

# The Legal Protection for the Names of the Cities and Other Places "Changing the Names of the Places in Palestine as an Example"

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## Abstract

Despite its importance for the archeology and history especially in the prehistory studies, the issue of the legal protection for cities names and other places was not previously treated in the general international law. This issue could be deal under the concept of the cultural properties protection, thus it demands a legal protection in the wars time and peacetime also. In addition, it demands adapting clear legislations to be added to the international conventions imposing protecting the names of cities, towns, and other places and territories from changing and/ or omission.

## Introduction

This study has two sides; the first one is discussing the possibility of saying that there is legal protection for the names of cities, other places, and geographical locations in the declared international conventions and bills. Either in the peace times or in the armed conflicts, which assumed to be existed, but still insufficient to cover the whole issue as it is in fact.

What is happening in Palestine is an obvious example to the failure of the protection, leaving it facing its fate with a force supported with money, armament, and politics, which confiscates lands, builds colonies, robs the antiques and ruins villages. And then, gives the control to "the governmental names committee", in order to erase all the remaining historical marks for the right which the Arabic Palestinian population holds and found in the Arabic or historic names away from the "Torah", and its unscientific allegations that was disproved by a lot of researches in archeology and other fields.

The second side is discussing practical suggestions that can be adopted by the UNESCO in order to give every thing its original name, through an international convention assures that the names of cities and other geographical and historical places are cultural properties which is important for the human heritage and gives it the needed protection. This gives the powerless countries a legal instrument to maintain the names that they have for hundreds or thousands of years. for example; in Palestine or other countries where occupation, changing the system, or adopting a new ideology could be a motive for canceling names that are thousand years old ad considered as historical marks and replace it with new ones.

### 1) The importance of the names of the cities and other places.

The importance of these names is identified in Article 1 of Paris convention on the means of prohibiting and preventing the illicit import, export and transfer of cultural property- 1970, as to which extent they can be considered important for the archeology, history or prehistory, arts, or science. Therefore, in order to consider the names of the cities and other places as important, it is enough to prove that it is important in any of the aforementioned fields, even if the reasons for which the countries are considering them important are either secular or religious (article 1 Paris convention 1970). In the archeology field, the archeologist has to connect between what is being discovered of antiques and the assumed history of a nation or a civilization, so he can't ignore the existence of some names related to a nation's language. For example, W.F. Albright, the known Biblical archaeologist in his theories or allegations, leans on the proper names mentioned in Torah to connect them to some of the Amoraic names mentioned in the written documents of the second millennium before Christ, in order to determine the time period of the Genesis. When the findings become rare, connecting between the names and these findings helps explaining some aspects. For example, no link can be made between the names mentioned in the Torah and the names of the places in China or Japan, because this will not be logical, but it becomes more difficult when we know that these names are similar to the names of other places in Saudi Arabia and neighboring countries, and might be more.

In this case, the researchers needs any available source to prove his theory, either in the language, in the name itself and its content, or even in the written stories and myths and in other tools that help in the scientific knowledge.

In his study about the names of the cities in Syria and neighboring countries, Jones explained that a lot of

these cities after changing their names by the Romans and Greeks for more than 800 years, gained back their original Arabic and Aramaic names directly after the Islamic conquests. Example for that “Akkā” which was known as “Batlemos” and “Hama” which was known as “Abvania” etc, (Jones 1971). Moreover, this concludes that the persistence of the ancient names proves that some of the cities, which are not mentioned in the old references, existed before the classic period “Greeks and Romans” (Jones 1971).

Concerning history and prehistory, as much the researchers studied prehistory more thoroughly, their resources becomes less and less, until they find themselves looking for any reference to lean on, in either archeology, geology, anthropology, or ethnology, etc.

For example, a lot of researchers leaned on the so called “Mejiddo” list (from the Pharaoh Tuthmōsis III time (1450-1504 B.C.), which was engraved on the towers of Amon temple in al Karnak (Egypt), containing the names of places, which was occupied by the Pharaoh in his military campaign). To compare them with the names mentioned in the Torah, in order to correct and review the history of Syria, through comparing lingual consistency to the antiques found in the area (Abu Taleb 2006: 25-46).

The name is considered as a term or a word, and the language is produced by a group of human beings during their evolution to express their culture, identity, and the level of skills and knowledge they have, so the language is completely linked to a “cultural system” which expresses and incorporates it and vice versa (al-Rubay’ii 2002). In addition, each word has a meaning, which could be religious/ ideological, economical, or political, etc.

