

## **Living in a Walled City: The Ethnographic Case Study of Palestinian Christians in Bethlehem and Beit Jala**

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Consequent to the disorders and violence of the *Second Intifada* ignited by Ariel Sharon's walk on Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif on September 28, 2000, the separation between Israeli and Palestinians became overt through the construction of the renowned "security fence" or Wall. The barrier's total length has been planned to run for approximately 712 kilometers. Herein, I address the 15 kilometers-long segment surrounding the Bethlehem Governorate, which represents one of the locations where this barrier appears as an eight-meter-high concrete Wall. Particularly, I analyze the agency that this Wall, considered in terms of an assemblage of human and nonhuman actants, exercises on the Christian ethno-religious minority. Starting from an account of their experiences of living in a Walled city, I wish to paint a picture of how the Wall's physical presence affects their freedom of worship, their relationship with the communities dwelling in Israel, and their connectedness with the Holy Land's landscapes. Furthermore, I intend to analyze three different cases in which the Wall's presence is contested, namely the cases of the Wall Museum in the Rachel's Tomb Area, the Weekly prayer of the Rosary near Checkpoint 300, and the legal and religious battle for the Cremisan Valley.