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CHAPTER 1: PROFILE

Introduction

Following independence from Britain in 1971, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) became a federation of seven states: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ajman, al-Fujairah, Ra's al-Khaimah, Sharjah, and Umm al-Qaiwain.¹ Prior to the formation of the UAE, the territories on the southern coast of the Arabian Peninsula were tribally organized sheikhdoms that had been under the protection of Britain since the late 1800s.²



© Jacques Descloitres / NASA
Satellite photo of the Strait of Hormuz

The discovery of oil in the 1950s transformed the economies of the UAE member states. Formerly dependent on fishing and pearling—and now driven by the petroleum industry and the booming business, tourism, and construction sectors—they are among the most important economies in the Middle East.^{3,4} The UAE is an important ally of the United States and provided military aid to liberate Kuwait during the 1991 Gulf War.⁵

Human trafficking and other social problems persist under the authoritarian but liberal government of the UAE. Other concerns include the activities of UAE-based Iranian businesses accused of trying to circumvent international sanctions against Iran, which is located across the Persian Gulf to the north and east.^{6,7,8,9} Strategically, the location of the UAE is important because the country lies along the southern approaches to the Strait of Hormuz, through which roughly 40% of global oil exports are transported by seaborne vessels. In response to

¹ BBC News, “United Arab Emirates Profile,” 31 January 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14703998>

² Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, “Country Profile: United Arab Emirates (UAE),” July 2007, 1–2, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/UAE.pdf>

³ BBC News, “United Arab Emirates Profile,” 31 January 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14703998>

⁴ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, “Country Profile: United Arab Emirates (UAE),” July 2007, 2, 4, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/UAE.pdf>

⁵ Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Background Note: United Arab Emirates,” 14 July 2010, <http://www.state.gov/outofdate/bgn/unitedarabemirates/158475.htm>

⁶ Kenneth Katzman, “The United Arab Emirates (UAE): Issues for U.S. Policy” (report, Congressional Research Service, 18 June 2013), <http://www.fas.org/srg/crs/mideast/RS21852.pdf>

⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, “United Arab Emirates: Geography,” in *The World Factbook*, 7 May 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “United Arab Emirates,” 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/615412/United-Arab-Emirates>

⁹ Debra A. Miller, “Chapter 1: Hidden Riches,” in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Detroit: Lucent Books, 2004), 7.

international pressure to end its controversial nuclear program, Iran threatened to block this important transportation corridor in 2012.^{10, 11}

Geography

Located on the Arabian Peninsula and bounded by the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, the UAE shares land borders with the Sultanate of Oman (410 km/255 mi) and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (457 km/284 mi). With an area of 83,600 sq km (32,278 sq mi), the UAE is slightly smaller than the state of Maine.¹² Abu Dhabi is the largest emirate and constitutes 87% of the total land.^{13, 14} The smallest emirate, at only 260 sq km (100 sq mi), is Ajman in the north near the al-Hajar Mountains, which is one of three geographic zones of the UAE.¹⁵ The other geographic zones are the coastal plain and the desert interior. Each zone has a slightly different climate.¹⁶ Most of the land is inhospitable, except for a few oases.^{17, 18, 19}



© Sharon Harper
View of Ajman

¹⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, “United Arab Emirates: Geography,” in *The World Factbook*, 7 May 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

¹¹ Reuters, “UAE Criticizes Iran Lawmakers’ Visit to Disputed Islands,” 6 May 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/05/06/us-iran-emirates-islands-idUSBRE9450GP20130506>

¹² Central Intelligence Agency, “United Arab Emirates: Geography,” in *The World Factbook*, 7 May 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

¹³ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, “Country Profile: United Arab Emirates (UAE),” July 2007, 3, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/UAE.pdf>

¹⁴ Debra A. Miller, “Chapter 1: Hidden Riches,” in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Detroit: Lucent Books, 2004), 7.

¹⁵ Sheikh Mohammed, “Seven Emirates,” 2012, <http://www.sheikhmohammed.co.ae/vgn-ext-templating/v/index.jsp?vgnextoid=7dbb4c8631cb4110VgnVCM100000b0140a0aRCRD>

¹⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, “United Arab Emirates,” in *The World Factbook*, 7 May 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

¹⁷ Emirates, “United Arab Emirates,” 2010, <http://www.emirates.org/>

¹⁸ Debra A. Miller, “Chapter 1: Hidden Riches,” in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Detroit: Lucent Books, 2004), 7–8.

¹⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “United Arab Emirates: Relief,” 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/615412/United-Arab-Emirates>

The Coastal Plain

Most of the country's coastline extends about 650 km (404 mi) along the southern shore of the Persian Gulf. A small section of coast lies along the Gulf of Oman. The largest natural harbor is located at Abu Dhabi. Numerous small islands lie offshore, although the ownership of some of the islands has been disputed by Iran and Qatar.^{20, 21, 22} Three of the disputed islands, Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tunb, have been occupied by Iran since 1971.²³ The barren islands are strategically important because of their location in the middle of shipping lanes near the Strait of Hormuz.²⁴



© Bob McCaffrey
View of Ra's al-Khaimah

Most residents of the UAE live along the coast in the urban centers of Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Between and beyond these cities lie salty mangroves and vast stretches of white sand.²⁵ Ra's al-Khaimah, situated between the al-Hajar Mountains in the east and the northeastern coast, is the most fertile of the emirates and is sometimes referred to as the "garden spot." Most people in Ra's al-Khaimah make their living as farmers.²⁶

²⁰ Government of Ras Al Khaimah, "About RAK: Geography," 2010, <http://rak.ae/de/web/rakportal/visitors>

²¹ United Arab Emirates Online, "Geography," 2013, <http://www.trip2uae.com/geography.php>

²² Central Intelligence Agency, "United Arab Emirates: Transnational Issues," in *The World Factbook*, 7 May 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

²³ Reuters, "UAE Criticizes Iran Lawmakers' Visit to Disputed Islands," 6 May 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/05/06/us-iran-emirates-islands-idUSBRE9450GP20130506>

²⁴ Cecily Hilleary, "Iran-UAE Island Dispute Could Escalate," Voice of America, 18 October 2012, <http://www.voanews.com/content/iran-uae-island-dispute-could-escalate/1528869.html>

²⁵ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "United Arab Emirates," 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/615412/United-Arab-Emirates>

²⁶ H.G. Carlson, "Emirians (United Arab Emirates): Location and Homeland," in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life* 3, 2nd ed., eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit: Gale, Cengage Learning, 2009), 236.

The al-Hajar Mountains

The al-Hajar Mountains run from the Musandam Peninsula in the north through the emirate of al-Fujairah and south into the Sultanate of Oman, forming the boundary between the two countries. The craggy peaks of these rocky mountains can reach elevations of 1,300 m (4,265 ft) in the UAE.²⁷ The mountains are of great interest to geologists because they form a substantial surface deposit of igneous rock. In the northern al-Hajar Mountains, copper-ore deposits occur near the surface and are easily mined.^{28, 29, 30, 31}



© Attila Malarik
al-Hajar Mountains

²⁷ Emirates, “The Country,” 2012, http://www.emirates.org/the_country.html

²⁸ UAE Interact, “Natural UAE: The Hajar Mountains,” n.d., <http://www.uaeinteract.com/nature/geology/geo03.asp>

²⁹ M. Redha Bhacker and Bernadette Bhacker, “Digging in the Land of Magan,” *Archaeology* 50, no. 3 (May/June 1997), <http://www.archaeology.org/9705/abstracts/magan.html>

³⁰ Malcolm C. Peck, “Chapter 1: The Historical Background,” in *The United Arab Emirates: A Venture in Unity* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 23–24.

³¹ Breitbart, UPI, “Unique Insight into UAE’s Ancient Civilisations [sic] at Sorbonne Abu Dhabi Lecture,” 5 February 2013, <http://www.breitbart.com/system/wire/upi20130205-162008-2875>

The Desert Interior

With the exception of the oasis city of al-Ain and the small towns of Liwa Oasis, the vast inland desert has few settlements. Its dunes, which run north to south, merge in the south with the Rub al-Khali desert of Saudi Arabia.^{32, 33} The frontier between the two countries is still disputed and has been the cause of sporadic hostilities in past decades, including a naval clash in 2010 over water boundaries.^{34, 35, 36, 37}



© Serge Bystro
Camel in the desert

Lakes and Rivers



© Bob McCaffrey
Lagoon in Ra's al-Khaimah

The UAE has no lakes or rivers, although temporary pools of water called *wadis* may form when rain falls.³⁸ Lagoons and estuaries are found along the coastal lowlands. Evaporation from these marshy waters creates salt flats (*sabkhas*). These flats bake in the sun creating a salt crust that is sometimes hard enough to sustain vehicle traffic. But during the rainy periods or high tides, they become impassable swamps.^{39, 40, 41}

³² *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “United Arab Emirates,” 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/615412/United-Arab-Emirates>

³³ H.G. Carlson, “Emirians (United Arab Emirates): Location and Homeland,” in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life* 3, 2nd ed., eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit: Gale, Cengage Learning, 2009), 236.

³⁴ Jane’s, “External Affairs: United Arab Emirates,” *Sentinel Security Assessment—The Gulf States*, 15 February 2012.

³⁵ Tawfiq al-Sayyid, “After UAE’s Arrest of Saudi Border Guards, Will the Relations Between Riyadh and Abu Dhabi Are Heading [*sic*] to a New Political Crisis?,” *Biyokulule Online*, 26 March 2010, http://www.biyokulule.com/view_content.php?articleid=2629

³⁶ “Abu Dhabi Keeps Pressure on Saudis Over Border,” *Middle East Monitor: The Gulf* 16, no. 2 (February 2006): 6.

³⁷ Richard Spencer, “Naval Battle Between UAE and Saudi Arabia Raises Fears for Gulf Security,” *Telegraph*, 26 March 2010, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/unitedarabemirates/7521219/Naval-battle-between-UAE-and-Saudi-Arabia-raises-fears-for-Gulf-security.html>

³⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “United Arab Emirates: Relief,” 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/615412/United-Arab-Emirates>

³⁹ Debra A. Miller, “Chapter 1: Hidden Riches,” in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Detroit: Lucent Books, 2004), 11.

⁴⁰ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “United Arab Emirates: Relief,” 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/615412/United-Arab-Emirates>

⁴¹ Hector Hernandez, “Algae from UAE Desert Saltflats Could Be Biofuel of the Future,” *National*, 17 February 2013, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/technology/algae-from-uae-desert-saltflats-could-be-biofuel-of-the-future>

Climate

The UAE lies in an arid tropical zone stretching from North Africa in the west to Asia in the east. Its climate is dry and moderated to a great extent by upper air currents of the Indian Ocean. Temperatures become more moderate during the cooler winter months, averaging between 25°C and 35°C (77°F and 95°F). In some parts of the country, temperatures can drop to 9°C (48°F).⁴² Along the coast, average January temperatures hover around 18°C (64°F).^{43, 44} Infrequent rains come in December or January. The annual rainfall is about 11 cm (4.3 in) per year.^{45, 46} Desert winds (*shamal*) blow in from the north and northwest and can generate sandstorms large enough to close airports and force people indoors. The winds generally occur during midwinter and early summer.^{47, 48, 49}

Major Cities

City	Population ⁵⁰
Dubai	1,354,980
Sharjah	685,000
Abu Dhabi	630,000
Al-Ain	350,000
Ajman	202,244



© Lars Plougmann
Sandstorm over Dubai

⁴² Debra A. Miller, "Chapter 1: Hidden Riches," in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Detroit: Lucent Books, 2004), 11.

⁴³ John Walsh, "Chapter 1: Land and People," in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 14.

⁴⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "United Arab Emirates: Climate," 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/615412/United-Arab-Emirates>

⁴⁵ Emirates Meteorology Portal, "UAE 1934–2001 Annual Rainfall! There Is No Such Thing as Average!" 2013, <http://www.meteo.ae/blog/2011/02/23/uae-1934-2001-annual-rainfall-there-is-no-such-thing-as-average/>

⁴⁶ John Walsh, "Chapter 1: Land and People," in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 14–15.

⁴⁷ Mahmood Saberi, "Sandstorm Forces UAE Residents to Stay Indoors," Gulf News, 17 February 2012, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/weather/sandstorm-forces-uae-residents-to-stay-indoors-1.982233>

⁴⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "United Arab Emirates: Climate," 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/615412/United-Arab-Emirates>

⁴⁹ Amy Glass, "Sandstorm Threatens Dubai Weekend Whiteout," Arabian Business, 30 January 2008, <http://www.arabianbusiness.com/sandstorm-threatens-dubai-weekend-whiteout-191180.html>

⁵⁰ Thomas Brinkhoff, "City Population: United Arab Emirates: Principal Cities," 13 October 2012, http://www.citypopulation.de/UAE.html#Stadt_gross

Dubai

Dubai, in the emirate of the same name, is the nation's largest city and one of the fastest-growing urban areas in the world.^{51, 52} With residents from more than 200 countries, this modern metropolis grew from a late 19th-century trading port and pearl-fishing settlement of 10,000 inhabitants into the wealthiest of modern Arab cities.^{53, 54} Founded by traders, it has been ruled since its beginnings by descendants of the indigenous al-Maktoum tribe.⁵⁵ The discovery of oil in the second half of the 20th century is largely responsible for the city's most recent growth.⁵⁶



© Bob McCaffrey
Unique architecture in Dubai

Today, Dubai is a center of global commerce and tourism.⁵⁷ In January 2010, the city opened Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building.⁵⁸ The city is home to the world's largest shopping mall, the longest driverless metro network, the largest gold bazaar in the world, and the world's first 7-star hotel.⁵⁹ Dubai continues to expand into the desert in the south and into the Persian Gulf.⁶⁰

In 2004, work began on creating a series of man-made islands off the coast of Dubai intended for the development of high-end hotels and luxury villas. One of the three palm-shaped islands, considered part of the largest artificial archipelago in the world, is open to visitors. The first residents began moving onto the islands in the summer of 2007. Developed by Dubai-based Nakheel Properties to promote tourism, the islands have expanded the coastline of Dubai by 166%.⁶¹ Although development was interrupted by the financial crisis of 2008, a government

⁵¹ Thomas Brinkhoff, "City Population: United Arab Emirates: Principal Cities," 13 October 2013, <http://www.citypopulation.de/UAE.html>

⁵² Definitely Dubai, "Why Dubai?," 2012, <http://visiting.definitelydubai.com/why-dubai>

⁵³ Lonely Planet, "Dubai: History," 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/dubai/history>

⁵⁴ Definitely Dubai, "Why Dubai?," 2012, <http://visiting.definitelydubai.com/why-dubai>

⁵⁵ Lonely Planet, "Dubai: History," 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/dubai/history>

⁵⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Dubayy," 2103, <https://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/172717/Dubayy?anchor=ref94714>

⁵⁷ Lonely Planet, "Introducing Dubai," 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/dubai>

⁵⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Dubayy," 2013, <https://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/172717/Dubayy?anchor=ref94714>

⁵⁹ Definitely Dubai, "Why Dubai?," 2012, <http://visiting.definitelydubai.com/why-dubai>

⁶⁰ Nadine DeNinno, "Palm Islands of Dubai Are World's Largest Island Trio," *International Business Times*, 6 June 2012, <http://www.ibtimes.com/palm-islands-dubai-are-worlds-largest-artificial-island-trio-photos-700660>

⁶¹ Nadine DeNinno, "Palm Islands of Dubai Are World's Largest Artificial Islands," *International Business Times*, 6 June 2012, <http://www.ibtimes.com/palm-islands-dubai-are-worlds-largest-artificial-island-trio-photos-700660>

bailout in 2009 is now funding construction of shops, computer-controlled fountains, and a marina expected to be completed in late 2013.⁶²

Another artificial archipelago, the World, was built nearby. Its islands, which resemble countries of the world, are sinking back into the sea. Except for Greenland, all of the World's islands are uninhabited.⁶³

Abu Dhabi

With the discovery of water in the 1760s, the island settlement of Abu Dhabi began its expansion from a pearl-fishing community into a glitzy 21st-century metropolis, the capital and second-largest city in the UAE.^{64, 65} The population of the city was reported at 666,000 in 2009.⁶⁶



© Shenli Leong
Cityscape of Abu Dhabi

The discovery of oil in Abu Dhabi in 1958 catapulted the city to petrodollar prominence, and the city now exports more than 90% of the nation's oil.⁶⁷ Lacking some of the glamour of Dubai, Abu Dhabi is more distinctly Arab.⁶⁸ It is home to Sheikh Zayid Grand Mosque, which can hold 41,000 worshippers and features 82 domes, 1,000 columns, and 24-carat gold-gilded chandeliers.⁶⁹ The ruling family, al-Nahyan, moved to Abu Dhabi in the early 19th century from their home in the Liwa Oasis.^{70, 71}

⁶² Zainab Fattah, "Dubai Palm-Shaped Island to Get First New Development Since Nakheel Rescue," Bloomberg, 11 January 2012, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-01-11/nakheel-plans-its-first-new-palm-island-project-since-dubai-market-crashed.html>

⁶³ Richard Spencer, "The World Is Sinking: Dubai Islands 'Falling Into the Sea'," *Telegraph*, 23 January 2011, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/dubai/8271643/The-World-is-sinking-Dubai-islands-falling-into-the-sea.html>

⁶⁴ John Walsh, "Key Facts," in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 10.