For example, the word “Baysān” –which is a Palestinian city-, indicates the belief of the first civilization in there, especially when we know that the second syllable of the word “San” or “Shan” is one of Gods worshiped in that area.

Archeology made great changes in the dominating classical culture concerning the origin of civilization, history, and prehistory which was mostly dependant on the so called the “Biblical archeologists” who wrote the history of Palestine according to what was mentioned in the Torah. There are some of the “Biblical archeologists” in addition to some explorers in Palestine, (who are supported by political, imperial, and ideological institutes), are following the Torah and proving its validity, to wipe out the history of Palestine and replace it with the strange, fabricated history of an “old Israel” (Whitlam 1996). That is to justify forming an imperial body with the name of this fabricated “Israel” in claiming the legal heritage. Nevertheless, this is about to change due to the irrefutable evidences of archeology.

Now, we have new generation which studying the essence and history of the words and semantics, through analyzing the myths and stories (Dawod 1986; Muna 1995; Salibi 1985). This generation know that the ancient communities with their prehistorically mythical behavior, did not keep their history in Jars, vessels, or in engravings on the rocks, but they kept it in the essence of the words (al- Rubay’ii 2002).

This is what we can find in the names in general including the names of the cities and other historic places. We also can find it in the language through more understanding of the history of its vocabularies and concepts in the myths and stories through analyzing them, detecting what is mythical, and what is historical of it.

The importance of the names appears in the fact that the history of the human beings is identified through its relation with the place and time. As human relatively dominated the time through discovering the time (year, season, month, week, day, hour, minute, and etc...), he also dominated the place through naming the places around, that is what made geography not to be an opened space any more, but a materialistic fact formed, because the names which the man gave to the places like: (the; sea, river, mountain, plain, valley etc...), then the name for this mountain or that sea, then a series of the more accurate names that we find in the more populated places over the time, ad those places also witnessed more variation in the cultures settled there (Abdulfattah 1983).

For example, in Palestine where there were more than 826 villages before 1948, there were “at least” 30-40 thousands geographical names (Abdulfattah 1983: 379), these names like all the names in Syria are the result of a deep human heritage and accumulated from a lot of names over the history, the biggest part of it are Arabic names like “Nahr al Muqatta’”, “Nahr al ‘Awjā”, “Jabal al Tūr”, “Tal al Fūl”, “al Tayyibah”, “Umm al Fahm etc”... (Abdulfattah 1983: 379).

Just as the names are important in the science and history, they are also important in the frame of the community life in all aspects; political, economical, and ideological. The biggest indicator of the importance of the names in the political aspect is the conflict in Palestine, which covers all aspects including the names of the cities and historical places.

Regarding the aforementioned aspect, Israel and the Zionism got an advantage from the semi complete domination of the Biblical archaeologists’ of writing the ancient history and the ancient history of Palestine, when there was a great European interest in Palestine and the Arabic region for imperial reason, which made the mandatory power to include the following in the mandatory document in article 21 “within 12 months, the mandatory power will guarantee issuing the law of antiques, and assuring its implementation according to the following rules (then the mandatory document lists 8 rules)”, and this law stipulates the reciprocity regarding

exploring for antiques for all the countries of the League of Nations. And when there was a continuous exploratory expeditions, and according to what these explorers or the so called "historians" had done of transferring their personal preconceptions as theories to the history books, universities, institutes, and schools and then to the culture of the people to be an undoubted fundamental truth, then it penetrates to the Arabic literates, then to the Arabic universities and schools what made us surrounded by them (Abdulfattah 1983, 381). A long time passed before a new generation of researchers either in the west or in Arabic world started reconsidering these fundamentals.

The religious mania made those who are interested in the Torah and bible studies hate to see any thing in Palestine other than the ancient antiques which they gave names to them from the Torah, and they went beyond the possible in making the maps and the atlas giving them names from the Torah, that's how the name "Jodea" became used for Jerusalem mountains, the name "Samaria" was given to Nāblus, the name "Esra'ael" was given to "Marj Bani 'Amer", and "Hebron" was given to "al Khalil" (Abdulfattah 1983: 379).

This mistaken approach in using the Torah names for the Palestinian places gave a wrong view to the west media about the development situation in Palestine in order to attract sympathy and support to Zionism, and then it supported the Zionistic attack against the Aramaic and Arabic names of the Palestinian places (Abdulfattah 1983). And in fact, the Zionism started giving their names to the colonies they established in Palestine since 1878, there is "Mlabbas" takes the name "Beta Tekfa" which means "the door of the hope", and "al Jā' uūnah" takes the name "Rosh Bena" which is a Torah name means "the head of the corner".

