

Voices Through Walls: How Walls Undermine Human Rights, Humanity, Public Health, and Peace

**Children's Environmental Health
Working Group Collaborative on Health
and the Environment- WA (CHE-WA)
October 8, 2015**



**Steven G. Gilbert & Sahera R. Bleibleh
(sgilbert@innd.org & sahera.bleibleh@uaeu.ac.ae)**



WALLS

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I
come from there
and remember,
I was born like
everyone is born, I
have a mother
and a house with
many windows,
I have brothers,
friends and a prison.
I have a wave that
sea quite installed away.
I have a view of my
own and an extra
blade of grass.
I have a moon past the
peak of words.
I have the godsent food of
words and an olive tree beyond the level of time.
I have traversed the land before
swords turned bodies into banquets.
I come from there,
I return the sky to its mother when for
its mother the sky cries,
and I weep for a returning
cloud to know me.
I have learned the words
of blood-stained courts in
order to break the rules.
I have learned
and dismantled all
the words
to construct
a single one:
**H
O
M
E**

I AM THERE
MAHMOUD DARWISH



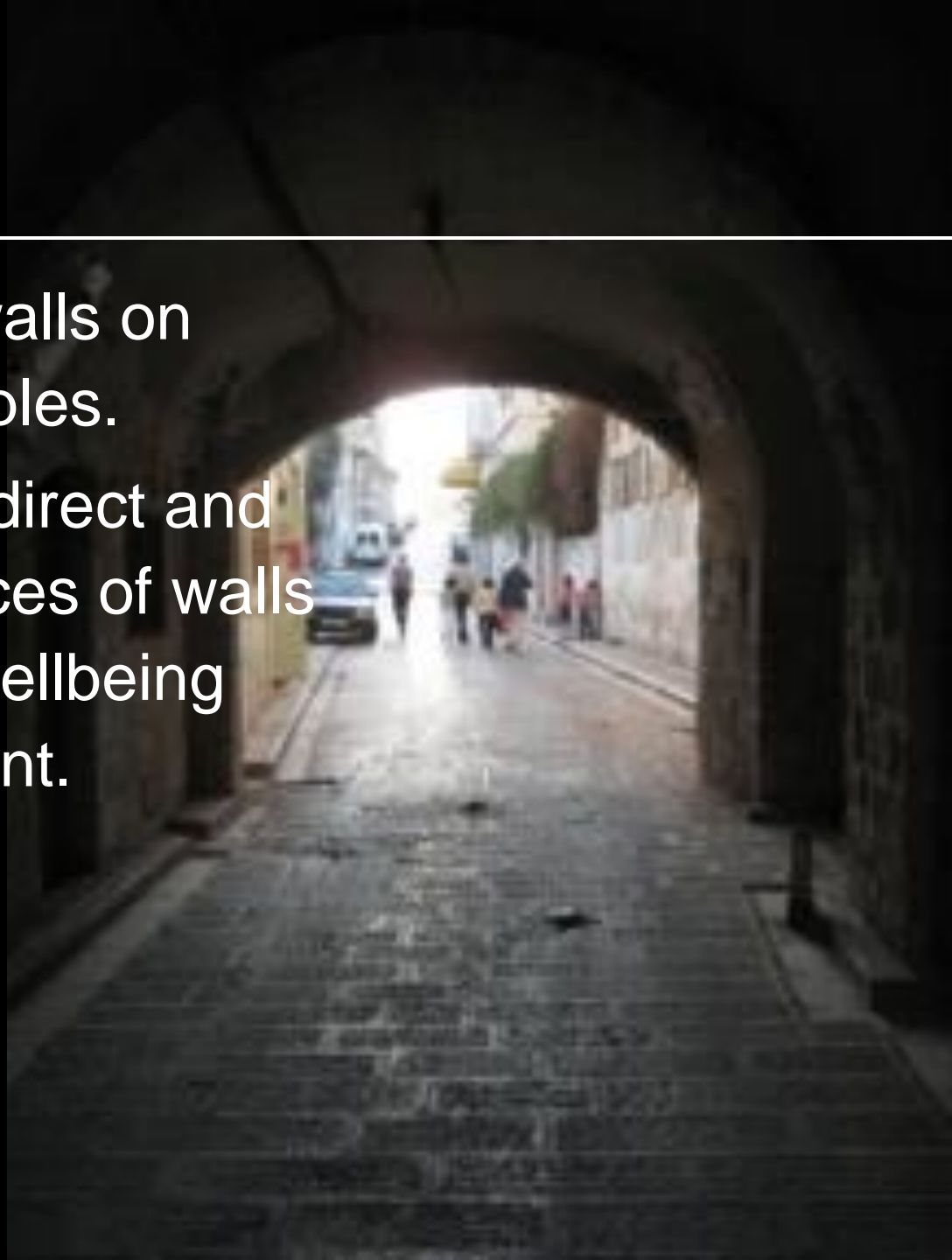
WALLS

WALLS



Objectives

- Consequences of walls on human rights principles.
- Study and analyze direct and indirect consequences of walls on human health, wellbeing and built environment.