⁶⁵ Silvia Radan, "The Story of Abu Dhabi," *Khaleej Times*, 16 February 2013, http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?section=expressions&xfile=/data/expressions/2013/February/expressions_February27.xml

⁶⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, "United Arab Emirates: People and Society," in *The World Factbook*, 7 May 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

⁶⁷ Christopher Davidson, "Abu Dhabi's New Economy: Oil, Investment and Domestic Development," Middle East Policy Council, 2013, <http://www.mepc.org/journal/middle-east-policy-archives/abu-dhabis-new-economy-oil-investment-and-domestic-development>

⁶⁸ Lonely Planet, "Abu Dhabi: Overview," 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/abu-dhabi>

⁶⁹ Visit Abu Dhabi, "Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque," 2013, <http://visitabudhabi.ae/en/what.to.see/attractions/sheikh.zayed.grand.mosque.aspx>

⁷⁰ Silvia Radan, "The Story of Abu Dhabi," *Khaleej Times*, 16 February 2013, http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?section=expressions&xfile=/data/expressions/2013/February/expressions_February27.xml

⁷¹ Lonely Planet, "Abu Dhabi: History," 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/abu-dhabi/history>

Al-Ain

This desert oasis, the UAE's third-largest city, is part of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.^{72, 73} Lying close to the al-Hajar Mountains near the Sultanate of Oman, the city is the birthplace of the "father of the nation" and the country's first president, Sheikh Zayid bin Sultan al-Nuhayyan.^{74, 75, 76} Once an important stop on the trading route from the UAE to Oman, al-Ain is a major tourist destination for Emiratis and international travelers. Al-Ain, nicknamed the "Garden City," is home to al-Ain University. It is also the site of an oasis.^{77, 78, 79, 80}



© Jon Connell
Camel market in Al-Ain

⁷² Visit Abu Dhabi, "Heritage Heartland," 2013, <http://visitabudhabi.ae/en/what.to.see/culture.and.heritage/heritage.heartland.aspx>

⁷³ Visit Abu Dhabi, "Explore Al Ain," 2013, <http://visitabudhabi.ae/en/getting.here.and.around/tours.and.tour.operators/explore.al.ain.aspx>

⁷⁴ Lonely Planet, "Introducing Al-Ain," 2103, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/east-of-abu-dhabi/al-ain>

⁷⁵ BBC News, "UAE Buries 'Father' Sheikh Zayed," 3 November 2004, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3977833.stm

⁷⁶ Al Ain Mall, "About Al Ain City," 2009, <http://www.alainmall.net/2010/alain-city.html>

⁷⁷ Top Universities, "Study in the United Arab Emirates," 2013, <http://www.topuniversities.com/where-to-study/asia/united-arab-emirates/guide>

⁷⁸ Al Ain Mall, "About Al Ain City," 2009, <http://www.alainmall.net/2010/alain-city.html>

⁷⁹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "Cultural Sites of Al Ain (Hafit, Hili, Bidaa Bint Saud and Oases Areas)," 2013, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1343>

⁸⁰ Visit Abu Dhabi, "Explore Al Ain," 2013, <http://visitabudhabi.ae/en/getting.here.and.around/tours.and.tour.operators/explore.al.ain.aspx>

History

Early History

Humans have inhabited the area now known as the United Arab Emirates for more than 8,500 years, according to archeologists. About 5000 B.C.E., a Bronze-Age culture thrived in the region of the northern al-Hajar Mountains.^{81, 82, 83} By the coming of the Iron Age, around 1500 B.C.E., Mongol and Persian invaders had begun to dominate life in the region. Persian and Persian-Greek dynasties governed western Asia until 650 C.E.⁸⁴

The Coming of Islam

Islam arrived in what is today the UAE about 630 C.E., followed by a rebellion in 632 after the Prophet Muhammad died. More than 10,000 rebel soldiers were killed in the coastal city of Dibba; their graves are still visible on the city outskirts.^{85, 86} The short rule of the Arab Umayyads, the first dynasty of Islamic rulers, yielded to a larger group of Islamic caliphs, the Abbasids, in the eighth century.^{87, 88} Based in the city of Julfar (present-day Ra's al-Khaimah), the Abbasids established a seaborne trading network that delivered dates and pearls to the Far East and brought back silks, spices, teakwood, precious stones, and porcelain.⁸⁹ In the 1500s and 1600s, the Arab rulers of the region developed close commercial ties with the Kingdom of Hormuz in the Strait of Hormuz. But the arrival of the Portuguese at the end of the 15th century upset these relations and introduced a new era.⁹⁰



© Bjoertvedt / Wikipedia.org
Watch tower in Hatta

⁸¹ M. Redha Bhacker and Bernadette Bhacker, "Digging in the Land of Magan," *Archaeology* 50, no. 3 (May/June 1997), <http://www.archaeology.org/9705/abstracts/magan.html>

⁸² Malcolm C. Peck, "Chapter 1: The Historical Background," in *The United Arab Emirates: A Venture in Unity* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 23–24.

⁸³ Breitbart, UPI, "Unique Insight into UAE's Ancient Civilisations [sic] at Sorbonne Abu Dhabi Lecture," 5 February 2013, <http://www.breitbart.com/system/wire/upi20130205-162008-2875>

⁸⁴ Lonely Planet, "United Arab Emirates: History," 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/history>

⁸⁵ Malcolm C. Peck, "Chapter 1: The Historical Background," in *The United Arab Emirates: A Venture in Unity* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 25.

⁸⁶ "History and Traditions," in *United Arab Emirates Yearbook 2006* (Trident Press, 2006), 17, www.uaeyearbook.com/Yearbooks/2006/eng/

⁸⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Umayyad Dynasty," 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/613719/Umayyad-dynasty>

⁸⁸ Jewish Virtual Library, "Abbasids," 2012, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0001_0_00087.html

⁸⁹ Malcolm C. Peck, "Chapter 1: The Historical Background," in *The United Arab Emirates: A Venture in Unity* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 26.

⁹⁰ "History and Traditions," in *United Arab Emirates Yearbook 2006* (Trident Press, 2006), 19–20, www.uaeyearbook.com/Yearbooks/2006/eng/

Colonial History

The Portuguese arrived in 1498, planning to dominate the trade routes and markets of the Gulf region. By 1515, they occupied Julfar, where they built a customs house and levied taxes on the Gulf traders bound for India and the Far East.^{91, 92} Many of the local Arab economies suffered under the Portuguese, setting in motion events that would eventually create the emirate of Sharjah, which today is the third-largest emirate in the UAE.^{93, 94} The Portuguese were the major regional power until they were expelled by Oman's Ya'arabi dynasty at the beginning of the 17th century. Disagreements over succession led to a civil war that ended the reign of the Ya'arabi, who were replaced by the Oman-based al-Busaid.^{95, 96}



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Painting of King George III

The Dutch, French, and British followed the Portuguese to the Persian Gulf in the 17th and 18th centuries—eager to compete for trade. Their merchant fleets ferried spices, tea, coffee, and cocoa between Asia, Africa, and Europe.^{97, 98} In 1666, the Treaty of Oman opened the door to Dutch traders in the Lower Gulf, which remained in force until an Arab rebellion against the Dutch in 1750 provided an opportunity for the merchant and martial fleets of Britain's King George III.⁹⁹

In 1763, the British East India Company established a residency post for its agent in Sharjah.¹⁰⁰ Thereafter, the British Navy mounted campaigns against pirates in the Gulf region that became known as The Pirate Coast. Following its naval victory against the Arab pirates, who were subdued in 1820, Britain signed a General Treaty of Peace in 1820 with nine Arab sheikhdoms,

⁹¹ Lonely Planet, "United Arab Emirates: History," 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/history>

⁹² Gordon Robison, "The United Arab Emirates: History," in *Lonely Planet: Arab Gulf States*, 2nd ed. (Hawthorn, Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet Publications, 1996), 420–421.

⁹³ John Walsh, "Chapter 1: Land and People," in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 22.

⁹⁴ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, "Country Profile: United Arab Emirates (UAE)," July 2007, 1, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/UAE.pdf>

⁹⁵ Global Security, "Emirates History: Portuguese Era," 2013, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/gulf/uae-history-portuguese.htm>

⁹⁶ Malcolm C. Peck, "Dictionary," in *The Historical Dictionary of the Gulf Arab States* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2008), 319.

⁹⁷ Malcolm C. Peck, "Chapter 1: The Historical Background," in *The United Arab Emirates: A Venture in Unity* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 27–28.

⁹⁸ National Center for Documentation and Research, Ministry of Presidential Affairs, "UAE History: Dutch Era," 2012, <http://www.cdr.gov.ae/ncdr/English/uaeGuide/hisDutch1.aspx>

⁹⁹ William Smyth, "Chapter 1: Historical Setting," in *Oman: A Country Study*, ed. Helen Chapin Metz (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1994), <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/omtoc.html>

¹⁰⁰ National Center for Documentation and Research, Ministry of Presidential Affairs, "UAE History: British Era," 2012, <http://www.cdr.gov.ae/ncdr/English/uaeGuide/hisBritish.aspx>

including Bahrain, Qatar, and the seven smaller sheikhdoms that later formed the UAE.^{101, 102} After a treaty signed in 1853 empowered Britain to enforce a maritime truce established by earlier agreements, the region became known as the Trucial Coast.¹⁰³ In a deal brokered in 1892, the area became a British Protectorate, and Britain gained control of the foreign affairs of the emirates, although each emirate retained control over its domestic affairs.^{104, 105}

From the beginning of the 20th century until the end of World War II, the Trucial States became important economically for British trade and logistically for British outposts in the East. The discovery of petroleum in the 1950s ensured a rapid increase in wealth for the sheikhdoms and fueled the movement toward independence. On 2 December 1971, the Trucial States followed the example of the former British Protectorates of Kuwait and Bahrain, declaring their independence as the United Arab Emirates.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Lonely Planet, "United Arab Emirates: History," 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/history>

¹⁰² British Empire, "Trucial Oman: Initial Contacts with the British," n.d., <http://www.britishempire.co.uk/maproom/trucialoman.htm>

¹⁰³ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, "Country Profile: United Arab Emirates (UAE)," July 2007, 2, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/UAE.pdf>

¹⁰⁴ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, "Country Profile: United Arab Emirates (UAE)," July 2007, 2, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/UAE.pdf>

¹⁰⁵ BBC News, "United Arab Emirates Profile: A Chronology of Key Events," 31 January 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14704414>

¹⁰⁶ Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: United Arab Emirates," 14 July 2010, <http://www.state.gov/outofdate/bgn/unitedarabemirates/158475.htm>

Recent Events

Since gaining independence, the UAE has emerged as one of the most liberal and stable states in the Arab Middle East. The evolution from traditional forms of tribal governance to the workings of a modern federal state has been gradual. The two original ruling families, al-Nahyan of Abu Dhabi and al-Maktoum of Dubai, have retained their preeminence throughout the history of the country. Based on previous negotiations, the presidency of the UAE rests with al-Nahyan and the position of prime minister with al-Maktoum. When Sheikh Zayid al-Nahyan died in 2004, the presidency passed smoothly to his eldest son, Sheikh Khalifa.¹⁰⁷



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Sheikh Khalifa

The stability of the UAE is anchored in and reinforced by its systems of good governance, active membership in the United Nations and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and a network of significant trade and cooperation treaties with major world powers. As a founding member of the six-member GCC, the UAE provided military aid for the liberation of Kuwait during the Gulf War of 1991. The country is also a major donor of aid to underdeveloped nations in Africa and Asia.¹⁰⁸

Although revenues from oil have expanded the nation's wealth, the economy teetered on the verge of bankruptcy in 2008—with bailouts needed from Abu Dhabi and the central bank to keep Dubai afloat.^{109, 110, 111, 112} But by 2010, the city and the nation had begun to rebound from the crisis.¹¹³

The UAE was relatively unaffected by the protests that swept the Arab world in 2011; nevertheless, the government is cracking down on reformers, including foreign-sponsored reform groups that were expelled in 2012. The government has also cracked down on domestic groups it

¹⁰⁷ Kenneth Katzman "The United Arab Emirates (UAE): Issues for U.S. Policy" (report, Congressional Research Service, 18 June 2013), <http://www.fas.org/srg/crs/mideast/RS21852.pdf>

¹⁰⁸ Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: United Arab Emirates," 14 July 2010, <http://www.state.gov/outofdate/bgn/unitedarabemirates/158475.htm>

¹⁰⁹ Debra A Miller, "Chapter 3: Unity and Progress," in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Farmington Hills, MI: Lucent Books, 2005), 46–47.

¹¹⁰ Claire Suddath, "Brief History: Dubai," *Time*, 14 December 2009, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1945354,00.html>

¹¹¹ BBC News, "Abu Dhabi Gives Dubai \$10bn to Help Pay Debts," 14 December 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8411215.stm>

¹¹² Pan Jian, "Global Financial Crisis Takes Toll on UAE," *China View*, 2 December 2008, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-12/02/content_10445926.htm

¹¹³ Andrew Butler, "How Did Dubai Bounce Back from Its Economic Collapse?," *Econ Matters*, 23 January 2012, <http://www.econmatters.com/2012/01/how-did-dubai-bounce-back-from-its.html>

views as potential threats.^{114, 115} To help preserve stability, the UAE is spending billions of dollars to improve living conditions. Minor political reforms have also been introduced.^{116, 117}

Government

The United Arab Emirates is a federation of seven individual emirates. The federal government retains powers over certain areas, including national defense, foreign affairs, education, and public health, while the individual emirates retain authority over local issues.¹¹⁸ The chief of state is the president, although the Federal Supreme Council (FSC) is the highest constitutional authority in the nation.¹¹⁹ The FSC, composed of the rulers of each of the seven emirates, is headed by the prime minister. The body meets four times a year and has both legislative and executive powers. The rulers of the emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai have effective veto power in the council. The president and vice-president are each elected by the FSC to 5-year terms. The president appoints both the prime minister and the deputy prime minister.^{120, 121}



© www.kremlin.ru
Vladimir Putin and Sheikh Khalifa

The Federal National Council (FNC) is a unicameral body of 40 members, 20 of whom are elected to 4-year terms. Until 2007, all 40 members of the council were appointed, but new political reforms allow the election of half the council members in order to encourage greater participation among citizens.^{122, 123}

¹¹⁴ Angela Shah, "Gulf States Cast Dim Eye on Reform After Tumult," *New York Times*, 18 April 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/19/world/middleeast/gulf-states-cast-dim-eye-on-reform-after-tumult.html?_r=0

¹¹⁵ Reuters, "FACTBOX—Political Risks to Watch in United Arab Emirates," *Chicago Tribune*, 20 July 2012, http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-07-20/news/sns-rt-emirates-risks-factboxriskae-20120530_1_al-roken-islamist-activists-president-sheikh-khalifa-bin

¹¹⁶ Reuters, "FACTBOX—Political Risks to Watch in United Arab Emirates," *Chicago Tribune*, 20 July 2012, http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-07-20/news/sns-rt-emirates-risks-factboxriskae-20120530_1_al-roken-islamist-activists-president-sheikh-khalifa-bin

¹¹⁷ Kenneth Katzman, "The United Arab Emirates (UAE): Issues for U.S. Policy" (report, Congressional Research Service, 18 June 2013), 4–5, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RS21852.pdf>

¹¹⁸ UAE Interact, "Political System," n.d., http://www.uaeinteract.com/government/political_system.asp

¹¹⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, "United Arab Emirates: Government," in *The World Factbook*, 7 May 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

¹²⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, "United Arab Emirates: Government," in *The World Factbook*, 7 May 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

¹²¹ UAE Interact, "Political System," n.d., http://www.uaeinteract.com/government/political_system.asp

¹²² Central Intelligence Agency, "United Arab Emirates: Government," in *The World Factbook*, 7 May 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

¹²³ UAE Interact, "Political System," n.d., http://www.uaeinteract.com/government/political_system.asp

The nation's judiciary is composed of the Union Supreme Court, whose judges are appointed by the president. The legal system is based on both civil and Islamic law. The shari'a courts are active in personal status cases and sometimes play a role in criminal cases, as well as labor and commercial disputes. Other matters are heard by the nation's secular courts.^{124, 125}

Media

The national constitution of the UAE guarantees freedom of speech and freedom of the press.¹²⁶ The country has 11 national daily newspapers, 6 of which are in English. Foreign journalists operate with more freedom than in most other countries in the region.¹²⁷ Nevertheless, the government limits the rights of those who are critical of it and the ruling families. All aspects of the media are regulated.¹²⁸ The most extreme forms of censorship involve issues of local politics, culture, and religion.¹²⁹