## 2) Do the names of the cities and other places fall within the concept of cultural properties?

We have a group of concepts, which are close to each other in meaning and can be considered as cultural properties, and they are the culture that forms the vessel of this concept, the heritage that indicates the chronological space of the concept, and the antiques that considered as the main component of the concept of the cultural properties.

The concept of culture includes "all kinds of recreation and expression used by individuals or groups in their living or artistic activities" (the recommendation of the UNESCO in their general conference in Nairobi 1976 concerning the participation and contribution of the public in the cultural life). Culture in general is every thing the human creates in mind or act, thus, the names that the human gives to every thing around him is considered as the first creations that formed his primary knowledge, accumulating over the ages to make the endless stream of information from where now we gain the elements of our existence.

Because of these names, the geography is no more an absolute space, but it is tangible and defined by the relationships, which the man created in the core of geography. The language, as an original cultural product, participated in formulating the names that proved its cultural presence in the civilization frame which humanity entered after ages in the primitive life.

Then, the names gained an importance that went beyond the language, to history, politics and economy enriching the social life through the subjective identity of the human beings in the communal frame they showed culturally and historically as nations in countries where the culture creates its privilege within the reciprocal relationships; conflict or cooperation.

The concept of heritage can't be separated from culture. The immaterialist cultural heritage includes the names of the places. This could be concluded from the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (Paris 2003), where article 2 defined the "intangible cultural heritage" as: "The practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage". From this text, we notice the following:

First: there is a gesture left by the concept of the intangible Cultural Heritage that allows us to include the names of the cities and other places within the general content of the concept itself.

Second: the names of the cities and the other places can be considered as a kind of expressions or knowledge. Especially if we linked that to the aspects where the intangible cultural heritage is obvious in section 2 of the same article that includes in paragraph (a) "oral traditions and expressions, including language as a way of the intangible cultural heritage"; also, paragraph d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; Regarding the way of creating the intangible cultural heritage, article 2 of Paris convention 2003 advises that "this intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity"

According to the aforementioned, the relationship between the names of the cities and the other places in Palestine and the Arabic identity of Palestine, which Israel is trying eradicate using all the available tools and changing the names of the cities and other places is one of these tools that Israel is using to make changes and replacements in every thing related to the Arabic heritage of Palestine and represent it to the world as it is the national heritage of Israel.

Concerning the antiques, archeological sites, sculpturing, drawing on buildings, engravings, caves, coins,

and ancient instruments (etc...), which are the subject of archeology, where archeology is "the science of detecting the materialist origin of the human culture" (Rezeq 1996: 12) or "the study of the ancient ruins of the human in order to uncover the past cultures and studies, and analyze them to know the behaviors of the human in the past in all aspects; materialist and immaterialist". (Qados 2003: 26). The names of the cities and other places fall under archeology because of its cultural dimension, and what is we find in its wording of ideologies, traditions, behaviors, and movements indicating the civilization value of the place itself and the people lived there.

Concerning the concept of cultural properties found in some documents, it could be approach in two international conventions:

First: Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict- Hague 1954, with Regulations for the Execution of the Convention 1954. The point is that Israeli occupation to Palestine is an international armed conflict according to the common article 2 of the four conventions of Geneva 1949, and article 18 of Hague convention 1954. Which assures that the convention shall applicable "to all cases of partial or total occupation of the territory of a High Contracting Party, even if the said occupation meets with no armed resistance", it is applicable for the occupation of Palestine. The Hague convention 1954 defined the cultural properties as "the term "cultural property" shall cover, irrespective of origin or ownership: (a) the movable or immovable property of the great importance to the cultural heritage of every people...". In lawful language, the cultural properties is the things with the greatest importance for the nations' cultural heritage, and the "things" could be movable or immovable, which has an independent nature from the man either materialist nature like land and buildings or immaterialist like thoughts (etc...). the names of the cities and other places could be added to the group of immaterialist things, which don't belong to a person himself, and no body can assume ownership of them, like the sun which is for everybody to benefit from and no one can say it is his/ her. For example, no body can sue someone else for using his name, because the names are common things, found in languages, reach all people, and nobody can assume ownership of them.