Great Wall of China



History

Started: 7th century BC

Length: 8,850 km

(5,500 mi)

Protection / define
boarders – did it work?
What was the cost?

Jerusalem – Walls & Gates



History

Started: 11th century
BCE

Area: 0.9 square
kilometers (0.35 sq mi)
walled area

Protection / dominance /
control – The gates /
access most important.
Now the wall serves little
purpose.

Mexico – U.S. Walls



History

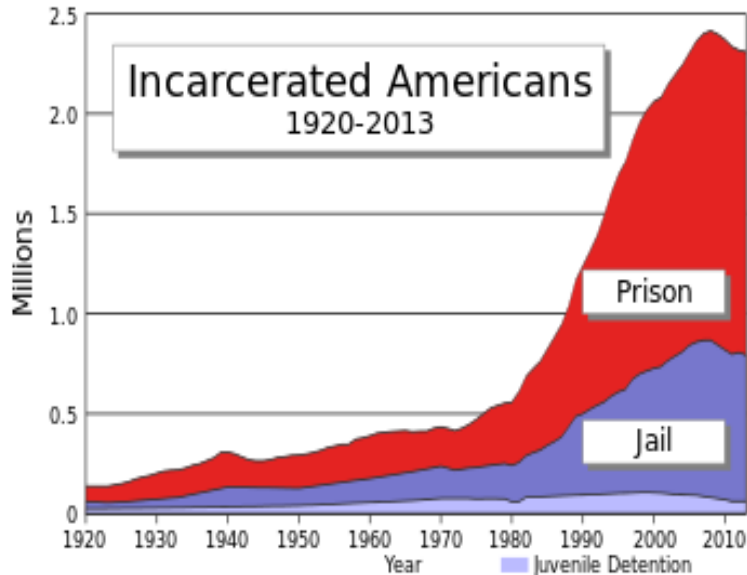
Called: separation barrier

Boarder: 1,951-mile (3,141 km) border

Current: 344.3 miles (554.1 km) of fence

Control / displacement / On going damage - human & ecological consequence. Has it worked ?

Prisons – U.S. Made Walls



San Quentin, CA

History to Current

- US has the world's largest prison population of over 2 million incarcerated about 1% of the population
- US spends \$74 billion on confinement and correction issues
- Post prison more barriers to integration into society
- Racial disparity
- Public health consequences – 1 million black kids no father

Palestine – Israel



History

Called: separation barrier

Target: 430 -mile
(700km)

Height: 26 ft (8 m)

Exclusion area: 200 ft (60
m)

We like Walls - physical or virtual

Walls :

- Make our homes
- Make our class rooms
- Make our work place
- Allow us to drive and fly
- Walls in our control

Purpose / Consequences of Walls/physical or virtual

Walls are:

- Built to separate not protect
- Silence voices / stories we are missing
- Stifle / separate people
- Physical and mental
- Intolerance / racism / prejudice
- Stop learning
- Promote misunderstandings and rejection
- Electronic walls
- On the sea block fishing
- Block access to jobs / to medical supplies / to education / relatives / friends ... etc.

Walls in Perspective

- Military vs private walls – there is a big difference
- Military – defensive, offensive, keeping people, culture separate

Purpose / Consequences of Walls

- Well being & Public health
- Environment & Ecosystem
- Space/home/walking through walls
- Transportation and movement

Well being & Public health

- Socializing
- PTSD
- Hospital/medical supply
- Medical care
- Education/library
- Training
- Food/water
- Child development
- Nutrition-Iron
- Degradation of humanity
- Spirit
- Family and Friends

Environment & Ecosystem

- Drinking water
- Waste water
- Pesticide
- Energy
- Lead
- Gasoline
- Garbage and litter, plastic bags
- Electricity
- Sewage
- Soil
- Air

Space/home/walking through walls

- Displacement
- Demolition
- Buildings
- Construction materials
- Public space
- Buffer zone
- Confiscation /property
- Clothing
- Spirit

Transportation and movement

- Infrastructure/roads/borders
- Technology
- Maintenance and supply
- Limited market exchange
- Economic strangulation
- Censorship
- Social media
- Security measures

Ethics and Walls

- Consent vs no consent
- Ability to move past wall – home / class room vs prison – who controls access
- Human rights
- Public / child health (who is most vulnerable ?)
- Well being

Into and Out of Gaza

Walls Intimidating



Wall West Bank



When a child has no place to play..