© ITU Pictures / flickr.com
News recording at TV studio in Dubai

In 2011, about 70% of the population had access to the internet, the use of which is criminally punishable by fines or imprisonment if it violates political, social, and religious norms. Two state-owned and -operated internet providers service the nation. Cellular telephones are a popular way to receive internet content, especially news. The government has threatened to ban the use of BlackBerry's encrypted email and messaging services as a means of increasing its surveillance of journalists.^{130, 131, 132}

¹²⁴ Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2012: United Arab Emirates Country Report* (Gütersloh, Germany: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2012), 6, <http://www.bti-project.de/fileadmin/Inhalte/reports/2012/pdf/BTI%202012%20United%20Arab%20Emirates.pdf>

¹²⁵ Gulf Law, "United Arab Emirates: 3. The Judicial System," 2008, http://gulf-law.com/uae_judicial.html

¹²⁶ Freedom House, "Freedom of the Press: United Arab Emirates," 2012, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2012/united-arab-emirates>

¹²⁷ Reporters Without Borders, "United Arab Emirates," 2013, <http://en.rsf.org/report-united-arab-emirates,150.html>

¹²⁸ Freedom House, "Freedom of the Press: United Arab Emirates," 2012, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2012/united-arab-emirates>

¹²⁹ Freedom House, "Freedom of the Press: United Arab Emirates," 2012, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2012/united-arab-emirates>

¹³⁰ Freedom House, "Freedom of the Press: United Arab Emirates," 2012, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2012/united-arab-emirates>

¹³¹ Reporters Without Borders, "United Arab Emirates," 2013, <http://en.rsf.org/report-united-arab-emirates,150.html>

¹³² Josh Halliday, "UAE to Tighten BlackBerry Restrictions," *Guardian*, 18 April 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2011/apr/18/uae-blackberry-emails-secure>

Economy

With a high per capita income comparable to the leading nations of Western Europe, the residents of the UAE enjoy a high standard of living.¹³³ The UAE also has one of the freest economies in the world.¹³⁴ Low trade barriers, open-market supports, transparency, and political stability have combined to create a strong business environment.¹³⁵ The economy of the UAE, which has about 10% of the world's petroleum and natural gas reserves, was once nearly wholly dependent on natural gas and oil.^{136, 137} But today the country has diversified, with oil and gas accounting for about 25% of GDP (gross domestic product) in 2012.¹³⁸ The nation's industrial sector is expected to continue to grow and to account for about 25% of GDP by 2015 and for about half of GDP by 2017.^{139, 140, 141} Food and beverages, tobacco, textiles and clothing, wood products, paper products, printing and publishing, chemical and plastics, non-metallic mineral products, and fabricated metal products are the main manufacturing subsectors.¹⁴²

To promote investment and trade, the government has established domestic economic policies that have encouraged the growth of trade, including free-trade zones. These secure zones permit foreign manufacturers to produce and export goods without tariffs and high production costs. International companies are guaranteed 100% foreign ownership. Business entities may operate in a tax-free environment with few restrictions on the import and export of goods and currency.¹⁴³ Dubai has become the third-largest re-export center in the world, lagging behind only Hong Kong and Singapore. Major re-exports include electronics, precious and semi-

¹³³ Central Intelligence Agency, "United Arab Emirates," in *The World Factbook*, 7 May 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

¹³⁴ Heritage Foundation, "2013 Index of Economic Freedom: United Arab Emirates," 2013, <http://www.heritage.org/index/country/unitedarabemirates>

¹³⁵ Heritage Foundation, "2013 Index of Economic Freedom: United Arab Emirates," 2013, <http://www.heritage.org/index/country/unitedarabemirates>

¹³⁶ Gerald Butt, "Oil and Gas in the UAE," in *United Arab Emirates: A New Perspective*, eds. Ibrahim Al Abed and Peter Hellyer (London: Trident Press, 2001), 231, http://www.uaeinteract.com/uaeint_misc/pdf/perspectives/11.pdf

¹³⁷ U.S. Energy Information Administration, "United Arab Emirates," 3 January 2013, <http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=TC>

¹³⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, "United Arab Emirates: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 7 May 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

¹³⁹ Oxford Business Group, "Economic Update: Dubai: Going for Growth in Manufacturing," 22 March 2012, http://www.oxfordbusinessgroup.com/economic_updates/dubai-going-growth-manufacturing

¹⁴⁰ AME Info, "UAE Growth Capitalises [sic] on Expanding Manufacturing Sector," 16 October 2012, <http://www.ameinfo.com/uae-growth-capitalises-expanding-manufacturing-sector-315446>

¹⁴¹ Construction Week, "Manufacturing to Become More Important to UAE," 19 December 2012, <http://www.constructionweekonline.com/article-20057-manufacturing-to-become-more-important-to-uae/#.UTTxa1dc2Yc>

¹⁴² AME Info, "UAE Growth Capitalises [sic] on Expanding Manufacturing Sector," 16 October 2012, <http://www.ameinfo.com/uae-growth-capitalises-expanding-manufacturing-sector-315446>

¹⁴³ Swiss Business Hub GCC, "United Arab Emirates Business Sectors" (report, Dubai, June 2012), http://www.osec.ch/de/filefield-private/files/781/field_blog_public_files/10603

precious metals and stones, base metals, chemical products, and vehicles.¹⁴⁴ The UAE is also the world's 20th-largest exporter in merchandise trade with 1.6% of the world's exports.¹⁴⁵

But the proximity of the UAE and its ports to the Republic of Iran places the nation in geopolitical jeopardy. Any hostilities involving Iran could lead to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and to an interruption of maritime transport through the Strait. In effect, this would shut off shipments of oil to the West and to Asia.^{146, 147, 148}

¹⁴⁴ Swiss Business Hub GCC, "United Arab Emirates Business Sectors" (report, Dubai, June 2012), http://www.osec.ch/de/filefield-private/files/781/field_blog_public_files/10603

¹⁴⁵ Arab News, "UAE 20th Biggest Exporter in Merchandise Trade," 4 December 2012, <http://www.arabnews.com/uae-20th-biggest-exporter-merchandise-trade>

¹⁴⁶ Ben Smith, "Oil Embargo on Iran and the Threat to the Straits of Hormuz" (information note, House of Commons Library, 20 January 2012), 4–5, http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=4&ved=0CE8QFjAD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.parliament.uk%2Fbriefing-papers%2FNS06190.pdf&ei=jEJHUZ7xCeeXigL6zoH4Aw&usg=AFQjCNH3GF3_8-WC7DmpwzaN54MkjGrOJA&sig2=ioxZbADSxSNzoP5UR5aL6Q&bvm=bv.43828540,d.cGE

¹⁴⁷ Audi Saradar Group, "2: Concluding Remarks," in *UAE Economic Report: Sustained Recovery Prospects Despite Lingering Challenges* (report, 4 January 2013), 18, http://research.banqueaudi.com/documents/EconomicReports/uae_economic_report.pdf

¹⁴⁸ Andy Sambidge, "UAE Growth Forecast to Touch 4% in 2013," *Arabian Business*, 5 January 2013, <http://www.arabianbusiness.com/uae-growth-forecast-touch-4-in-2013-484498.html>

Ethnic Groups

The UAE's population of about 8 million people falls into two categories: citizens (*al muwateneen*) and resident non-citizens (*al wafedeen*).^{149, 150, 151} Citizens, who must be Emirati, account for about 15% of the population. Among the expatriates, who make up about 85% of the population, Indians are the largest group, followed by Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, and Asians (mostly from China, the Philippines, Thailand, and Korea). About half a million Western expatriates also reside in the UAE.^{152, 153, 154} The government is trying to create a more balanced demographic structure and has established a new council to review the matter.¹⁵⁵ Part of the council's charge, according to the government's 2021 strategy, is to determine the proper ratio of Emiratis to expatriates living in the country.¹⁵⁶



© Qasim Al Khuzale
Crowd in Abu Dhabi

¹⁴⁹ World Bank, "Population, Total," 2013, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL>

¹⁵⁰ Kenneth Katzman, "The United Arab Emirates (UAE): Issues for U.S. Policy" (report, Congressional Research Service, 18 June 2013), 2, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RS21852.pdf>

¹⁵¹ Sulayman N. Khalaf, "United Arab Emirates," *Countries and Their Cultures*, 2001, <http://www.everyculture.com/To-Z/United-Arab-Emirates.html>

¹⁵² Jane's, "Security: United Arab Emirates," *Sentinel Security Assessment—The Gulf States*, 15 February 2012.

¹⁵³ Top Universities, "Study in the United Arab Emirates," 2013, <http://www.topuniversities.com/where-to-study/asia/united-arab-emirates/guide>

¹⁵⁴ Andy Sambridge, "UAE Sets Up Council to Tackle Demographic Issues," *Arabian Business*, 10 November 2009, <http://www.arabianbusiness.com/uae-sets-up-council-tackle-demographic-issues-11033.html>

¹⁵⁵ Andy Sambridge, "UAE Sets Up Council to Tackle Demographic Issues," *Arabian Business*, 10 November 2009, <http://www.arabianbusiness.com/uae-sets-up-council-tackle-demographic-issues-11033.html>

¹⁵⁶ Kareem Shaheen, "UAE to Draft Population Strategy to Address 'Imbalance'," *National*, 26 January, 2011, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/politics/uae-to-draft-population-strategy-to-address-imbalance>

CHAPTER 1 ASSESSMENT

1. Dubai is the largest of the seven emirates of the UAE.

FALSE

Abu Dhabi is the largest emirate and constitutes 87% of the total land area of the nation. Dubai, in the emirate of the same name, is the nation's largest city and one of the fastest-growing urban areas in the world.

2. Most of the population of the UAE lives in the urban centers on the nation's coast.

TRUE

Most residents of the UAE live along the coast in the urban centers of Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

3. Most of the power of the government is vested in the president.

FALSE

The chief of state is the president, although the Federal Supreme Council (FSC) is the highest constitutional authority in the nation. The FSC, composed of the rulers of each of the seven emirates, elects the president.

4. Oil and gas account for more than one-half of the nation's GDP (gross domestic product).

FALSE

The UAE has about 10% of the world's petroleum and natural gas reserves, and in the past the economy was almost entirely dependent on natural gas and oil. Because of diversification, oil and gas accounted for about 25% of GDP in 2012.

5. Freedom of the press is constitutionally guaranteed in the UAE.

TRUE

The national constitution guarantees freedom of speech and freedom of the press. But the government limits the rights of those who are critical of it and the ruling families. All aspects of the media are regulated.

CHAPTER 2: RELIGION

Introduction

Islam is the official religion of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and greatly influences life throughout the nation, from the traditional full-body covering that many women wear to the shari'a courts that rule over family matters.^{157, 158, 159, 160}

Virtually all Emirati are Muslims. Most (80–85%) follow the teachings of Sunni Islam.¹⁶¹ To date, the UAE has largely been able to avoid the religious extremism and violence often seen in other countries in the region.^{162, 163}



© Abdul Awaes
People inside Sheikh Zayed Mosque

The government is generally tolerant of other religions, even allowing some hotels and businesses to recognize holidays such as Christmas and the Hindu celebration of Diwali.¹⁶⁴ Nevertheless, visitors to the nation are expected to show respect for Islamic traditions and may be subjected to fines or imprisonment if they violate Islamic laws.^{165, 166}

¹⁵⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, “United Arab Emirates: People and Society,” in *The World Factbook*, 7 May 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

¹⁵⁸ John Walsh, “Chapter 2: Values and Attitudes,” in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 44–45.

¹⁵⁹ Debra A Miller, “Chapter 4: Tradition, Religion, and Culture,” in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Detroit: Lucent Books, 2004), 52–53.

¹⁶⁰ H.G. Carlson, “Emirians (United Arab Emirates),” in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life* 3, 2nd ed., eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit: Gale, Cengage Learning, 2009), 237–39.

¹⁶¹ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, “United Arab Emirates,” in *2011 Report on International Religious Freedom*, 30 July 2012, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2011/nea/192911.htm>

¹⁶² Debra A. Miller, “Chapter 4: Tradition, Religion, and Culture,” in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Detroit: Lucent Books, 2004), 55.

¹⁶³ Christopher Davidson, “Sunni-Shiite Hostility? The UAE Suggests Otherwise,” *Daily Star*, 4 August 2008, <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Opinion/Commentary/Aug/04/Sunni-Shiite-hostility-The-UAE-suggests-otherwise.ashx#axzz2OZ11aUIR>

¹⁶⁴ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, “United Arab Emirates,” in *2011 Report on International Religious Freedom*, 30 July 2012, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2011/nea/192911.htm>

¹⁶⁵ Expat Arrivals, “Ramadan for Expats in the Middle East,” 2013, <http://www.expatarrrivals.com/article/ramadan-for-expats-in-the-middle-east>

¹⁶⁶ Shelter Offshore, “Living in Dubai and Knowing the Rules,” 2011, <http://www.shelteroffshore.com/index.php/living/more/living-in-dubai-knowing-the-rules-10831>

Pre-Islamic Religions

Zoroastrianism, paganism, and Christianity were practiced in the area now known as the UAE before the arrival of Islam in the seventh century.¹⁶⁷

Zoroastrianism

The teachings of the Persian prophet Zoroaster were brought to the region by Persian and Greek invaders around 500 B.C.E. Born about 1500 B.C.E., Zoroaster taught the existence of a supreme god (*Ahura Mazda*) who presided over a polarized world torn between the forces of good (*Spenta Mainyu*) and evil (*Angra Mainyu*).¹⁶⁸ According to the religion, for which fire was the main object of worship, humans have been caught in the eternal struggle between these two forces.¹⁶⁹ By the fifth century C.E., Zoroastrianism had disappeared from the peninsula and given way to the animist world of South Arabian gods and the worship of inanimate objects thought to have a soul.¹⁷⁰



© Isaac Adams
Depiction of Zoroaster

Paganism

Pre-Islamic Arabs in the region worshipped idols, spirit gods, and tribal heroes.¹⁷¹ During that period, the Kaaba of Mecca housed hundreds of statues of the gods of both North and South Arabia. These included Shams the sun god, Hubal the moon god, and the lion goddess Athtar, known as Ashtar in Babylon.¹⁷² The Arabs also venerated jinn, which were the personifications of desert terrors and wildlife. Unlike the pagan gods, jinn tended to be hostile.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁷ Malcolm C. Peck, "Chapter 1: The Historical Background," in *The United Arab Emirates: A Venture in Unity* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 25.

¹⁶⁸ Shahin Bekhradnia, "The Tajik Case for a Zoroastrian Identity," *Religion, State, and Society* 22, no. 1 (1994): 110, http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/rss/22-1_109.pdf

¹⁶⁹ History World, "History of Zoroastrianism," n.d., <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ab71>

¹⁷⁰ Nihal Şahin Utku, "Arabia in the Pre-Islamic Period," 3 May 2010, <http://www.lastprophet.info/arabia-in-the-pre-islamic-period>

¹⁷¹ Abdul Hameed Siddiqui, "Religion of the Pre-Islamic Arabs," Sound Vision, 2013, <http://www.soundvision.com/info/seerah/hameed5.asp>

¹⁷² *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Arabian Religion, Sanctuaries, Cultic Objects, and Religious Practices and Institutions," 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-68311/Arabian-religion>

¹⁷³ Abdul Hameed Siddiqui, "Religion of the Pre-Islamic Arabs," Sound Vision, 2013, <http://www.soundvision.com/info/seerah/hameed5.asp>

Christianity

There is evidence that Christianity was also practiced in the region before the arrival of Islam, in the Gulf from the fourth century and established on the islands of Abu Dhabi in the fifth and sixth centuries before being displaced by Islam.¹⁷⁴ Recently, a 1,400-year-old Christian monastery was unearthed in the UAE. Scientists believe that the monks who lived in the monastery were likely members of the Nestorian Church, which survives today as the Assyrian Orthodox Church.¹⁷⁵

Islam

In the seventh century C.E., Islam arrived in what is today the UAE.¹⁷⁶ The religion is based on the teachings of the seventh-century Prophet Muhammad, who wrote the Quran and is believed by Muslims to be the final messenger of God (Allah) in a long line of prophets that includes Abraham, Moses, and Jesus Christ. Followers of Islam believe in one God who is all powerful. Pillars of the faith include praying five times a day (*salat*), giving charity to the poor (*zakat*), fasting (*sawm*), and going on a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once during one's lifetime (*hajj*).^{177, 178, 179, 180}

Most Emirati observe these tenets earnestly, stopping to answer the daily calls to prayer and giving about 2.5% of their income to charity.¹⁸¹



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Depiction of Mohammed & angel Gabriel

Islam's holy book, the Quran, is regarded by Muslims as sacred and should be treated with respect. It should not be touched with dirty hands and should be kept off the floor and out of latrines. If one sits on the floor, the Quran should be held above one's lap or waist. When not in use, the Quran should be protected with a dustcover; nothing should be placed on top of the

¹⁷⁴ Peter Hellyer, "Nestorian Christianity in Pre-Islamic UAE and Southeastern Arabia," *Journal of Social Affairs* 18, no. 22 (winter 2001): 85–88, <http://www.adias-uae.com/publications/hellyer01b.pdf>

¹⁷⁵ Mail Online, "Built by Monks, Nurtured by Pilgrims from India: Only Pre-Islamic Christian Site in Muslim Heartland Opens to Public," 13 December 2010, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1338060/Pre-Islamic-Christian-monastery-Abu-Dhabi-opens-public.html>

¹⁷⁶ Malcolm C. Peck, "Chapter 1: The Historical Background," in *The United Arab Emirates: A Venture in Unity* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 25.