As long as the names don't belong to any body, they also are considered within the concept of "state ownership of territories", the state – or one of its departments - can give names to streets or yards etc... and they change the names of some cities or villages etc... but what they do in this regard is considered as an abuse toward the cultural heritage and the history of their population.

In addition, changing the names of the cities and other places by the occupation forces, is considered as attacking the cultural heritage of the population under occupation, for example, can we imagine that the French population could accept changing the name of Paris by the Nazism, if it was done that time!, the Germans would accept if the Soviet Union changed the name of Perlin in the course of the second world war, as they did with the city of Betrosport and other Soviet cities, which gained back their original names after the Soviet Union collapsed, and also like the cities which gained back their Aramaic and Arabic names with the Islamic conquest after they have been changed by the Greeks and Romans and later the Crusades who replaced these Aramaic and Arabic names with their own names (Abbas 1990; Jones 1971).

Second: Paris Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property 1970.

Where article 1 mentioned that the cultural properties means "property which, on religious or secular grounds, is specifically designated by each State as being of importance for archaeology, prehistory, history, literature, art or science" which comes in group of sectors including: (b) "property relating to history, including the history of science and technology and military and social history, to the life of national leaders, thinkers, scientists and artist and to events of national importance"; and (f) "objects of ethnological interest. Concerning paragraph (b), we had already explained the historic importance of the names of the cities and the other places, especially in Palestine where we find some places important in the military history like the village "Hittin" where Saladin had his war with the Crusaders in 1187 and the textual Roman sources mentioned it as "Kfar Hittaya" and the Israelis gave it several names like "Kfar Zetem" "Ahozat" "Nevtly" and "Kfar Hitteem", and the names could also be important for the social history or the biography of the leaders like the village "al Qastal" where the great Palestinian leader "Abdul Qader Al Husseini" was martyred in 8/4/1948, the Romans gave it the name "Castellum" also the crusaders "Castellum Belvoir", and then Israel changed the name into "Kasteel" then "Ma'wz Tesyon" then "Mavseert" and then "Tesyon". Also "al-Mukabbir mountain" (the exclaiming mountain) where "Omar Bin al Khattab" (a Companion of the Prophet - may God be pleased with him) stood to exclaim "God is great" when he first saw Jerusalem in 638 A .D ., and Israel changed its name into "Tlebyot" (Arraf 2004).

Concerning paragraph (f), it is important to explain that ethnology is "the science that study the nations and their cultures, analyze its different aspects" (Aref 1984: 10), it was mentioned, the names of the cities are considered as a lingual and cultural product, and the semantics of the name give a clear picture of the nature of the ideologies that dominated, and how rich the culture was. Thus, the names of the cities and other places fall within the definition of the cultural properties, and it demands the legal protection.

The researchers considered these names as a part of the cultural heritage because of their importance in languages, history, ethnology, or anthropology, etc. . .

But, can the cultural heritage of a nation (the history and myths) be considered as “Human heritage”?

We can look at this from two angles: the first one is that the study dedicated information concerning the ancient history, which is a primary indicator to the fact that the subject is humanistic, which means that it doesn't concern a nation in this historic period, because the ancient history is the history of the human culture and doesn't belong to a nation as the Zionism is trying to prove. As deep we go in history, we find ourselves in front of common things, for example, the myths of the Romans is the same myths which the Greeks, Babylon's, or Egyptians have regarding the content, with some difference in the names or literature, but the concepts are almost the same.

In the same angle, we find that the names of the cities and geographic places can be a group of repeated names with some lingual changes due to the language requirements, or keeping the meaning but in a different language.

The second angle is in the meaning of the word “humanistic” which is an expression for the human basic interest regardless of his political, economical, or social affiliation, and reaches the current and future interests of the human (al Daqqaq 1987: 33>).

The researchers considered the names of the cities and other places as cultural properties with the legal meaning of this expression, the related international conventions, and covenants emphasized that the cultural properties is a common human heritage like what the preamble of Hague convention 1954 (the protection of the cultural properties in the armed conflicts) stipulated “damaging the cultural properties of any nation harms the cultural heritage of all man kind” and this convention considered “securing the cultural heritage embraces a great benefit for all the nations in the world, and this heritage requires an international protection”.

The international declaration of the cultural cooperation –which was ratified by the general conference of the UNESCO in his 14<sup>th</sup> term in 14/6/1966 includes in paragraph 3 of article 1 “ all cultures with their diversity, difference, and mutual effect, form a part of the heritage that belongs to all mankind”. In Paris convention concerning the Protection of Cultural and Natural World Heritage - 1972 the ratifying countries assured that the natural and cultural heritage properties are considered as a “part of the world heritage of all mankind”, and the international community "should participate in protecting the extraordinary natural and cultural heritage".

