President of Bir-Zeit University (6 December 1977), some of the civilian and military officials who were present listening to the respectful, while explicit, remarks made by the Vice-President, interrupted more than once to explain that during a period of military occupation such as that in the West Bank, it is impossible to avoid certain unfortunate occurrences due to the tensions which arise, particularly in the zones of Ramallah and Bir-Zeit, where there are public riots and demonstrations against the Israeli authorities. They also pointed out that the Israeli Government would be able to help the University economically, facilitate the recruitment of foreign professors and take other similar measures, if Bir-Zeit University itself took a more co-operative attitude.

(e) Finally it seems only fair to add that during our contacts (those not included in the programme) with people linked with Bir-Zeit University, we were able to collect several pamphlets of monographic studies edited by the Press Section of Bir-Zeit University (apart from the informative notes already mentioned). These pamphlets included: "Contemporary Palestinian Literature under Occupation" by Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi, Department of English, Bir-Zeit University; "Survival Strategies of Arabs in Israel", by Sharif Kanaana, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Bir-Zeit University; "Israeli Violations of Human Rights" by Hanna Nasir, President of Bir-Zeit University. (I am including copies of the two most important pamphlets with regard to our report as Annexes 2 and 3).



The fact that the University is able to publish and distribute works of this kind is a detail which must be looked at objectively, even though it does not sufficiently compensate for the difficulties and problems that we have mentioned.

2.5 Centre of Higher Education in Nablus (Nayajs)

(a) I only have a very summary amount of information concerning the founding of a university centre in this town in Samaria.

I should like to explain that the "official programme" for Sunday, 4 December, did not include the visit to a centre of this kind. The notes that I took only make mention of our visit to a "school for vocational training" founded in 1961, and to another centre for vocational training that we visited in great haste. We then had the opportunity of a conversation held with a Cadi of the region, a highly intelligent man who gave us a very flexible interpretation of the Koran and of the traditions of religious teaching.

The Ministry of Defence for Israel dossier which has already been quoted several times (cf. page 29 and Appendix No.7) makes no reference at all to this Higher Centre at Nablus; it only mentions the Islamic College at Hébron, Bir-Zeit University and Bethlehem University.

(b) However, as I indicated in my notebook concerning our Mission, Professor Bari Garamki, Vice-President of Bir-Zeit University did tell us (during our meeting of 6 December) that a course of higher education had just been started in a new centre of university character in Nablus (academic year 1977/1978). He was also of the opinion that the Centre would obtain recognition by the Association of Arab Universities.

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ANNEX IV

by Jacqueline HENIN

Report to the Director-General of Unesco on multi-purpose centres for research and creative work, cultural radio and television programmes, publications, festivals and exhibitions and school textbooks and libraries in the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967

INTRODUCTION

Our mission to the Arab territories occupied by Israel was, according to the instructions of the Director-General of Unesco, to collect on-the-spot information on the educational situation and on conditions of cultural life. I shall therefore attempt, first of all, to say what Unesco's own views are in this respect, following the definition given by the Director-General at the Nairobi Conference.

Having emphasized the close connection between the past and the present, the Director-General stressed the urgent need for "the preservation and promotion of authentic cultural values and ... the necessary affirmation of a specific cultural identity which is at the same time open and dynamic". The affirmation of cultural identity is necessary because "the criterion of all genuine development is that it should be qualitative and no longer merely quantitative".

That cultural identity, which is so highly prized by the Arabs in general, and by the Palestinians in particular, in the case which concerns us, found brilliant expression from the second century of the Hegira until the Dark Ages (from the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries) in the Arab Muslim countries. I am thinking in particular of the golden age of the Abbassid centuries. At that time, Arab culture was the product of a symbiosis of several interrelated civilizations, with the Persian civilization predominant, and it was, indeed, open and dynamic since it enabled the Greco-Latin scientific heritage to advance and develop. In our own age, since the "Nahda" Renaissance of the nineteenth century, Arab culture has been broadly receptive to European influences, at the same time recovering its own distinctiveness as it has drawn away from its early European models; it has rediscovered its cultural heritage, somewhat fallen into neglect during the Turkish supremacy.