¹⁷⁷ Clyde Mark, "Islam: A Primer" (CRS Report for Congress, 19 February 2003), <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RS21432.pdf>

¹⁷⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Pillars of Islam," 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/295625/Pillars-of-Islam>

¹⁷⁹ Debra A. Miller, "Chapter 4: Tradition, Religion, and Culture," in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Detroit: Lucent Books, 2004), 52.

¹⁸⁰ John Walsh, "Chapter 2: Values and Attitudes," in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 52–53.

¹⁸¹ Debra A. Miller, "Chapter 4: Tradition, Religion, and Culture," in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Detroit: Lucent Books, 2004), 53.

Quran, which Muslims often keep on the highest shelf of a bookcase.¹⁸² Old or damaged copies of the Quran can be properly disposed of in one of two ways: burning or burying. Burning is acceptable as long as the process is conducted with respect. Texts should not be burned with trash or other items. For burial, the Quran should be wrapped in something clean and buried where people do not walk.^{183, 184}

Today, most of the Muslims in the UAE follow the Maliki school, the second-largest of the four branches of religious law associated with Sunni Islam. Some Muslims, those who primarily live along the al-Batinah coast, subscribe to the more fundamentalist Shafi'i school of Sunni Islam.^{185, 186} The conservative Wahhabi sect of Sunni Islam is concentrated in the al-Buraimi oasis region.¹⁸⁷ Between 15% and 20% of Emiratis are Shi'a, and most live in Dubai and Sharjah.^{188, 189}

The split between Sunni and Shi'a Islam resulted from a disagreement in the Muslim community in the seventh century concerning leadership of the faith after Muhammad's death. The Shi'a chose to follow the bloodline of Muhammad in selecting ongoing leadership, while the Sunnis have chosen successive leaders based upon their perceived abilities to lead.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸² TRADOC DCSINT Handbook no. 2, "Arab Cultural Awareness: 58 Factsheets" (Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, January 2006), 40, www.fas.org/irp/agency/army/arabculture.pdf

¹⁸³ Allison Keyes, "How to Properly Dispose of Sacred Texts," National Public Radio, 24 February 2012, <http://www.npr.org/2012/02/24/147321213/how-to-properly-dispose-of-sacred-texts>

¹⁸⁴ Whitney Eulich, "Quran Burning: What Is the Respectful Way to Dispose of Islam's Holy Book?," *Christian Science Monitor*, 21 February 2012, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Global-News/2012/0221/Quran-burning-What-is-the-respectful-way-to-dispose-of-Islam-s-holy-book>

¹⁸⁵ UAE Travel Guide, "Religion in the UAE," 2013, <http://emiratesvoyage.com/uae-guide/uae-religion/>

¹⁸⁶ Global Security, "Maliki Islam," 7 May 2011, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/intro/islam-maliki.htm>

¹⁸⁷ Global Security, "Religion," 10 December 2012, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/gulf/uae-religion.htm>

¹⁸⁸ Global Security, "Religion," 10 December 2012, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/gulf/uae-religion.htm>

¹⁸⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, "United Arab Emirates: People and Society," in *The World Factbook*, 7 May 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

¹⁹⁰ Fred Donner, "Chapter 1: Muhammad and the Caliphate," in *Oxford History of Islam*, ed. John Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 15–18.

Religion and Government

The constitution guarantees freedom of religion, which is mostly respected. Nevertheless, the government is involved in many religious affairs, and freedom of assembly and association for religious purposes is restricted. The law requires that all citizens be Muslims and prohibits Muslims from changing their religion. The teaching of non-Islamic religions in public schools is prohibited. Private schools may offer religious instruction but may not teach anything that offends or criticizes Islam without risking closure.¹⁹¹



© Dominic Scaglioni
Temple in Dubai

The government, which funds or subsidizes about 95% of the Sunni mosques, also monitors and regulates the activities of the mosques in order to guard against religious extremism.¹⁹² Although the government appoints religious teachers known as imams for Sunni mosques, the government does not appoint imams for Shi'a mosques, except in Dubai.^{193, 194}

Muslim men are allowed to marry non-Muslim women, but Emirati women may not marry non-Muslim males. Violators of the Islamic law are subject to arrest, trial, and imprisonment, although no recent cases have been reported.^{195, 196}

It is against the law for churches to display crosses or to erect bell towers, to try to convert Muslims to other religions, or to distribute non-Islamic religious materials.¹⁹⁷ During the daylight hours of the month-long fast of Ramadan, adult Muslims must refrain from eating, drinking, smoking, or engaging in sex. Foreign visitors should not eat, drink, or smoke in public view during this time. Violating the rule, which does not apply to pregnant or nursing women or to young children, could result in a large fine and a jail sentence.^{198, 199, 200, 201} Offices and shops often close during Ramadan.²⁰²

¹⁹¹ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "United Arab Emirates," in *2011 Report on International Religious Freedom*, 30 July 2012, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2011/nea/192911.htm>

¹⁹² Global Security, "Religion," 10 December 2012, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/gulf/uae-religion.htm>

¹⁹³ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "United Arab Emirates," in *2011 Report on International Religious Freedom*, 30 July 2012, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2011/nea/192911.htm>

¹⁹⁴ Global Security, "Religion," 10 December 2012, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/gulf/uae-religion.htm>

¹⁹⁵ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "United Arab Emirates," in *2011 Report on International Religious Freedom*, 30 July 2012, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2011/nea/192911.htm>

¹⁹⁶ Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), "United Arab Emirates," 2012, <http://genderindex.org/country/united-arab-emirates>

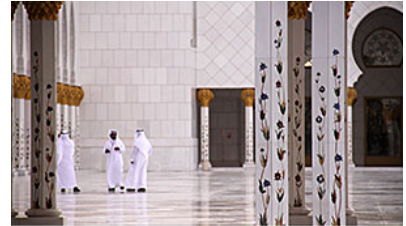
¹⁹⁷ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "United Arab Emirates," in *2011 Report on International Religious Freedom*, 30 July 2012, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2011/nea/192911.htm>

¹⁹⁸ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "United Arab Emirates," in *2011 Report on International Religious Freedom*, 30 July 2012, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2011/nea/192911.htm>

All citizens and residents are expected to follow the ordinances governing public dress and conduct.²⁰³

Daily Life

For both Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, daily life revolves around the mosque. Whereas practicing Christians may go to church once a week, devout Muslims pray in mosques daily. Some offices and business close during prayer times.²⁰⁴ Friday is the Islamic holy day, and weekend days are Friday and Saturday.²⁰⁵



© Iam Chihang
Men in the Sheikh Zayed Mosque

Conservative dress is worn in accordance with Islamic tradition, especially among women, who wear a headscarf and a long garment called an *abaya*. Some more conservative women wear a full face veil.^{206, 207}

Although males and females can meet in public, public displays of affection are prohibited. Men and women are often segregated in the home, socializing separately.^{208, 209}

Islam strongly values hospitality and generosity, which are viewed as hallmarks of Emirati life.²¹⁰ Religious dietary restrictions prohibit the consumption of pork and alcohol.²¹¹

¹⁹⁹ Riazat Butt, "Britons Warned to Respect Ramadan While Holidaying in Dubai," *Guardian*, 31 July 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/jul/31/dubai-tourists-must-respect-ramadan>

²⁰⁰ Expat Arrivals, "Ramadan for Expats in the Middle East," 2013, <http://www.expattarrivals.com/article/ramadan-for-expats-in-the-middle-east>

²⁰¹ Shane McGinley, "'Warning' for Non-Muslims Caught Eating in Public During Ramadan," *Arabian Business*, 10 July 2011, <http://www.arabianbusiness.com/-warning-for-non-muslims-caught-eating-in-public-during-ramadan--409549.html>

²⁰² InterNations, "Living in the UAE," 2013, <http://www.internations.org/uae-expats/guide/living-in-the-uae-15537>

²⁰³ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "United Arab Emirates," in *2011 Report on International Religious Freedom*, 30 July 2012, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2011/nea/192911.htm>

²⁰⁴ Expat Arrivals, "Pros and Cons of Moving to Dubai," 2013, <http://www.expattarrivals.com/dubai/pros-and-cons-of-moving-to-dubai>

²⁰⁵ Dubai Airport, "About Dubai in United Arab Emirates," 2012, <http://www.dubai-airport.info/visiting-dubai/>

²⁰⁶ CultureGrams, "The United Arab Emirates," 2013.

²⁰⁷ Debra A. Miller, "Chapter 4: Tradition, Religion, and Culture," in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Detroit: Lucent Books, 2004), 55.

²⁰⁸ Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), "United Arab Emirates," 2012, <http://genderindex.org/country/united-arab-emirates>

²⁰⁹ CultureGrams, "The United Arab Emirates," 2013.

²¹⁰ Communicaid, "Doing Business in the UAE: UAE Social and Business Culture," 2009, <http://www.communicaid.com/access/pdf/library/culture/doing-business-in/Doing%20Business%20in%20the%20UAE.pdf>

²¹¹ H.G. Carlson, "Emirians (United Arab Emirates): Food," in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life* 3, 2nd ed., eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit: Gale, Cengage Learning, 2009), 239.

Religious Events and Holidays

The widespread practice of Islam throughout the UAE involves the observance of Islamic events and holidays, the dates of which are based on sightings of the moon and therefore vary from year to year.²¹²

Ramadan

Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim calendar, is believed to be the time when Allah revealed the Quran to the Prophet Muhammad. It is a month of fasting, prayer, charity, and goodwill. From sunup to sundown, Muslims abstain from eating, drinking, smoking, and engaging in sex. Although non-Muslims are not expected to observe the fast, they should not eat or drink in public or in front of a fasting Muslim. Families generally get together to break the fast daily after sundown.^{213, 214, 215}



© flickr.com / یمنام
Pages of the Quran

Eid al-Fitr

Eid al-Fitr, the festival of fast breaking, begins the first day after Ramadan; it celebrates the end of Ramadan and lasts three days. During this time, ministries and other government offices are closed. People wear new clothes, engage in community prayers, and visit with friends and relatives. Eid al-Fitr is a time of togetherness and community. Neighbors are invited for meals, and donations of money and food are given to local mosques for charity. Restaurants, cafes, and bakeries experience an upsurge in business as people flock to them for celebratory meals and dishes.^{216, 217, 218, 219}

²¹² National, "UAE Public Holidays for 2013 Announced by Abu Dhabi Government," 30 December 2012, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/uae-public-holidays-for-2013-announced-by-abu-dhabi-government>

²¹³ BBC News, "Ramadan," 22 March 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/islam/ramadan.shtml>

²¹⁴ Dubai Faqs, "Ramadan/Ramadhan in Dubai and the UAE," 2013, <http://www.dubaifaqs.com/ramadan-in-dubai.php>

²¹⁵ Visit Abu Dhabi, "Religion and Ramadan," 2013, <http://visitabudhabi.ae/en/getting.here.and.around/facts.and.essential.info/religion.and.ramadan.aspx>

²¹⁶ Rasha Ellass, "UAE Marks Eid al Fitr," National, 29 September 2008, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/uae-marks-eid-al-fitr>

²¹⁷ Colorado State University, "Islamic Holidays and Observances," n.d., <http://www.colostate.edu/orgs/MSA/events/EUF.html>

²¹⁸ Global Post, "Saudi Arabia Announces Tuesday Start of Eid al-Fitr Holiday," 29 August 2011, <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/culture-lifestyle/world-religion/110829/eid-al-fitr-2011-uae-dubai-mubarak-egypt-ramadan-ends>

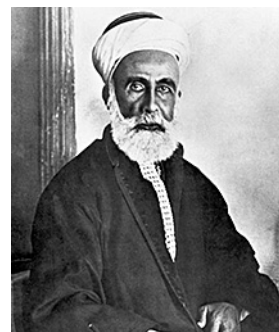
²¹⁹ The Eid, "Eid-ul-Fitr Traditions," 2013, <http://www.theeid.com/eid-ul-fitr-traditions/>

Eid al-Adha

Muslims in the UAE also celebrate Eid al-Adha as an important religious holiday. The four-day event, which commemorates Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son to God, occurs each year the day after the Day of Arafat—a ritual on the *hajj*. The holiday begins with families going to public prayer wearing their finest clothing. Families then visit friends and neighbors, exchanging gifts and feasting. For those who can afford it, a sheep is sacrificed, and one-third of the meat is donated to the poor, with the remaining two-thirds divided among family and friends. Charity is obligatory on Eid al-Adha to allow the poor to participate in the festivities.^{220, 221, 222}

Ashura

Muslims in the UAE celebrate Ashura, or the feast of the tenth day. Among Sunnis, the holiday commemorates Noah's departure from the ark and Moses' exodus from Egypt. Among Shi'a, Ashura is a day of mourning commemorating the martyrdom of Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad. The historic split between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims resulted from this event in 680 C.E., when Hussein and other Shi'a were slaughtered by Sunnis on the battlefield in Karbala, Iraq. Displays of mourning exhibited during Ashura among Shi'a Muslims include beating themselves on the back with chains and ritually cutting themselves. Viewed as a symbolic struggle against injustice, tyranny, and oppression, the holiday was outlawed for a time in Iraq during the rule of Saddam Hussein.^{223, 224}



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Sherif-Hussein

²²⁰ Government of Dubai, "Eid Al Adha in Dubai," 24 February 2013, <http://www.dubai.ae/en/Lists/Articles/DispForm.aspx?ID=68&category=citizens>

²²¹ Khaleej Times, "Dubai Braces for Festivities as Eid Al Adha Falls on Oct 26," 17 October 2012, http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/nationgeneral/2012/October/nationgeneral_October288.xml§ion=nationgeneral

²²² BBC News, "Eid-ul-Adha: 6 November 2011," 19 September 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/islam/eid_haj.shtml

²²³ Religion Facts, "Ashura," 2013, <http://www.religionfacts.com/islam/holidays/ashura.htm>

²²⁴ BBC News, "What Is Ashura?," 6 December 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-16047713>

Buildings of Worship

Mosques, or Muslim houses of worship, are readily found throughout the UAE. Although local mosques are often used for daily worship, many Emiratis tend to visit more prominent mosques for Friday prayers.²²⁵ Women are allowed to enter mosques to worship in segregated areas.²²⁶

One of the most spectacular mosques in the UAE is the Sheikh Zayid Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi. The mosque opened in 2007 and features 82 domes. The main dome is the largest of its kind in the world.²²⁷ The Jumeirah Mosque, in Dubai, was built in the medieval tradition and can hold 1,200 worshippers.²²⁸ Another Dubai mosque, the Grand Mosque, was built in 1900 and has many Persian features, including domes, sky-blue mosaic facades, and stained glass.²²⁹

The specific design of mosques varies, but most have four walls, with the *qibla* the wall that faces Mecca. In the *qibla* is a small niche called the *mihrab*. To the right of the *mihrab* stands a pulpit, or *minbar*, where the imam stands while giving services. Mosques also have a tower known as a minaret from which the calls to daily prayers are issued. Many mosques have an ablution fountain in the center of a courtyard (*sahan*) at which Muslims may conduct ritual washing before prayers.^{230, 231}



© Jan Smith
Grand Mosque, Abu Dhabi

²²⁵ Maps of World, "Mosques in Dubai," 2012, <http://www.mapsofworld.com/dubai/mosques-in-dubai.html>

²²⁶ Sulayman N. Khalaf, "United Arab Emirates: Religion," Countries and Their Cultures, 2013, <http://www.everyculture.com/To-Z/United-Arab-Emirates.html>

²²⁷ Rahat Haque, "Top 10 Heavyweight Mosques," 6 July 2011, <http://listverse.com/2011/07/06/top-10-heavyweight-mosques/>

²²⁸ Emirates, "Jumeirah Mosque," 2013, http://www.emirates.com/english/destinations_offers/discoverdubai/sightseeingindubai/jumeirahmosque.aspx

²²⁹ Maps of World, "Mosques in Dubai," 2012, <http://www.mapsofworld.com/dubai/mosques-in-dubai.html>

²³⁰ Massachusetts Institute of Technology, "2: The Vocabulary of Islamic Religious Architecture," n.d., <http://web.mit.edu/4.614/www/handout02.html>

²³¹ Virginia Polytechnic University, "The Mosque," n.d., 46, <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/theses/available/etd-050599-103655/unrestricted/ch14.pdf>

Behavior in Places of Worship

Many mosques cannot be visited by non-Muslims. The Jumeirah Mosque is the only mosque in Dubai open to non-Muslims.²³² It is a good idea to check with the local police station to find out which mosques may be visited.