The general conference of UNESCO in Nairobi 1976, considered the “cultural properties is one of the main elements of the nations’ culture and civilization” and “all cultural properties are part of the common heritage of mankind”. In addition, the international declaration of UNESCO (Paris 2001), described the cultural diversity as the “common heritage of all mankind”.

In summary, the names of the cities and other historic places are considered as a common human heritage for all mankind, harming them means wasting the values of humanity and damaging the immaterialist heritage that the major part of it still unknown. Studying this unknown heritage is very important form the scientific and political point of view as we advised previously concerning changing the names of the cities and other historic places in Palestine.

### **3) The legal protection for the names of the cities and other places in Palestine.**

In 1922, the Jewish commission created a committee to help the emigrants to choose names for the colonies. During the period 1922-1948, this committee changed the names of 216 places, and between 1948 and May 1951, they decided another 198 names. Then, "David Bengorion" decided to include this committee within his bureau “the prime minister bureau” directly. This committee consists of 24 members among the best scientists in geography, history, Torah, archeology, arts and languages. In addition, it includes representatives from the different ministries and institutions like the internal affairs, labor, Jewish commission, Jewish National Fund, and the army. Moreover, there are some consultants from different universities in America and Europe. The committee is divided into three subcommittees; historic committee dealing with the names of the different places like the ruins and the hills, and a geographical committee dealing with the mountains and valleys and other places, and the colonies’ committee. This committee meets periodically and makes decisions to be announced in the Israeli official newspaper, where they announce the accurate location on the Palestinian coordinates network with an explanation of this name. Then put the new names into the official use, and integrate them in the maps, Atlas, and other administrative aspects.

The philosophy of this committee depends on trying to get rid of the arabic names and replace them with Hebraic names. The categories of the names are:

- Torah names: like Esr’ael plain instead of Marj Bani ‘Amer, and Bet Shan instead of Baysān.

- Names given in memory of the persons who helped supporting the Zionism like Benjamin colony which was named after baron Edmond Benjamin Rotcheld and "Ji’fat" which was named after his wife and established on the lands of “Qannir”, “Sendyana”, and “Qīsāryah”. The colony of Belforya was established in the arabic village “al ‘Afūlah” and named after Lord Belford.

- Names reflecting the love of power like “Neer Awz” in Ghazzah, and “Ja’fat Awz” in Sālim village. In

addition to some names starting with the words; Meshmar (Guard), Terat (fort), or Mejdal (castle) like the colony of "Mejdal Ha'eq" on the village of "Mujaydil" west of "An-nāsirah".

Thus, what is happening in front of the world, in the name of the science, is changing geography and composing history according to political and ideological visions serving the Zionist project which aims at strengthening the occupation of Palestine through disabling the legal instruments, and force an accomplished fact leaning on the "right of power" and not to the "power of right". Then, in a substitutive manner, create events including all aspects of the conflict and according to them, seize everything even the Palestinian heritage and sell it to the world as an Israeli heritage. Since it was established, Israel persisted in trying to omit the history, create a breach between time, place and cultural deeds, cancel the right of the human in his land, heritage, culture, and destroy his attributes (Qutaish 2000).

Hague convention of 1954, and its two supplementary protocols ( 1<sup>st</sup> 1954, 2<sup>nd</sup> 1999), provided legal protection for the cultural properties during the armed conflicts, and Paris convention 1970 inhibited the illegal exporting, importing and property transfer of the cultural properties, also Paris convention 1972, gave a great importance to protecting the natural and cultural world heritage through obliging the ratifying countries to do the needed procedures and cooperate between each other in that regard.

Despite what could be said, regarding these conventions including the criticism and doubts especially regarding the implementing part of these conventions, but they remain a strong basis for the protection of the cultural properties at all times.

Concerning the names of the cities and other places, also as we considered them a part of the cultural properties and specified their importance to the common human cultural heritage, it requires the same protection given to the other cultural properties especially regarding the protection against the risk of the change or replacement in the formal documents, maps, atlas, encyclopedias, or other instruments that show their scientific, historic, etc... importance. This require a special protection against the political and ideological changes, religious or racial bigotry, and during the armed conflicts including occupation, especially when we know that the names of the cities and other places are linked to the general values of the mankind, and to the dignity of a nation, their political identity, cultural heritage, and ideology.