At present there is thus a single Arab culture, shared by all the Arab peoples, and there are cultural identities which are the product of that culture and of the character of each individual country.

I was asked, as an Arabist, to test the cultural content of various activities, both in education and in various forms of self-expression.

When speaking of the operations to be given priority by the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture, the Director-General included the following among the sectors worthy of interest:

- multi-purpose centres for research and creative work;
- cultural radio and television programmes;
- publications
- festivals and exhibitions.



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I shall therefore keep to this order in my account and shall attempt, rapidly and to the extent that I am in possession of the relevant information, or, on occasion, according to the impressions I formed during the ten days I spent in the occupied territories, to review these various aspects of cultural life, which are, indeed, the expression of a country's cultural potential.

I. Multi-purpose centres for research and creative work

They could theoretically exist, in occupied territories, chiefly in the form of theatres, cinemas showing art films and experimental films, cultural clubs or youth and arts centres, accommodating amateur or professional troupes and young people looking for cultural stimulus.

According to the Syrian Ministry of Education, there were many cultural establishments in the Golan Heights before 1967 (including a cultural centre) which received State subventions.

They were all closed down after 1967.

The Egyptian Government and the Jordanian Government stated that youth clubs and arts centres also existed in the Gaza Strip and on the West Bank. However, we did not receive any list of these establishments.

During our visit to the occupied territories, we did not on any occasion visit arts centres and it seemed that, apart from community centres (as in Sinai, for example), which are centres for social work, the Israeli authorities do not permit the establishment or reopening of arts centres or cultural clubs, which are too readily considered to be hotbeds of rebellion.

Nor did we hear of any municipal Arab theatre where plays by contemporary Palestinian or Arab authors from other regions might be acted, or where local folk groups could organize performances.

Yet in Jerusalem there is a magnificent building where magnificent concerts are given and where a variety of cultural events take place, but apparently it is mainly for the use of the Israeli population and the emphasis is on Judeo-European culture. It seems that there is no similar building, even on a modest scale, for Arab culture in the occupied territories.

II. Cultural radio and television programmes

In this field a certain effort seems to have been made by the Israeli authorities. It is possible to listen to radio broadcasts in Arabic for 16 hours a day, and one of the television channels devotes six hours to programmes in Arabic. The programmes are quite varied and attract large audiences, even in Jordan. We were told of a highly successful programme, "The Doctor at your Service", which found listeners as far away as Saudi Arabia. Here we find, once again, the Israeli's concern to boost education in hygiene and civics, which sometimes seems destined to supplant cultural activities.

The political news on the radio has an obvious Israeli slant and is fairly brief. After the news bulletin, an announcer makes daily comments which are, in some sort, the echo of the voice of the Israeli Government. There are some strictly religious broadcasts, such as recitations from the Koran or a commentary on verses or Hadiths (sayings of the Prophet), and there are a few cultural broadcasts, e.g. accounts of the current literary scene, but, since I did not have an opportunity to listen to this type of broadcast, I cannot comment.



Radio and television are the only area which is in touch with the Arab world, since one can tune in to the radio stations of neighbouring countries and watch Jordanian television.

III. Publications

I shall deal primarily with newspapers, magazines and books. Newspapers in Arabic (four in all) are entirely confined to local papers. Some are openly opposed to the Government and to the occupying forces. In my opinion, however, these are rather weak vehicles of information since their presentation is uninspired and their material resources visibly limited (few pages and newsprint frequently smudgy).

Apart from Arabic newspapers, many foreign newspapers expressing various currents of opinion are on sale.