Exchange 1: May I enter?

Soldier:	May I enter?	agdar adKhil?
Local:	Yes, but you must remove your shoes.	ee, bas laazim tiKhla' in'aalak

In all cases, etiquette must be observed when entering mosques or holy sites. Shoes should always be removed before entering a mosque. Males should wear clean, long trousers and long-sleeve shirts. Women should cover their heads and wear long skirts and long-sleeve blouses.²³³ Clothing should not have pictures of people or animals in respect for Islamic prohibitions against image-making. For women, the *abaya* (black, cape-like garment worn over daily dress) is preferred.²³⁴

Exchange 2: Do I need to cover my head?

Soldier:	Do I need to cover my head?	laazim aghaTee raasee?
Local:	Yes.	ee

When visiting a mosque or holy site, one should never walk in front of people who are praying; Muslims believe that doing so invalidates the prayers.^{235, 236} Likewise, one should never chew gum or smoke cigarettes in or near mosques or religious places. Laughing, talking, and touching walls and books should also be avoided. Photography, unless permitted on an organized tour, is strictly forbidden.^{237, 238}

²³² Sheikh Mohammed Centre for Cultural Understanding, "Jumeirah Mosque," 2013, http://www.cultures.ae/jumeirah_mosque_visit.php

²³³ Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque Center, "Vision, Mission, and Values," 2012, <http://www.szgmc.ae/en/plan-your-visit#conduct>

²³⁴ Inspiring Travellers, "How to Visit the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi," 23 February 2012, <http://inspiringtravellers.com/2012/02/23/visit-sheikh-zayed-grand-mosque-abu-dhabi/>

²³⁵ Hounslow Jamia Masjid and Islamic Centre, "Etiquettes of Visiting a Mosque," 2009, <http://www.hounslowmasjid.co.uk/page2/page10/page30/page30.html>

²³⁶ Charlotte Jirousek, "Islamic Visual Art," Cornell University, 1995, <http://char.txa.cornell.edu/nonwest/islam/islamhis.htm>

²³⁷ Gregory Rodgers, "Mosque Etiquette: Do's and Don't [sic] When Visiting Mosques," About.com, 2013, <http://goseasia.about.com/od/travelplanning/a/mosque-dos-and-donts.htm>

²³⁸ Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque Center, "Vision, Mission, and Values," 2012, <http://www.szgmc.ae/en/plan-your-visit#conduct>

CHAPTER 2 ASSESSMENT

1. Islam is the official religion of the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

TRUE

Islam is the official religion of the UAE and greatly influences life throughout the nation. Virtually all Emirati are Muslims, with the majority being Sunni (80%–85%).

2. Most of the nation's Shi'a Muslims are concentrated in the al-Buraimi oasis region.

FALSE

Between 15% and 20% of Emiratis are Shi'a, and most live in Dubai and Sharjah. The conservative Wahhabi sect of Sunni Islam is concentrated in the al-Buraimi oasis region.

3. The government monitors religious activity in mosques.

TRUE

The government, which funds or subsidizes about 95% of the Sunni mosques, also monitors and regulates the activities of the mosques in order to guard against religious extremism. The government appoints religious teachers (imams) for Sunni mosques and for some Shi'a mosques (those located in Dubai).

4. Mosques in the UAE are generally open to non-Muslim visitors.

FALSE

Many mosques cannot be visited by non-Muslims. The Jumeirah Mosque is the only mosque in Dubai open to non-Muslims. It is advisable to inquire at the local police station about mosques that may be visited.

5. Burning is a proper method of disposing of old or damaged copies of the Quran.

TRUE

Islam's holy book, the Quran, is regarded by Muslims as sacred. Burning is an acceptable method for disposing of old or damaged copies of the Quran as long as the process is conducted with respect. Texts should not be burned with trash or other items.

CHAPTER 3: TRADITIONS

Introduction

Traditions of Islam, nomadic life, and petroleum-based wealth have shaped the customs and culture of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the modern era.^{239, 240}

In addition to Islam, which inhabitants of the region have practiced since the seventh century, Bedouin heritage, originating in the nomadic desert life of the past, has created the rules and protocol meant to secure the survival of the Emirati today.

Hospitality, which is at the core of Emirati life, stems from desert origins in which survival and trade depended on receiving a warm welcome into a safe environment. Loyalty to tribe and family is also important to the people of the UAE. Most Emiratis describe themselves in terms of their tribe first, followed by their emirate of origin, nationality, and membership in the broader Arab world.^{241, 242}

Money and power flowing from the UAE's vast oil and natural gas reserves have also been influential in shaping Emirati society—leading to the development of a new type of materialism among people of the UAE, who love to showcase their generosity and wealth in many celebrations.^{243, 244} The newfound Emirati wealth has sometimes turned hospitality into competitions over generous displays of wealth.²⁴⁵

Another key value in Emirati culture is friendship, although it is almost always defined along strict gender lines. Rarely is it possible for a man and a woman to enjoy a friendship.²⁴⁶



© Sarah Ackerman
Bedouin tent

²³⁹ John Walsh, "Chapter 2: Values and Attitudes," in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 44–45.

²⁴⁰ Debra A. Miller, "Chapter 4: Tradition, Religion, and Culture," in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Detroit: Lucent Books, 2004), 52–53.

²⁴¹ John Walsh, "Chapter 2: Values and Attitudes," in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 44–45.

²⁴² Debra A. Miller, "Chapter 4: Tradition, Religion, and Culture," in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Detroit: Lucent Books, 2004), 50–51.

²⁴³ John Walsh, "Chapter 2: Values and Attitudes," in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 44–45.

²⁴⁴ John Walsh, "Chapter 3: Customs and Traditions," in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 68.

²⁴⁵ John Walsh, "Chapter 4: Making Friends," in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 85–86.

²⁴⁶ John Walsh, "Chapter 2: Values and Attitudes," in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 44–45.

Greetings

General Greetings

Many aspects of social relations in the UAE are formalized, including greetings. The universal greeting is Salaam aleikum (May peace be with you), to which one responds Wa aleikum as-salaam (And unto you peace). Traditional greetings can last several minutes with inquiries about parents, uncles, and cousins. During face-to-face communication, Emiratis often prefer direct eye contact. But foreign men should be careful not to stare at or hold the gaze of an Emirati woman for too long.

Eye contact is less common when talking to elders since it may be interpreted as a sign of disrespect.^{247, 248}



© Felicité Rustique
Two men in Dubai

Exchange 3: Good morning

Soldier:	Good morning.	SabaaH il Kheyr
Local:	Good morning to you.	SabaaH il Kheyr

Exchange 4: Good afternoon

Soldier:	Good afternoon.	masaa il Kheyr
Local:	Good afternoon to you.	masaa il Kheyr

When men greet each other, they often shake hands lightly; this is followed by placing the right hand on the heart as a sign of respect. Males may grasp each other's right hand and place the left on the other's right shoulder while offering a light kiss once on the right cheek followed by several kisses on the left cheek. Males greeting each other may also touch noses. Women commonly kiss each other several times on the right cheek or touch their left cheek to the other's right cheek. Although men generally greet women verbally rather than physically, if a woman extends her hand, a man may shake it.^{249, 250}

²⁴⁷ John Walsh, "Chapter 4: Making Friends," in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 83.

²⁴⁸ Culture Crossing, "United Arab Emirates: Eye Contact," n.d., http://www.culturecrossing.net/basics_business_student_details.php?Id=10&CID=214

²⁴⁹ Culture Crossing, "United Arab Emirates: Greetings," n.d., http://www.culturecrossing.net/basics_business_student_details.php?Id=7&CID=214

²⁵⁰ CultureGrams, "The United Arab Emirates," 2013.

Exchange 5: Good evening.

Soldier:	Good evening.	masaa il Kheyr
Local:	Good evening to you	masaa il Kheyr

Exchange 6: Good night.

Soldier:	Good night	tiSbaH 'ala Kheyr
Local:	Good night to you.	tiSbaH 'ala Kheyr

Names and Titles

Close friends and same-sex relatives address each other using first names. Professional and personal titles are typically used with acquaintances or people of the opposite sex. Members of the ruling family are addressed by the title Sheik (for males) or Sheikha (for females).²⁵¹

Exchange 7: Are you doing well?

Soldier:	Are you doing well?	inta zeyn?
Local:	Yes.	ee

Exchange 8: How are you?

Soldier:	How are you?	chef Haalak?
Local:	Fine, thank you.	Tayb, shukran

²⁵¹ CultureGrams, “The United Arab Emirates,” 2013.

Adults may be addressed using titles: *um* (mother) for women and *abu* (father) for men, followed by the name of the addressee's oldest son. For example, the mother of Ali might be called Um Ali and his father Abu Ali. Conservative Emiratis never speak the names of their mothers or sisters in public, as a sign of respect.²⁵²

Exchange 9: Hi, Mr. Al-Farsi.

Soldier:	Hi, Mr. Al-Farsi.	ahlan, as sayd il farisee
Local:	Hello.	hala

Exchange 10: God bless you and your family.

Soldier:	God bless you and your family	alla yerHamak oo yerHam waaldeyk
Local:	Thanks to God.	alHamdoo lil laah

²⁵² CultureGrams, "The United Arab Emirates," 2013.

Gender Issues

Before oil was discovered in the UAE, women traditionally worked outside the home and were less likely to wear the full-length Islamic garment known as the *abaya*. But after the discovery of oil and the country's rapid expansion of wealth, women were encouraged to stay home and wear Islamic coverings to protect their honor against the influx of foreign male workers.²⁵³

Many women in the UAE today still live traditional lives as wives and mothers, but many others are pursuing educational and employment opportunities.²⁵⁴ Although more women are opting for careers, many men still prefer wives who remain home to take care of the family. Because of this difference of opinion between the sexes, a large number of women over the age of 30 are remaining unmarried.²⁵⁵ The high cost of dowries is another reason for women remaining single.²⁵⁶



© Liv Unni Sodern
Muslim woman in Dubai

Although women typically have a lower status than men in the Middle East, the gender gap between the two sexes has been narrowing in the UAE, which leads the Arab world in providing educational and professional opportunities for women. But the situation is relative. In the 2010 annual report of the Global Gender Gap, the UAE ranked 103rd out of 134 countries, revealing that women in most of the other countries surveyed enjoy more gender equality than women in the UAE.²⁵⁷ To increase female participation in the labor force, particularly in a decision-making capacity, companies and government agencies in the UAE are now required to appoint women to their boards of directors.²⁵⁸ In 2010, the percentage of women participating in the labor force was 43%. Most (66%) were employed in the public sector.²⁵⁹

Nevertheless, UAE society remains strictly segregated, and women are still unequal in the legal system governing marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance.^{260, 261} Even though more

²⁵³ John Walsh, "Chapter 2: Values and Attitudes," in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 54–55.

²⁵⁴ Debra A. Miller, "Chapter 5: Life in the Modern UAE," in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Detroit: Lucent Books, 2004), 72.

²⁵⁵ Agence France Presse, "Single Female, Over 30 and 'Too Old' to Marry in UAE," *Jakarta Globe*, 4 July 2012, <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/lifeandtimes/single-female-over-30-and-too-old-to-marry-in-uae/528554>

²⁵⁶ Hoda Rashad, Magued Osman, and Farzaneh Roudi-Fahimi, "Marriage in the Arab World" (brief, Population Reference Bureau, September 2005), http://www.igwg.org/pdf05/MarriageInArabWorld_Eng.pdf

²⁵⁷ Zoi Constantine, "UAE Leads Arab World in Gender Equality," *National*, 13 October 2010, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/uae-leads-arab-world-in-gender-equality>

²⁵⁸ Katherine Dudley Hoehn, "This Arab Nation Made It Mandatory for Women to Be in Positions of Power," *Polycymic*, 2012, <http://www.polycymic.com/articles/20737/this-arab-nation-made-it-mandatory-for-women-to-be-in-positions-of-power>

²⁵⁹ Government of Dubai, "UAE Women Statistics," 19 March 2013, <http://www.dwe.gov.ae/stat.aspx>

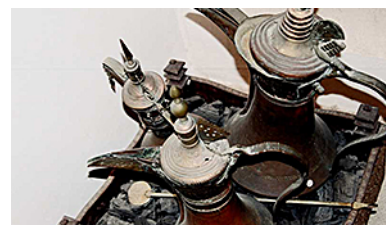
²⁶⁰ Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), "United Arab Emirates," 2012, <http://genderindex.org/country/united-arab-emirates>

women than men now pursue university educations, many Emirati women also use their educational opportunities as a vehicle to find a suitable husband.^{262, 263}

Hospitality and Gifts

Invitations to an Emirati home are relatively rare. It is more common for foreigners and Western guests to be invited to lunch or dinner at a restaurant. On such occasions, bringing a small but meaningful gift is appropriate but not expected. Such gifts generally should not include food or alcohol.²⁶⁴

If invited to the home of an Emirati, it is advisable to be punctual and to dress conservatively. Guests must remove their shoes at the door before entering an Emirati home. Because men and women often socialize separately, men usually meet in a special room called a *majlis*. Upon arrival, men are typically offered a cup of Arabic coffee (*gahwa*) and incense (*bukhoor*). The coffee cups (*finjan*) are small, and protocol deems it polite to accept at least two cups of the steaming brew. To decline, one shakes the empty cup, which otherwise will be refilled.²⁶⁵



© Nada Abdalla
Coffee

It is rare that a male guest will be introduced to his host's wife. Although older male children often join the men, younger children of both sexes stay with the women.²⁶⁶

Exchange 11: I really appreciate your hospitality

Soldier:	I really appreciate your hospitality.	ashkurak 'ala karamak
Local:	You're welcome.	'afwan

Exchange 12: The meal was very good.

Soldier:	The meal was very good.	alwajba Tayba waayed
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²⁶¹ United Nations Children's Fund, "United Arab Emirates: MENA Gender Equality Profile: Status of Girls and Women in the Middle East and North Africa" (UNICEF document, October 2011), 2, <http://www.unicef.org/gender/files/UAE-Gender-Eqaulity-Profile-2011.pdf>

²⁶² Vicky Kapur, "UAE Leads Arab World in Gender Equality: WEF," Emirates 24/7, 3 November 2011, <http://www.emirates247.com/business/uae-leads-arab-world-in-gender-equality-wef-2011-11-03-1.426750>

²⁶³ H.G. Carlson, "Emirians (United Arab Emirates): Gender Issues," in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life* 3, 2nd ed., eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit: Gale, Cengage Learning, 2009), 240.

²⁶⁴ John Walsh, "Chapter 4: Making Friends," in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 87.

²⁶⁵ CultureGrams, "The United Arab Emirates," 2013.

²⁶⁶ CultureGrams, "The United Arab Emirates," 2013.

Local:	Thanks.	shukran
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Food and Eating Habits

Emiratis usually eat three meals a day. Breakfast is served early, often before 6 a.m., followed by lunch between 2 and 3:30 p.m. and dinner between 8:30 and 10 p.m. Although some households have become more Westernized, meals are often eaten while sitting in a circle on the floor, where food is served and eaten from a single platter. If cutlery is not provided, one eats with the right hand. Only the right hand is used for eating because the left hand is reserved for the toilet. Males do not dine with females. Eating commences when the eldest person begins. Emiratis commonly wash their hands before and after meals.^{267, 268, 269}



© krista / flickr.com
Meal in Dubai

Rice is a national staple and is eaten every day. Emirati cuisine also features large amounts of meat, fish, dairy products, and bread. Common spices include thyme, turmeric, saffron, and cardamom. Vegetables and fruit, once difficult to obtain, are now eaten daily; vegetable salads are a common accompaniment to most meals.^{270, 271, 272} *Machboos* is a popular dish consisting of meat, fish, or chicken served with rice and cooked in a sauce. *Margooga* is a stew made from meat, vegetables, and soaked Arabic bread cooked in a spicy broth.^{273, 274}

Exchange 13: Is this food a specialty of the UAE?

Soldier:	Is this food a specialty of the UAE?	tara hal akla eemaaraateya?
Local:	Yes, it is.	ee

²⁶⁷ CultureGrams, “The United Arab Emirates,” 2013.

²⁶⁸ John Walsh, “Chapter 4: Making Friends,” in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 88–89.

²⁶⁹ Robin020, “Eating with Muslims,” Virtual Tourist, 26 January 2012, http://www.virtualtourist.com/travel/Middle_East/United_Arab_Emirates/Abu_Zaby/Abu_Dhabi-1857435/Local_Customs-Abu_Dhabi-TG-C-1.html

²⁷⁰ UAE Travel Guide, “Cuisine in the UAE,” 2013, <http://emiratesvoyage.com/uae-guide/uae-cuisine/>

²⁷¹ H.G. Carlson, “Emirians (United Arab Emirates): Food,” in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life* 3, 2nd ed., eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit: Gale, Cengage Learning, 2009), 239.