Walking Through Walls



Destruction – Cast Lead



Lack of Opportunities: Child laborer



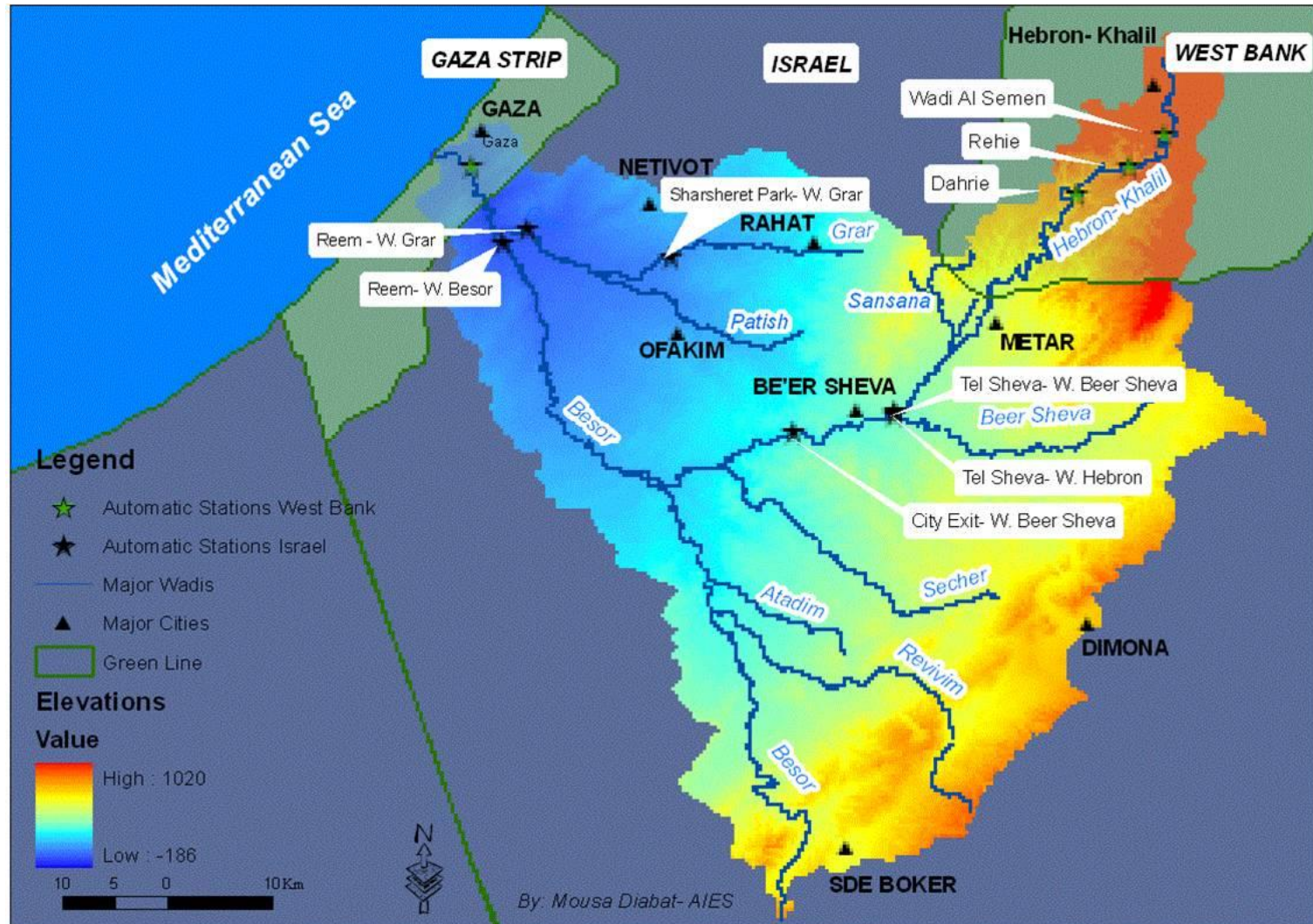
Concrete Salvage



Wadi Gaza

- Wadi Gaza is a wetland south of Gaza City
- 60 to 80 million litres of raw sewage from Gaza's Middle Governorate pumped through it daily
- No wastewater treatment in the whole of the Wadi Gaza area

Wadi Gaza Source



Sanitation



Wadi Gaza River



01.19.2011

Wadi Gaza River



Sewage Treatment



Lead Batteries



Leaded Gas



Berlin Wall

“We welcome change and openness; for we believe that freedom and security go together, that the advance of human liberty can only strengthen the cause of world peace. There is one sign the Soviets can make that would be unmistakable, that would advance dramatically the cause of freedom and peace. General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization, come here to this gate. Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate. Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!”

Speech at the Brandenburg Gate on June 12, 1987, U.S. President Ronald Reagan challenged Mikhail Gorbachev



Are walls a form of genocide ?

Lemkin (1944) defined genocide as follows:

Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be the disintegration of the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups.

Pope Francis (Sept. 2015)

- Asked about barriers being put up in Europe to stop the influx of migrants, the pope said: "All walls collapse, today, tomorrow or after 100 years, but they will collapse. Walls are not a solution."
- He said that while it was true that Europe was struggling in the face of a refugee crisis, the solution had to be found through dialogue. "Barriers last a short time or a long time, but the problem remains and with it, more hatred."

“There is a crack in everything.
That's how the light gets in.” — Leonard Cohen



References

Bleibleh, S. (February 11, 2014). Walking Through Walls: The Invisible War. *Space and Culture*.

List of walls – Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_walls
www.voicesthroughwalls.org