As far as other publications, i.e. magazines and books, are concerned, there is no local magazine worthy of the name. There was one in the past, which, I was told, had to cease publication owing to lack of funds.

A few novels and publications of various kinds are published in Jerusalem. I was able to obtain "As Subbar", the novel written by a young Palestinian woman and published in Jerusalem, which has also been translated into French as "Le Cactus" and published by Gallimard. This is a fairly violent diatribe against the Israeli occupation and daily life in the occupied territories. This is not the least of the paradoxes of Israeli censorship, which prohibits works dealing with the cultural heritage or innocuous publications while allowing a number of committed works to be printed in which the Palestinian voice of the occupied territories can be heard loud and clear. However, it should be pointed out that the latter constitute a small proportion of published works compared with all the manuscripts which are confiscated locally.

Arabic bookshops in Jerusalem are rather a sorry sight. There are not many recent publications, a few classical and religious books, some crime fiction, a few modern Egyptian novels and virtually no works by Palestinians (especially not by those in exile).

Any publication from outside, whether magazine or book, is systematically examined by the censors and must remain for at least a fortnight on their premises before its fate is decided. Books and journals reach the occupied territories either via commercial agencies, or through educational bodies in the case of books for schoolchildren and students.

Censorship allows only a few magazines to find their way into the occupied territories. The magazines on sale include a magazine on popular medicine (Tabibouka), two or three illustrated magazines dealing with current events but mainly concerning the cinema and trivial topics (Achhabaka, for example), a children's comic (Mickey), a sports magazine ("Stars of Sport", "Noujoum Ar Riyada") and the "Al Arabi" magazine from Kuwait. All these magazines arrive late and in limited quantities.

Arabic books which pass the censor are often of doubtful value, e.g. a great many crime novels, popular science books (similar to the Marabout practical series) and a few purely religious works (N.B. however, in the Gaza Strip, 400 copies of the Koran have been prohibited).



Very large numbers of books are, on the other hand, rejected by the censor. The Jordanian Ministry of Education provided me with a long list of these, and the Bir-Zeit College gave me another. I also had an opportunity to examine 20 or so books, dispatched by the Syrian Government, which had been rejected outright. A detailed study of censored books would be interesting but it could not be included in this preliminary report. However, in an effort to draw some conclusions, it might be said that, whether by systematic ill will or by a mistaken assessment of the value and content of certain works, the censorship manages to reject works of fundamental importance to the Arab cultural heritage (poets and prose writers of the second and third centuries of the Hegira, for example), to ban the works of Arab poets of the early twentieth century (I am thinking of the great poet Chawqi among others) on the grounds that they constitute incitations to violence, and to reject books concerned with world culture (I am thinking of a book on Paul Cézanne) on the pretext that they come from Syria or that they contain brief comments on events which took place in Palestine or the Middle East.

One sentence is sometimes enough to condemn out of hand a book of obvious importance.

IV. Festivals and exhibitions

These require the prior authorization of the military authorities and are sometimes forbidden at the last minute even when an authorization has been obtained.

Folklore is also censored for security reasons invoked by the Israeli authorities. In addition, we were informed that Israeli folklore groups playing in Europe "pirate" Palestinian music and songs. These groups seem to attribute Palestinian folklore to Israel. Similar acts of "piracy" have also been exposed in the literary field. It is alleged that Arab works are being reprinted in Israel under the names of Israeli authors.

There are a few exhibitions of paintings. I was informed that a painting entitled: "The bride of the future", representing a young Palestinian girl killed during a demonstration, had been confiscated and withdrawn from an exhibition.

Censorship therefore seems to be carried out in all fields of culture.

V. Education - textbooks

Many very detailed reports have been written on the content of textbooks and the modifications made to them. In particular, there is a report by ALECSO dated 1975, a report by the Jordanian Ministry of Education and a report by the PLC.

It appears in this connection that the Israeli Censorship Commission usually proceeds by elision and sometimes by the deletion of whole paragraphs; this naturally weakens the chapters involved and makes them colourless.