²⁷² David C. King, “Food,” in *Cultures of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish Benchmark, 2008), 125.

²⁷³ David Marsha, “Top 5 Must Try Traditional Food [sic] of UAE,” Wonder How To, n.d., <http://excusemewhileidine.wonderhowto.com/inspiration/top-5-must-try-traditional-food-uae-0137844/>

²⁷⁴ Dubai Chew, “Decoding Emirati Cuisine: Your Go-To Guide to the Local Flavor of the Emirates,” n.d., <http://dubaichew.wordpress.com/tag/margooga/>

A popular chicken stew called *dejaj murraq/saloona* is served with rice, bread, and side dishes. Chicken kebabs or *schwarma* is cooked on an open spit, mixed with salad, and eaten with bread and hummus. Another favorite chicken dish, *dej taha tah*, is served with rice, yogurt, limes, and sliced onions. *Kafta* is ground meat cooked much like a hamburger and served with cucumbers, tomatoes, lettuce, and yogurt. Islam prohibits eating pork and drinking alcohol.^{275, 276, 277, 278}

A recent survey suggests that the average Emirati dines out 11 times a week—frequently with friends and family. Many opt for Chinese and Italian cuisine over traditional Arabic fare. Others increasingly choose take-out food, with pizza and Indian cuisine being the most popular.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁵ UAE Travel Guide, “Cuisine in the UAE,” 2013, <http://emiratesvoyage.com/uae-guide/uae-cuisine/>

²⁷⁶ Dubai Chew, “Decoding Emirati Cuisine: Your Go-To Guide to the Local Flavor of the Emirates,” n.d., <http://dubaichew.wordpress.com/tag/margooga/>

²⁷⁷ H.G. Carlson, “Emirians (United Arab Emirates): Food,” in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life* 3, 2nd ed., eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit: Gale, Cengage Learning, 2009), 239.

²⁷⁸ David C. King, “Food,” in *Cultures of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish Benchmark, 2008), 125.

²⁷⁹ James Clarey, “UAE Residents Eat Out 11 Times a Week on Average,” *Hotelier Middle East*, 24 January 2012, <http://www.hoteliermiddleeast.com/13412-uae-residents-eat-out-11-times-a-week-on-average/>

Dress Code

Public attire in the UAE is conservative for both men and women.^{280, 281} Dress codes vary somewhat throughout the country, with residents of Dubai dressing less conservatively.²⁸²

Emiratis generally prefer to wear traditional clothing as a symbol of their national identity. Men often wear a long white robe known as a *dishdasha*, *kandurah*, or *thobe*. They also wear a cloth headdress consisting of a scarf-like portion (*guthra*) and a black cord (*egal*) used to hold the headdress in place, with a cap (*ghafiyah*) underneath. The way the *egal* is worn varies with age and tribal and social affiliations. Some young men simply tie the *guthra* without wearing the *egal*.^{283, 284, 285, 286}



© David Lisbona
Couple in traditional clothing

Exchange 14: Is this okay to wear?

Soldier:	Is this okay to wear?	mumkin albas haay?
Local:	Yes.	ee

²⁸⁰ H.G. Carlson, "Emirians (United Arab Emirates): Clothing," in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life* 3, 2nd ed., eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit: Gale, Cengage Learning, 2009), 239.

²⁸¹ Debra A. Miller, "Chapter 4: Tradition, Religion, and Culture," in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Detroit: Lucent Books, 2004), 55.

²⁸² CultureGrams, "The United Arab Emirates," 2013.

²⁸³ H.G. Carlson, "Emirians (United Arab Emirates): Clothing," in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life* 3, 2nd ed., eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit: Gale, Cengage Learning, 2009), 239.

²⁸⁴ Debra A. Miller, "Chapter 4: Tradition, Religion, and Culture," in *Modern Nations of the World: United Arab Emirates* (Detroit: Lucent Books, 2004), 55.

²⁸⁵ Grapeshisha, "UAE Clothing," 2013, <http://www.grapeshisha.com/about-uae/uae-clothing.html>

²⁸⁶ CultureGrams, "The United Arab Emirates," 2013.

Males in the UAE have traditionally required that after puberty female family members wear a black, full-body robe (*abaya*) with a headscarf (*hijab* or *shaylah*). Women from very religious families are required to wear a face veil (*niqab*) that leaves only the eyes visible. Often, older married women wear a gold-colored face mask (*burqa*). Under the *abaya*, women tend to wear modest dresses or long skirts and blouses, although younger women may wear jeans.^{287, 288, 289}

Exchange 15: How should I dress?

Soldier:	How should I dress?	shinoo albas?
Local:	Dress casually.	ilbas malaabis 'aadeya

Foreigners should avoid wearing short pants, tank tops, sandals, and other revealing clothing outside beach areas. In recent years, Western women have been observed wearing beachwear in shopping malls, supermarkets, and other public places, prompting citizen calls for a federal dress code to discourage tourists from appearing in inappropriate attire.^{290, 291, 292}

²⁸⁷ CultureGrams, “The United Arab Emirates,” 2013.

²⁸⁸ Shatha al-Muttawa, “The Veil,” n.d., <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/~skalmutt/uae/veil.html>

²⁸⁹ World News Australia, “At-a-Glance: Burqa, Niqab, and Hijab,” 30 April 2010, <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/1241972/At-a-glance-Burqa-Niqab-and-Hijab>

²⁹⁰ Katy Watson, “Dubai Dress Code: ‘Cover Up’, UAE Women Tell Foreigners,” BBC News, 5 July 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-18720920>

²⁹¹ Dina al-Shibeeb, “Emirati Women Launch ‘Dress Code’ Campaign to ‘Save Culture,’” Al Arabiya News, 3 June 2012, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/06/03/218302.html>

²⁹² Mariam M. Al Serkal, “Dubai Zoo Gets Strict with Dress Code,” Gulf News, 5 January 2013, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/tourism/dubai-zoo-gets-strict-with-dress-code-1.1127884>

Nonreligious Holidays

New Year's Day (1 January) and National Day or Independence Day (2 December) are nationally celebrated as nonreligious public holidays in the UAE.^{293,294} National Day, a day of great pride for Emiratis, is celebrated with parades, fireworks, concerts, and a variety of other activities. New Year's Day is more widely observed by foreigners.^{295, 296}

Exchange 16: Will you celebrate the festival next week?

Soldier:	Will you celebrate the festival next week?	tara raH tiHtifil bil munaasaba il isboo' il jaay?
Local:	Yes.	ee

²⁹³ National, "UAE Public Holidays for 2013 Announced by Abu Dhabi Government," 30 December 2012, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/uae-public-holidays-for-2013-announced-by-abu-dhabi-government>

²⁹⁴ Q++ Studio, "UAE Public Holidays for 2013," 2013, http://www.qppstudio.net/publicHolidays2013/uae_united_arab_emirates_.htm

²⁹⁵ *Khaleej Times*, "UAE Unites in National Day Celebrations," 3 December 2012, http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=data/nationalday/2012/December/nationalday_December25.xml§ion=nationalday

²⁹⁶ Visit Abu Dhabi, "41st UAE National Day Celebrations," 2013, <http://visitabudhabi.ae/en/events/41st.uae.national.day.celebrations.aspx>

Dos and Don'ts

Do remove your shoes before entering a mosque or a private dwelling.

Do remember that as a Westerner you have a high profile in public places and that your conduct will be observed by the local population.

Do give and receive items with the right hand. The left hand is considered unclean.

Do offer an Emirati something more than once; protocol dictates that one refuses the first offer.

Do dress modestly.

Don't speak to, sit next to, or attempt to contact a member of the opposite sex in public unless the person is a member of your family.

Don't swear or make rude gestures. These are criminal acts in the UAE.

Don't consume alcoholic beverages in public places or offer drinks to Arabs.

Don't enter a mosque unless you have received approval for a visit.

Don't bring a search dog into a private dwelling. They are considered unclean under Islamic law.

Don't take photographs of local people, especially women, without permission. It is illegal and can be prosecuted.

Don't sit in such a way that you show the soles of your shoes or the bottoms of your feet to an Arab.

CHAPTER 3 ASSESSMENT

1. Bedouin traditions play an important role in shaping modern Emirati culture.

TRUE

Emiratis' Bedouin heritage as desert nomads has led to the formation of rules and protocol meant to secure the survival of the Emirati today. Hospitality, which is central to Emirati life, stems from desert origins in which survival and trade depended on a warm reception into a safe environment.

2. Emiratis avoid direct eye contact when communicating face to face.

FALSE

During face-to-face communication, Emiratis often prefer direct eye contact. But foreign men should be careful not to stare at or hold the gaze of an Emirati woman for too long. Eye contact is also discouraged when talking with elders, who may consider it a sign of disrespect.

3. First names are commonly used among close friends in the UAE.

TRUE

Close friends and same-sex relatives address each other using first names. Professional and personal titles are typically used with acquaintances or members of the opposite sex.

4. Women often touch noses as a sign of greeting.

FALSE

When greeting, men may shake hands lightly, offer kisses on the cheek, or touch noses. Women commonly kiss each other several times on the right cheek or touch their left cheek to the other's right cheek.

5. The *egal* is a cord used to hold a man's headdress in place.

TRUE

Emirati men often wear a cloth headdress consisting of a scarf-like portion (*guthra*) and a black cord (*egal*) used to hold the headdress in place. The way the *egal* is worn varies with age and tribal and social affiliations.

CHAPTER 4 URBAN LIFE

Introduction

Only a few decades ago, the area that has become the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was merely scattered villages and a few small towns. Today, more than 80% of the population of the UAE lives in urban areas, largely along the coast.^{297, 298}

The cosmopolitan city of Dubai is one of the world's fastest-growing cities.^{299, 300} Modern skyscrapers, buildings with cutting-edge architecture, and glitzy shopping centers fill the urban centers of the country.^{301, 302, 303} Dubai and Abu Dhabi are home to world-class restaurants, excellent beaches, and high standards of luxury.^{304, 305}



© eGuide Travel / flickr.com
Shopping center in Dubai

²⁹⁷ Zayed University, "The Story of the U.A.E.," n.d., http://www.zu.ac.ae/main/en/_careers/living/story.aspx

²⁹⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, "United Arab Emirates: People and Society," in *The World Factbook*, 15 May 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

²⁹⁹ Definitely Dubai, "Why Dubai?" 2012, <http://visiting.definitelydubai.com/why-dubai>

³⁰⁰ UAE Interact, "Dubai's Urban Landmass Pushing Past 64%," 21 January 2013, http://www.uaeinteract.com/docs/Dubai%E2%80%99s_urban_landmass_pushing_past_64/53001.htm

³⁰¹ Steve Rose, "Towering Follies: The Dubai Architecture You Couldn't Make Up," *Guardian*, 3 December 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2009/dec/03/dubai-architecture>

³⁰² Charlie Hamilton, "UAE World Leader in Mobile Phone Lines," *National*, 12 March 2009, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/uae-world-leader-in-mobile-phone-lines>

³⁰³ Go Dubai, "Glitzy and Hi Tech," n.d., <http://www.godubai.com/shopping/glitzy.html>

³⁰⁴ World Travels, "Dubai Travel Guide," 2013, <http://www.wordtravels.com/Cities/United+Arab+Emirates/Dubai>

³⁰⁵ World Travels, "Abu Dhabi Travel Guide," 2013, <http://www.wordtravels.com/Cities/United+Arab+Emirates/Abu+Dhabi>

Urban Issues

Although residents of the UAE enjoy a high standard of living, rapid urbanization has created environmental and social problems.³⁰⁶, ³⁰⁷ Because the nation is running out of space in its landfills, waste-management is a particular challenge. With per capita household waste-production 30% above levels in other developed countries, new efforts in recycling and green construction are being implemented to tackle the problem.³⁰⁸, ³⁰⁹, ³¹⁰, ³¹¹



© Ahmed Riaz
Recycle station in Dubai

Additionally, groundwater supplies are dropping, forcing cities to rely on desalination plants for potable water. But these plants create carbon-dioxide emissions and generate heated sludge, which is pumped directly back into the sea.³¹², ³¹³, ³¹⁴ The dumping of such sludge has contributed to making the Persian Gulf one of the most polluted regions in the world.³¹⁵

³⁰⁶ Rakhshanda F. Fazli and Rashid Aziz Faridi, "Urbanization in Dubai: Process, Problems and Challenges," *Journal of West Asian Studies* 22, no. 1 (2008): 205, http://www.docstoc.com/docs/23826833/Urbanization-in-Dubai--Process_-Problems-and-Challenges

³⁰⁷ Government of Abu Dhabi, "Environment Conservation in the UAE," 2013, http://www.abudhabi.ae/egovPoolPortal_WAR/appmanager/ADeGP/Citizen?nfpb=true&pageLabel=p_citizen_homepage_hiddenav&lang=en&did=152382#top

³⁰⁸ Rakhshanda F. Fazli and Rashid Aziz Faridi, "Urbanization in Dubai: Process, Problems and Challenges," *Journal of West Asian Studies* 22, no. 1 (2008): 208, http://www.docstoc.com/docs/23826833/Urbanization-in-Dubai--Process_-Problems-and-Challenges

³⁰⁹ *Khaleej Times*, "UAE Intensifies Fight Against Pollution," 16 May 2010, http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data/theuae/2010/May/theuae_May430.xml§ion=theuae

³¹⁰ Mohammed N. Al Khan, "Dubai Running Out of Landfill Space to Dump Its Rubbish," *National*, 23 September 2012, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/dubai-running-out-of-landfill-space-to-dump-its-rubbish>

³¹¹ Colin Saldanha, "Increasing Government Regulations and 'Green Construction' Awareness in UAE Drive Business Growth for AESG," Kipp Report, 20 September 2012, <http://www.kippreport.com/news/press-release/increasing-government-regulations-and-green-construction-awareness-in-uae-drive-business-growth-for-aesg/>

³¹² Sylvia Szabo, "The Water Challenge in the UAE" (policy brief no. 29, Dubai School of Government, December 2011), 3, <http://www.dsg.ae/en/Publication/Pdf/En/127201212127404843750.pdf>

³¹³ Liz Alderman, "Dubai Faces Environmental Problems After Growth," *New York Times*, 27 October 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/28/business/energy-environment/28dubai.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>

³¹⁴ Nick Glass and George Webster, "Counting the Carbon Cost of Bringing Water to the Desert," *CNN*, 20 January 2012, <http://www.cnn.com/2012/01/20/world/meast/carbon-cost-water-uae>

³¹⁵ *Emirates 24/7*, "Oil Pollution Hits UAE's Eastern Shores Again," 11 April 2012, <http://www.emirates247.com/news/emirates/oil-pollution-hits-uae-s-eastern-shores-again-2012-04-11-1.453363>

Construction projects in the UAE have also created pollution problems, including high levels of dust that can cause respiratory problems and toxins from construction sites that kill aquatic life and contaminate groundwater.^{316, 317}

Another major concern for the country is unemployment. Economic expansion has created jobs, but mainly for the expatriate population. Fewer than one-half of Emirati citizens participate in the labor force, and the rate drops even more for women.³¹⁸ According to the UAE's National Bureau of Statistics, the overall unemployment rate in the country was 4.2% in 2012—2.8% for expatriates and 14% for nationals.³¹⁹ The underlying reason for the higher unemployment rate among UAE nationals is that most want government jobs and are unwilling to accept other forms of employment.^{320, 321} Beyond the personal financial difficulties caused by the situation, unemployment potentially threatens the economic stability of the nation.³²²

³¹⁶ AME Info, "UAE Ramps Up Efforts to Curb Construction Pollution," 23 November 2011, <http://www.ameinfo.com/281866.html>

³¹⁷ Jennifer Gray, "Pollution from Construction," Sustainable Build, 1 January 2013, <http://www.sustainablebuild.co.uk/pollutionfromconstruction.html>

³¹⁸ Samer Kherfi, "Unemployment and Labor Market Participation of UAE Youth," *The Social-Economic Situation of Middle East Youth on the Eve of the Arab Spring* (workshop discussion paper, American University of Beirut, 8–9 December 2012), 2–3, http://www.shababinclusion.org/files/1893_file_kherfiuae.pdf

³¹⁹ United Arab Emirates, National Bureau of Statistics, "Unemployment," 2012, <http://www.uaestatistics.gov.ae/EnglishHome/tabid/96/Default.aspx>

³²⁰ Mustafa Ali, "Unemployment Rates in UAE Are Safe for Now," Al-Shorfa, 13 June 2012, http://al-shorfa.com/en_GB/articles/meii/features/main/2012/06/13/feature-02

³²¹ Ingo Forstenlechner et al., "Emiratisation: Determining the Factors that Influence the Recruitment Decisions of Employers in the UAE," *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 23, no. 2 (January 2012): 408, 410, http://www.academia.edu/1083543/Emiratisation_determining_the_factors_that_influence_the_recruitment_decisions_of_employers_in_the_UAE

³²² Ingo Forstenlechner et al., "Emiratisation: Determining the Factors that Influence the Recruitment Decisions of Employers in the UAE," *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 23, no. 2 (January 2012): 406, http://www.academia.edu/1083543/Emiratisation_determining_the_factors_that_influence_the_recruitment_decisions_of_employers_in_the_UAE

Healthcare

The healthcare system, one of the best in the Arab world, guarantees free care to all UAE citizens. Its healthcare services encompass a comprehensive program of free health education, preventative medicine, maternity and child care, and surgical treatment.^{323, 324} The healthcare infrastructure includes an urban network of clinics, medical laboratories, and hospitals.³²⁵

Exchange 17: Is there a medical clinic nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a medical clinic nearby?	akoo 'iyaada SiHeeya gareeba min naa?
Local:	Yes, it is over there.	ee, al 'iyaada ihnaak

Exchange 18: Is there a doctor here?