Here we indicate that the Israelis changed thousands of the Palestinian names (Arraf 2004) to Zionist names, and they targeted the Palestinian cities and villages and destroyed a lot of them (Kamal Abdulfattah emphasized that Israel destroyed 395 villages between 1948-1950), (Abdulfattah 1983) and gave them different names, what makes it hard to know the real name of the place. This issue motivated a number of Arab and Palestinian researchers to publish books and maps for Palestine indicating the real Arabic names and, Hebraic names, and the exact location in longitude and latitude in order to make knowing them easy (Arraf 2004; al Dabbagh 1956; al Khaldi 1987; and Khamar 1980). Based on discrimination, Israel changed the names of the villages and archeological places to Hebraic names, and as an example of the names changed in formal Israeli documents presented to UNESCO:

- Jabal al Karmil got the name "Harha Carmel"
- Wadi al Maghara got the name "Nahal Metharot"
- Tal Waqqās got the name "Hassor"
- al Qohwan village got the name "Shea'ar Hajolan"
- Tal al Qādī got the name "Dan al Qadeema"
- al Menia village got the name "Horvan Menehem".

In addition, there are some bodies belong to the occupational forces of Israel aiming at stealing the Palestinian antiques (al As'ad 2004).

While the Israeli actions were denounced internationally, but it didn't face any objection regarding changing the names, even though they are trying to erase the Arabic identity of Palestine and Palestinians, and the U.N. gave the Palestinians the right to decide and establish their independent country. This also abuses the dignity of the Palestinians contradicting the declaration of UNESCO, 1966, regarding "respecting and protecting all cultures", because the diversity, difference, and mutual effect of all cultures are parts of the common human heritage. Also, it contradicts the Universal declaration of UNESCO on cultural diversity, which indicated that "creation draws on the roots of cultural tradition but flourishes in contact with other cultures for this reason, heritage in all its forms must be preserved, enhanced and handed on to future generations as a record of human experience and aspirations, so as to foster creativity in all its diversity and to inspire genuine dialogue among cultures".

From another side, changing the names falls within stealing the Arabic heritage of Palestine, and in the same time erasing the Islamic heritage through the trials of Israel to wipe out every Islamic traditional feature including the names, either in the occupied areas in 1967 or in Israel.

Protecting the names of the cities and other places in Palestine requires working in two channels:

**First:** protecting these names in the occupied areas of Palestine through applying Hague convention 1954, which the researchers previously indicated that the names of the cities and other places fall within the concept of the

cultural properties described in article 1 of this convention. And since this convention explained the needed protection including the “preservation” and "respect", and detailed that these two concepts apply to the materialist properties and not to the immaterialist (as the names). So, the researchers suggests in the future, either through revising the convention or through a third supplementary protocol, to include the immaterialist properties in the protection. That can be achieved by preventing the conflicting parties, especially the occupation forces, from; changing or replacing any names of cities or other places, stop using the original names, or put any new names in the maps and other formal documents. In addition, consider changing the names as a crime requiring individual responsibility.

**Second:** keeping the names of the cities and other places in order to protect the Palestinian heritage in Israel, as they are part of the common human heritage, so the general conference of UNESCO should be urge to adapt a declaration for protecting the names of the cities and other places against changing, replacement, or omitting.

### Conclusions

It was obvious through the study the importance of the names of the cities villages and other places to archeology, history or prehistory and science.

These names of the cities and other places are considered as a common human heritage for all humankind, harming them means wasting the values of humanity and damaging the immaterialist heritage that the major part of it still unknown.

It also was obvious through analyzing some of the concepts used in the frame of belongings (cultural heritage, archeology, and cultural properties) that the names of the cities, villages, and other places fall within the concept of cultural properties in its legal meaning. But, the researchers- and due to some considerations related to saving these names and protecting them- thinks that there must be a new definition of the cultural properties including the following in a clear and distinct way:

- a. Adapting a legal definition of the cultural properties within the frame of an international convention or protocol, and clearly including the names of the cities and other geographic places and the language within this definition.
- b. This suggested protocol should provide the legal protection for the names of the cities, villages and other places in the peace and war times.
- c. Including the subject of the legal protection for the names of the cities and other places in the agenda of the general conference of UNESCO.
- d. The general conference should adapt a declaration regarding the legal protection for the names of the cities and other places either separately or within the frame of protecting the language of each nation.

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