The main areas in which censorship is applied are literature, history and geography and religious matters.

In literature, books are made insipid by the deletion of all patriotic poetry or prose or allusions to sacrifice for the country. Pre-Islamic poets are not spared any more than contemporary poets. In addition, much use is made of summary notes either to replace certain works which have been permanently banned or to make up for delays in the reprinting of books imported from the Arab countries. In all these books, the indication of the place of origin (Jordanian Ministry of Education, for example) is also replaced by "West Bank Military Command" in Hebrew and then in Arabic.



As regards history and geography, the problems are obvious. One finds incomplete maps, biased views towards events relating to the region or to the neighbouring Arab countries, and the almost systematic replacement of "Palestine" by "Israel".

The delay in the reprinting of textbooks (due to the delay required by censorship) sometimes leads to anachronisms. For example, in a geography textbook intended for the sixth year of primary education, printed in June 1977, I noticed a chapter entitled "The Kingdom of Libya" (pp. 56 to 60).

Among the complaints about religious instruction textbooks contained in the various reports submitted by the Arab countries, I found the deletion of the concept of Jihad or "Holy War" and of "martyrs" for noble causes mentioned most frequently. The only textbook on religious instruction which the Israeli authorities found for me, "At tarbiyya al Islamiyya", intended for the third year of secondary school, escapes this criticism since it contains two chapters clearly describing:

- (1) The concept of Jihad and the verses of the Koran relating to it.
- (2) The duties of the Muslim State towards the families and children of servicemen killed for the just cause of Jihad (pp.259 to 265).

CONCLUSION

In concluding this report, which is not very systematic but consists mainly of a list of ideas and impressions, I should like to deal with a problem which lies at the heart of everything which has been said. This is censorship.

After 1967, the Israeli authorities appointed a Censorship Commission, with headquarters in Jerusalem, whose task it is to prevent the circulation of all written material likely to spread hatred against Israel.

Apart from this vague indication, we have been unable to discover precisely:

- (i) on what specific criteria publications were accepted or refused;
- (ii) how the Commission works and how often it meets;
- (iii) the composition of this Commission and the standard of knowledge of the Arabic language and civilization of each of the censors whose task it is to decide whether a given work shall be published or withdrawn once and for all.

All these details would have been very useful to us since as I have already said, on examining the lists of prohibited works or batches of books refused at the frontier, one is often struck by the inconsistency or the lack of scientific accuracy underlying the choice.

We several times and with insistence asked to meet a member of the Censorship Commission in Jerusalem but we waited in vain. An appointment was made and then cancelled at the last minute on the grounds that the censor whom we were to meet was ill.

The censorship at present practised restricts the prospects of young Palestinians in the occupied territories by giving them a distorted image of their cultural heritage and making it impossible for them to have any access to the Arab world of today or the contemporary world in general.



It may in this way be running counter to the aims it has set itself, since it is well-known that forbidden fruit is much more sought-after and desirable.

Palestinian literature as a whole is also prohibited, for security reasons, and this does serious harm to the Palestinian cultural identity.

A more realistic and positive method of censorship, in the present circumstances, might be envisaged thus:

- I. The Commission might review the lists of prohibited works and adopt a less restricted attitude to many works belonging to the Arab cultural heritage and to many books of general culture which do not always constitute incitations to violence.
- II. The sets of books sent by the Arab countries, which would be of such service to pupils and students, could be examined in detail instead of being returned outright. The libraries in some secondary schools might then perhaps seem less empty (I am thinking of some schools visited in the Golan, for example).

If the Israeli censorship does not make any effort in this direction, it will continue to give the impression either of wishing to commit cultural aggression against the populations of the occupied territories or of dismally failing to understand, and even of underestimating, the Arabic in language and culture.

In either case the consequences could sooner or later be very serious.

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