Soldier:	Is there a doctor here?	akoo duktor min naa?
Local:	No.	laa

Most endemic infectious diseases that once plagued the nation have been largely eradicated. Prenatal and postnatal care are on a par with that of most advanced nations. Both maternal mortality and neonatal mortality rates have significantly declined.^{326, 327}

Exchange 19: My arm is broken, doctor. Can you help me?

Soldier:	My arm is broken, doctor. Can you help me?	Theraa'ee maksoor, tigdar itsaa'idnee?
Local:	Yes, I can help you.	ee, agdar asaa'dak

³²³ Swiss Business Hub GCC, "United Arab Emirates Business Sectors" (report, OSEC Business Network Switzerland, Dubai, 12 June 2012), 6, http://www.osec.ch/de/filefield-private/files/781/field_blog_public_files/10603

²⁸ Elena Schildgen and Zahra Tahsili, "Healthcare in the United Arab Emirates," Lex Arabiae, Meyer-Reumann and Partners, January 2010, <http://lexarabiae.meyer-reumann.com/blog/2010-2/healthcare-in-the-united-arab-emirates/>

³²⁵ Elena Schildgen and Zahra Tahsili, "Healthcare in the United Arab Emirates," Lex Arabiae, Meyer-Reumann and Partners, January 2010, <http://lexarabiae.meyer-reumann.com/blog/2010-2/healthcare-in-the-united-arab-emirates/>

³²⁶ Elena Schildgen and Zahra Tahsili, "Healthcare in the United Arab Emirates," Lex Arabiae, Meyer-Reumann and Partners, January 2010, <http://lexarabiae.meyer-reumann.com/blog/2010-2/healthcare-in-the-united-arab-emirates/>

³²⁷ UAE Interact, "2011 Healthcare Statistics Revealed," 12 December 2012, http://www.uaeinteract.com/docs/2011_healthcare_statistics_revealed/52344.htm

The government healthcare program is augmented by a private healthcare system.^{328, 329} The number of private facilities, including hospitals, is increasing. Some private medical groups in the UAE have signed contracts with U.S. hospitals to develop specialist hospitals. Dubai Healthcare City is one such example and offers international-standard care in many specialties.³³⁰

Exchange 20: Do you need my help?

Soldier:	Do you need my help?	tara tiHtaj moosaa'ati?
Local:	Yes.	ee

Exchange 21: Do you know what is wrong?

Soldier:	Do you know what is wrong	tara tu'ruf shinoo il mushkila
Local:	No.	laa

³²⁸ Elena Schildgen and Zahra Tahsili, "Healthcare in the United Arab Emirates," Lex Arabia, Meyer-Reumann and Partners, January 2010, <http://lexarabiae.meyer-reumann.com/blog/2010-2/healthcare-in-the-united-arab-emirates/>

³²⁹ John Nicholls, "Healthcare in Abu Dhabi: A Beacon for the Middle East," Dell, 9 April 2012, <http://en.community.dell.com/dell-blogs/health-care/b/washington-report/archive/2012/04/09/healthcare-in-abu-dhabi-a-beacon-for-the-middle-east.aspx>

³³⁰ Elena Schildgen and Zahra Tahsili, "Healthcare in the United Arab Emirates," Lex Arabia, Meyer-Reumann and Partners, January 2010, <http://lexarabiae.meyer-reumann.com/blog/2010-2/healthcare-in-the-united-arab-emirates/>

Despite improvements in healthcare, obesity rates have soared in recent years, and the UAE is now the fifth-fattest nation in the world.^{331, 332, 333} Related rates of diabetes are among the world's highest.^{334, 335} Urbanization, increasing prosperity, and a sedentary lifestyle are among the major causes.³³⁶

Education

The UAE spends more for education than almost any other nation in the world.³³⁷ Emiratis, unlike noncitizens, receive free public education from kindergarten through university.^{338, 339,}

³⁴⁰ All citizens must complete 9 years of schooling: primary school (grades 1–5) and secondary school (grades 6–9). Upper secondary school (grades 10–12) is not compulsory.^{341, 342} Following the end of upper secondary school, students may attend a technical school or a university.^{343, 344}



© krebsmaus07 / flickr.com
Children in class

³³¹ Zawya, “UAE Rising to the Challenge of Diabetes—Prince Reviews Novo Nordisk Initiatives in the Region,” 26 February 2013,

http://www.zawya.com/story/UAE_rising_to_the_challenge_of_Diabetes_Prince_Reviews_Novo_Nordisk_Initiatives_in_the_Region-ZAWYA20130226093148/

³³² Tahira Yaqoob, “New Survey Highlights Extent of Obesity Crisis,” National, 6 June 2009, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/health/new-survey-highlights-extent-of-obesity-crisis>

³³³ Safia Fatima Mohiuddin, “Is Obesity the Price UAE Is Paying for Its Prosperity?” Arab Health Blog, 20 February 2013, <http://blog.arabhealthonline.com/is-obesity-the-price-uae-is-paying-for-its-prosperity/>

³³⁴ AME Info, “Dubai Diabetes Summit to Be Held in Dubai from March 18–21,” 8 February 2012, <http://www.ameinfo.com/289503.html>

³³⁵ United Health Group, “Diabetes in the United Arab Emirates: Crisis or Opportunity?” (working paper, 2010), 3, http://www.unitedhealthgroup.com/news/rel2010/UNH_WorkingPaperDiabetesUAE.pdf

³³⁶ Safia Fatima Mohiuddin, “Is Obesity the Price UAE Is Paying for Its Prosperity?” Arab Health Blog, 20 February 2013, <http://blog.arabhealthonline.com/is-obesity-the-price-uae-is-paying-for-its-prosperity/>

³³⁷ Michael Luchies, “United Arab Emirates Education Information and Statistics,” Yahoo! Voices, 13 July 2009, <http://voices.yahoo.com/united-arab-emirates-education-information-statistics-3798640.html?cat=16>

³³⁸ UAE Interact, “Education,” n.d., <http://www.uaeinteract.com/education/>

³³⁹ Thamer Al Subaihi, “The UAE Education System Is Changing for the Better,” National, 17 October 2012, <http://www.thenational.ae/lifestyle/the-uae-education-system-is-changing-for-the-better>

³⁴⁰ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, “2012 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: UAE,” n.d., <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/#wrapper>

³⁴¹ UAE Interact, “Education,” n.d., <http://www.uaeinteract.com/education/>

³⁴² National Qualifications Authority, “The UAE Education System: Overview of Performance in Education” (report, United Arab Emirates, February 2013), 6, <http://www.nqa.gov.ae/En/MediaCenter/Publications/The%20UAE%20Education%20System%20Report.pdf>

³⁴³ UAE Interact, “Education,” n.d., <http://www.uaeinteract.com/education/>

³⁴⁴ Embassy of the United Arab Emirates, Cultural Division, “Education in UAE: K–12 Education,” 2011, <http://www.uaecd.org/k-12-education>

Aside from traditional academic content, public schools in the UAE are charged with strengthening the Muslim faith of students and teaching age-appropriate religious duties. Another educational focus has been the strengthening of UAE cultural identity.³⁴⁵ In reality, few students attend the small number of Islamic schools available. Because the curricula of public schools often fails to meet international accreditation standards, about 40% of Emiratis attend fee-based private schools.^{346, 347, 348}

Exchange 22: Do your children go to school?

Soldier:	Do your children go to school?	awlaadak yerooHoon lil madrasa?
Local:	Yes.	ee

Exchange 23: Is there a school nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a school nearby?	akoo madrasa gareeba min naa?
Local:	Yes.	ee

The school year, lasting 180 days, begins in September and ends in June. In addition to the summer break between mid-June and September, there is a three-week break in mid-December and a two-week break near the end of March.^{349, 350}

³⁴⁵ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, International Bureau of Education, “United Arab Emirates: Basic Education (Primary and Lower Secondary Education),” in *World Data on Education*, 7th ed. 2010/2011 (report, August 2011), http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/WDE/2010/pdf-versions/United_Arab_Emirates.pdf

³⁴⁶ Afshan Ahmed, “Efforts to Boost Islamic Education as Enrolment [sic] Slips,” *National*, 6 December 2011, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/education/efforts-to-boost-islamic-education-as-enrolment-slips>

³⁴⁷ UAE National Bureau of Statistics, “Table 4: Students in Schools of Ministry of Education by Stage, Nationality and Sex, 2010/2011,” 2011, http://www.uaestatistics.gov.ae/ReportPDF/EDU%202010_2011_120912.xls

³⁴⁸ Embassy of the United Arab Emirates, Cultural Division, “Education in UAE: K–12 Education,” 2011, <http://www.uaecd.org/k-12-education>

³⁴⁹ Arabian Campus, “Study in UAE: UAE Education System,” 14 April 2012, <http://www.arabiancampus.com/studyinuae/edusys.htm>

³⁵⁰ Abu Dhabi Government, “Education System in Abu Dhabi,” 2013, http://www.abudhabi.ae/egovPoolPortal_WAR/appmanager/ADeGP/Citizen?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=p19654&lang=en

Restaurants

Restaurants in the main cities of the UAE serve international cuisines and have become quite popular with Emiratis, who on average eat out about 11 times a week.^{351, 352}

Exchange 24: Are you still serving breakfast?

Soldier:	Are you still serving breakfast?	inta lisaa itgadim fuToor / ghaThaa / 'ashaa?
Local:	Yes.	ee

Exchange 25: I'd like a coffee / tea.

Soldier:	I'd like a coffee / tea	law tismaH gahwa / shaay
Local:	Sure.	akeed

Popular local dishes include grilled fish, hummus, a lamb meat patty (*kibbe*), a meat casserole with rice (*machboos*), and chicken kebabs on a stick (*shawarma*). Desserts are usually sweet pastries filled with honey and nuts or a bread pudding with raisins and nuts (*umm ali*).^{353, 354, 355}

Exchange 26: This food is delicious.

Soldier:	This food is delicious.	al akil waayed Tayb
Local:	Thank you.	shukran

Exchange 27: What type of meat is this?

Soldier:	What type of meat is this?	ay no' laHim haay?
Local:	Lamb.	Dhaan

³⁵¹ UAE Interact, "Food and Drink," n.d., <http://www.uaeinteract.com/travel/food.asp>

³⁵² James Clarey, "UAE Residents Eat Out 11 Times a Week on Average," Hotelier Middle East, 24 January 2012, <http://www.hoteliermiddleeast.com/13412-uae-residents-eat-out-11-times-a-week-on-average/>

³⁵³ UAE Interact, "Food and Drink," n.d., <http://www.uaeinteract.com/travel/food.asp>

³⁵⁴ David Marsha, "Top 5 Must Try Traditional Food [*sic*] of UAE," Wonder How To, n.d., <http://excusemewhileidine.wonderhowto.com/inspiration/top-5-must-try-traditional-food-uae-0137844/>

³⁵⁵ Dubai Chew, "Decoding Emirati Cuisine: Your Go-To Guide to the Local Flavor of the Emirates," n.d., <http://dubaichew.wordpress.com/tag/margooga/>

Although many smaller restaurants do not serve pork, some hotels offer non-Muslim guests pork that has been cooked in a separate kitchen.³⁵⁶

Exchange 28: I'd like some schwarma.

Soldier:	I'd like some <i>schwarma</i> .	law tismaH shaawormaa
Local:	Sure.	akeed

Exchange 29: Do you have any dessert?

Soldier:	Do you have any dessert?	'idkum Halaweyaat?
Local:	Yes, we have fruit.	ee, 'idna fawaakih

Major hotels and restaurants catering to foreigners sell alcoholic beverages, although it is illegal to drink on the street.^{357, 358}

Exchange 30: Can you get me my bill?

Soldier:	Can you get me my bill?	mumkin t'Teenee faToorat ilHisaab?
Local:	Sure.	akeed

Exchange 31: Put this all on one bill, OK?

Soldier:	Put this all on one bill.	HuT kulshee if faaToora weHda
Local:	Sure.	akeed

³⁵⁶ Miriam M. Al Sekal, "Tough Penalties for Flouting Rules on Pork Sales," Gulf News, 4 February 2013, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/government/tough-penalties-for-flouting-rules-on-pork-sales-1.1141799>

³⁵⁷ Grapeshisha, "Can You Drink Alcohol in Dubai and Abu Dhabi [*sic*]," 2011, <http://www.grapeshisha.com/about-uae/alcohol-in-dubai.html>

³⁵⁸ UAE Interact, "Food and Drink," n.d., 2013, <http://www.uaeinteract.com/travel/food.asp>

The person who extends the invitation pays the bill.³⁵⁹ Hotel restaurants may add a service charge. Otherwise, it is appropriate to tip about 10–15% of the total bill.³⁶⁰

Exchange 32: Can I have more water?

Soldier:	Can I have more water?	mumkin ta'Teenee maay?
Local:	Sure.	akeed

Marketplace

Shopping is a popular pastime whether in modern malls or traditional markets (*sugs*).³⁶¹

Exchange 33: Is the market nearby?

Soldier:	Is the market nearby?	al soog gareeb min naa?
Local:	Yes.	ee

Shops, whether modern or traditional, tend to operate between 9 a.m.–1 p.m. and 4 p.m.–9 p.m. In the larger cities, malls may be open all day. Shops are open on Friday but close from 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. for Friday prayers.³⁶²

³⁵⁹ Curtin University of Technology (Australia), “United Arab Emirates: Cultural Sensitivity Notes,” *Ethics, Equity and Social Justice* (guidelines, n.d.), <http://eesj.curtin.edu.au/local/documents/UAE.pdf>

³⁶⁰ Grapeshisha, “How Much Should You Tip in Dubai and Abu Dhabi?” 2011, <http://www.grapeshisha.com/plan-your-trip/tipping-in-the-uae.html>

³⁶¹ UAE Interact, “Shopping,” 2013, <http://www.uaeinteract.com/shopping/>

³⁶² UAE Interact, “Opening Hours and Holidays,” 2013, <http://www.uaeinteract.com/travel/holidays.asp>

During Ramadan, shops have reduced hours.³⁶³ Although businesses in larger malls may close for several hours during the day, they reopen in the evening, often until 2 a.m.³⁶⁴

Exchange 34: May I hold this and inspect it?

Soldier:	May I hold this and inspect it?	mumkin amsik haay wo afHaShaa?
Local:	Sure.	akeed

Exchange 35: Do you have any more of these?

Soldier:	Do you have any more of these?	'idkum thaanee min haay?
Local:	No.	laa

Prices are generally cheaper in traditional markets or *souqs*. Although bargaining is part of the shopping experience at such markets, it is important to be good-natured and respectful at all times. Causing someone to lose face is a serious cultural violation.^{365, 366, 367}

Exchange 36: How much longer will you be here?

Soldier:	How much longer will you be here?	ilmeta tkoon min naa?
Local:	Three more hours.	thalaath saa'aat

Exchange 37: I can offer you this much money for this.

Soldier:	I can offer you this much money for this.	mumkin a'Teek hal gad ifloos ilhaay
Local:	No.	laa

³⁶³ Shafaat Shahbandari, "Reduced Work Hours in UAE for Ramadan," Gulf News, 12 July 2012, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/employment/reduced-work-hours-in-uae-for-ramadan-1.1047627>

³⁶⁴ Zoi Constantine, "Malls Cater with Late Hours for Ramadan," National, 9 September 2008, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/malls-cater-with-late-hours-for-ramadan>

³⁶⁵ UAE Interact, "Shopping," 2013, <http://www.uaeinteract.com/shopping/>

³⁶⁶ Julia Nap, "Working in Dubai—Etiquette," Alibaba, 25 September 2006, http://resources.alibaba.com/topic/18011/Working_in_Dubai_etiquette.htm

³⁶⁷ Wise Geek, "What Are Some Middle Eastern Etiquette [*sic*] Tips?" 2013, <http://www.wisegeek.com/what-are-some-middle-eastern-etiquette-tips.htm>

Money and ATMs

The official unit of currency is the UAE dirham (AED). In April 2013, USD 1 equaled about AED 3.6. Moneychangers generally give better rates than banks, which normally charge a commission.^{368, 369}

Exchange 38: Can you give me change for this?

Soldier:	Can you give me change for this?	mumkin ta'Teenee Kherda ilhaay?
Local:	No.	laa

ATMs are readily available on major city streets and in shopping malls. Machines generally accept Cirrus and Plus cards, although “chip” credit cards are occasionally rejected. Nevertheless, credit cards are widely accepted throughout the country, especially at hotels and in major shopping centers. Only cash is accepted in smaller establishments.^{370, 371}

Exchange 39: Do you accept credit cards?

Soldier:	Do you accept credit cards?	tigbaloon baTaqaat maSrafeya?
Local:	Yes.	ee

Exchange 40: Do you accept U.S. currency?

Soldier:	Do you accept U.S. currency?	tigbaloon il 'omla il-amreekeya?
Local:	No, we only accept Dirham.	laa, bas naaKhuTh dirham

³⁶⁸ Oanda, “Currency Converter,” 2 April 2013, <http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>

³⁶⁹ Lonely Planet, “United Arab Emirates: Money and Costs,” 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/practical-information/money-costs>

³⁷⁰ Lonely Planet, “United Arab Emirates: Money and Costs,” 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/practical-information/money-costs>

³⁷¹ Helen Ziegler and Associates, “Frequently Asked Questions—United Arab Emirates,” 2013, <http://www.hziegler.com/articles/united-arab-emirates-faq.html>

Street Vendors

Street vendors must have a license to operate legally, but despite this requirement, unlicensed street vendors can be found on side streets, selling products that may be counterfeit. The police, especially in Dubai, are cracking down on these merchants and confiscating their goods.^{372, 373}



© Jan Smith
Street vendor

Vendors are allowed to sell food on the streets as long as they comply with local regulations.³⁷⁴ *Schwarma* wrapped in unleavened bread is popular street fare. Other common street snacks include falafel and Indian food.³⁷⁵ Generally, food is clean and safe, but food that has been out too long may be contaminated.³⁷⁶

Exchange 41: Did you prepare this food?

Soldier:	Did you prepare this food?	inta jahazit hal akil?
Local:	No.	laa

Exchange 42: Is this food fresh?

Soldier:	Is this food fresh?	hal akil Taazij?
Local:	Yes.	ee

³⁷² Preeti Kannan, "Dubai Municipality Targets Illegal Street Vendors," National, 5 March 2012, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/dubai-municipality-targets-illegal-street-vendors>

³⁷³ WAM, "205 Street Vendors, Beggars Nabbed in Dubai," Emirates 24/7, 18 September 2011, <http://www.emirates247.com/news/emirates/205-street-vendors-beggars-nabbed-in-dubai-2011-09-18-1.419194>

³⁷⁴ AME Info, "Dubai Outlines Food Street Vendor Rules," 26 August 2006, <http://www.ameinfo.com/207655.html>

³⁷⁵ Time Out Abu Dhabi, "6 to Try: Dhahi Street Food," 5 July 2011, <http://www.timeoutabudhabi.com/gallery/25067-6-to-try-dhabi-street-food#.UVtPgFdc13E>

³⁷⁶ Yasin Kakande, "Sharjah Residents Warned over Street Vendor Fare," National, 22 August 2010, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/sharjah-residents-warned-over-street-vendor-fare>

Transportation

Cars

Cars can be rented from major international agencies in all cities. A passport, valid U.S. or European driving license, and a major credit card are the usual documents required for car rental.^{377, 378}

International drivers should be aware that the UAE has one of the highest rates of traffic fatalities in the world, making traffic accidents a leading cause of death in the nation.^{379, 380} Drivers often ignore speed limits and other traffic regulations. Reckless driving habits are not uncommon on intercity highways.³⁸¹



© Vladimir Yaitskiy
Traffic in Dubai

Exchange 43: Is there a gas station nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a gas station nearby?	akoo sheeshat baanzen gareeba min naa?
Local:	Yes, it is on this road.	ee, akoo wiHda fil Tareeg

Exchange 44: Is there a good auto mechanic nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a good auto mechanic nearby?	akoo meekaaneekee zeyn gareeb min naa?
Local:	Yes, there is.	ee, akoo waaHid

³⁷⁷ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "United Arab Emirates Country Specific Information: Traffic Safety and Road Conditions," 19 November 2012, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1050.html#traffic_safety

³⁷⁸ Lonely Planet, "Abu Dhabi: Getting There and Away," 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/abu-dhabi/transport/getting-there-away>

³⁷⁹ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "United Arab Emirates Country Specific Information: Traffic Safety and Road Conditions," 19 November 2012, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1050.html#traffic_safety

³⁸⁰ UAE Interact, "2011 Healthcare Statistics Revealed," 12 December 2012, http://www.uaeinteract.com/docs/2011_healthcare_statistics_revealed/52344.htm

³⁸¹ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "United Arab Emirates Country Specific Information: Traffic Safety and Road Conditions," 19 November 2012, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1050.html#traffic_safety

The nation has a zero-tolerance policy for driving under the influence of alcohol, and violators are subject to imprisonment, fines, and lashings for Muslims, including those who are not citizens of the UAE. Drivers who injure another person in an accident are automatically sent to jail until the victim is released from the hospital. In the case of death, the driver must pay compensation (*dhiyya*), usually in the amount of USD 55,000.³⁸²

Exchange 45: Do you know how to fix this?

Soldier:	Do you know how to fix this?	tu'ruf chef it SaliH haay?
Local:	No.	laa

Exchange 46: Can I rent a car from you?

Soldier:	Can I rent a car from you?	mumkin aaKhuTh sayaara min naa?
Local:	No.	laa

³⁸² Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "United Arab Emirates Country Specific Information: Traffic Safety and Road Conditions," 19 November 2012, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1050.html#traffic_safety

Buses and Taxis

Abu Dhabi and other major urban centers are served by city buses. In Abu Dhabi, the routes tend to be unsuitable for tourists because they primarily lead to destinations such as schools and hospitals.³⁸³ Public buses in Dubai serve mostly lower income expatriates.³⁸⁴

Exchange 47: Will the bus be here soon?

Soldier:	Will the bus be here soon?	al baaS yejee gareeb?
Local:	Yes, it will be here in ten minutes.	ee, ba'id 'ashir dagayeg

Exchange 48: Is there a bus station nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a bus station nearby?	fee maHaTat baaS ibhal manTaqa?
Local:	Yes.	ee

Private and government-run taxis, most of which are metered, are available and are frequently the fastest way to negotiate cities such as Dubai. Women can book “pink taxis” with female drivers.^{385, 386}

Exchange 49: Can I get a cab around here?

Soldier:	Can I get a cab around here?	mumkin aaKhuTh taxsee min naa?
Local:	Yes.	ee

³⁸³ Lonely Planet, “Abu Dhabi: Getting Around,” 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/abu-dhabi/transport/getting-around>

³⁸⁴ Guide 2 Dubai, “Living in Dubai: Transportation in Dubai,” 2013, <http://www.guide2dubai.com/living/transportation-dubai.asp>

³⁸⁵ Lonely Planet, “Abu Dhabi: Getting Around,” 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/abu-dhabi/transport/getting-around>

³⁸⁶ Guide 2 Dubai, “Living in Dubai: Transportation in Dubai,” 2013, <http://www.guide2dubai.com/living/transportation-dubai.asp>

Metro and Trams

Dubai has a new and modern metro system that operates two lines in the city. Cars contain special compartments for women and children. Projects to expand the system are currently underway.³⁸⁷

In another effort to ease traffic congestion in Dubai, a tram network also is under construction. The network, scheduled for completion in 2014, is expected to service about 220,000 commuters around the al-Safouh area of Dubai.³⁸⁸ Ongoing construction of a downtown tram project, when completed, will shuttle passengers between Burj Place, the metro, and the Dubai Mall. The express link of the tram route will feature driverless shuttles.³⁸⁹



© Serge Bystro
Metro station

Water Taxis

Abras, small motorized wooden boats, ferry passengers along waterways or across the Dubai Creek. Water buses also transport passengers and provide a more luxurious option. In 2010, Dubai launched its water taxi service. Taxis are air-conditioned and can transport a maximum of 11 passengers each. These taxis, unlike the smaller *abras* and water buses, are not restricted to the creek and can ply the waters of the gulf.³⁹⁰



© landhere / flickr.com
Water taxis

³⁸⁷ Guide 2 Dubai, "Living in Dubai: Transportation in Dubai," 2013, <http://www.guide2dubai.com/living/transportation-dubai.asp>

³⁸⁸ Guide 2 Dubai, "Living in Dubai: Transportation in Dubai," 2013, <http://www.guide2dubai.com/living/transportation-dubai.asp>

³⁸⁹ Guide 2 Dubai, "Living in Dubai: Transportation in Dubai," 2013, <http://www.guide2dubai.com/living/transportation-dubai.asp>

³⁹⁰ Guide 2 Dubai, "Living in Dubai: Transportation in Dubai," 2013, <http://www.guide2dubai.com/living/transportation-dubai.asp>

Planes

Because travel within the UAE tends to be limited to short distances, domestic air travel has been largely nonexistent until recently.³⁹¹ Although not yet popular, a program is currently underway to develop domestic air travel, with new routes now available from Abu Dhabi to al-Ain and Sharjah. Planes are small, carrying about 50 passengers each.^{392, 393}



© R4vi / flickr.com
Dubai International Airport

Exchange 50: Which direction to the airport?

Soldier:	Which direction to the airport?	ib-ay jiha lil maTaar?
Local:	That way.	min naak

Street Crime and Solicitation

The UAE has a reputation as a low-crime zone, with 97% of respondents in a 2010 national survey reporting that they “feel safe” living in the country.³⁹⁴ Much of the crime in cities like Dubai, considered a “medium risk” city by the U.S. State Department, has been limited to petty theft, assault, and sexual harassment centered in the lower-income areas populated by temporary foreign laborers. Violent crimes are rare.³⁹⁵



© David Lisbona
Police car

Although there were no specific incidents of terrorism in 2011, the threat remains real. A dispute with Iran over the island of Abu Musa continues. In recent years, vessels sailing in the region have been seized and detained by Iranian authorities.³⁹⁶

³⁹¹ Simon Atkinson, “UAE Airline Hopes Domestic Flights Take Off,” BBC News, 17 December 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-20758222>

³⁹² Gulf News, “First Domestic Flight Takes Off from Abu Dhabi Airport,” 19 September 2012, <http://gulfnews.com/business/aviation/first-domestic-flight-takes-off-from-abu-dhabi-airport-1.1078509>

³⁹³ Simon Atkinson, “UAE Airline Hopes Domestic Flights Take Off,” BBC News, 17 December 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-20758222>

³⁹⁴ Jonathan Gornall and Hassan Hassan, “97% Feel Safe in UAE,” National, 23 February 2010, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/97-feel-safe-in-uae>

³⁹⁵ Overseas Security Advisory Council, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, U.S. Department of State, “United Arab Emirates 2013 Crime and Safety Report: Abu Dhabi,” 15 April 2013, <https://www.osac.gov/Pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=13886>

³⁹⁶ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “United Arab Emirates Country Specific Information: Threats to Safety and Security,” 19 November 2012, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1050.html#safety

Another concern in the UAE is that Dubai is becoming increasingly popular among professional beggars who take advantage of the Islamic tradition of charity, especially during Ramadan. Most of the beggars appear to be from other Arab countries and from Asia. Because begging is illegal in the UAE, violators can be arrested and deported if they are foreign nationals. Authorities advise that money should not be given to beggars, and incidents of begging should be reported.^{397, 398, 399, 400}

Exchange 51: Buy something from me.

Local:	Buy something from me.	ishtaree haaThee min nee
Soldier:	No, go away.	laa, waKhir

Exchange 52: Give me money.

Local:	Give me money.	'iTnee floos
Soldier:	No, I don't have any.	laa, maakoo

³⁹⁷ Miriam M. Al Serkal, "Dubai Residents to Be Rewarded for Reporting Beggars," Gulf News, 15 July 2012, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/society/dubai-residents-to-be-rewarded-for-reporting-beggars-1.1049255>

³⁹⁸ Wafa Issa, "Ramadan Beggars Will Face Dubai Police Purge," National, 15 July 2010, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/ramadan-beggars-will-face-dubai-police-purge>

³⁹⁹ Annabel Kantaria, "Beggars, Be Gone," *Telegraph*, 19 July 2012, <http://my.telegraph.co.uk/expat/tag/beggars-in-dubai/>

⁴⁰⁰ Annabel Kantaria, "Beware the Bogus Beggars," *Telegraph*, 30 July 2010, <http://my.telegraph.co.uk/expat/tag/beggars-in-dubai/>

CHAPTER 4 ASSESSMENT

1. Most people in the UAE live in rural areas.

FALSE

Only a few decades ago, the area that has become the UAE was merely scattered villages and a few small towns. Today, more than 80% of the people in the UAE live in urban areas, largely along the coast.

2. Pollution from construction is a major problem in UAE's cities.

TRUE

Construction projects in the UAE have contributed to a rise in pollution—including high levels of dust that can cause respiratory problems and toxins from construction sites that kill aquatic life and contaminate groundwater.

3. A significant number of urban children attend Islamic religious schools in the UAE.

FALSE

Aside from traditional academic content, public schools in the UAE are charged with strengthening the Muslim faith of students and teaching age-appropriate religious duties. Few students attend the small number of Islamic schools available.

4. Bargaining is acceptable in traditional markets (*sucs*).

TRUE

Prices are generally cheaper in traditional markets (*sucs*). Although bargaining is acceptable at such markets, it is important to be good-natured and respectful at all times. Causing someone to lose face is a serious cultural violation.

5. Violent crimes in the cities of the UAE are rare.

TRUE

The UAE has a reputation as a low-crime zone. Much of the crime in cities like Dubai, considered a “medium risk” city by the U.S. State Department, has been limited to petty theft, assault, and sexual harassment. Violent crimes are rare.

CHAPTER 5: RURAL LIFE

Introduction

In the past, Bedouins in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) were goat and camel herders who roamed the Arabian Peninsula in search of food; today most Bedouins have abandoned their nomadic way of life and become part of modern urban culture.⁴⁰¹ Most of those who remain in rural areas struggle as small farmers to grow crops in the harsh desert environment.^{402, 403, 404} Some still live in traditional tents made of goat hair.⁴⁰⁵ Others have opted for modern housing.⁴⁰⁶



© Shankar S. / flickr.com
Goat

Rural Bedouins who have not settled as farmers continue to travel the desert at night, navigating by the stars in search of food and water for their animals. They remain in a place as long as the supply of food and water lasts. When the heat of the desert is at its peak during the summer, many Bedouin settle near oases, sometimes selling animals and buying supplies for their next migration.⁴⁰⁷

The Bedouin are dependent on their clan and kin for survival and maintain strong loyalties to their tribal groups and clansmen.⁴⁰⁸ Their families tend to be larger and have lower household incomes than urban residents.⁴⁰⁹ Marriages between cousins, preferably patrilineal cousins, are

⁴⁰¹ State University, "United Arab Emirates: History and Background," 2013, <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1605/United-Arab-Emirates-HISTORY-BACKGROUND.html>

⁴⁰² Aquastat, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "United Arab Emirates," 2013, http://www.fao.org/nr/water/aquastat/countries_regions/unt_d_arab_em/index.stm

⁴⁰³ Gulf News, "UAE Farmers Urged to Adopt Soilless Methods," 23 March 2013, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/government/uae-farmers-urged-to-adopt-soilless-methods-1.1161904>

⁴⁰⁴ Your Abu Dhabi Guide, "Bedouin People," 2013, <http://www.yourabudhabiguide.com/bedouin-people.html>

⁴⁰⁵ Jeffrey Hays, "Facts and Details: Bedouins," January 2012, <http://factsanddetails.com/world.php?itemid=1969&catid=56&subcatid=371>

⁴⁰⁶ Your Abu Dhabi Guide, "Bedouin People: Traditional Bedouin Life in the UAE Today," 2013, <http://www.yourabudhabiguide.com/bedouin-people.html>

⁴⁰⁷ Jeffrey Hays, "Facts and Details: Bedouins," January 2012, <http://factsanddetails.com/world.php?itemid=1969&catid=56&subcatid=371>

⁴⁰⁸ Jeffrey Hays, "Facts and Details: Bedouins," January 2012, <http://factsanddetails.com/world.php?itemid=1969&catid=56&subcatid=371>

⁴⁰⁹ Department of Economic Development, "Analyzing the Results of the Household Budget Survey" (statistical survey, Emirate of Abu Dhabi, September 2009), <http://ded.abudhabi.ae/Studies%20and%20Reports%20%202/Analyzing%20the%20Results%20of%20the%20Household%20Budget%20SurveyRR.pdf>

preferred, and most marriages involve second or third cousins. It is rare for the Bedouin to marry outside their extended family system.⁴¹⁰

By tradition, households are organized into large groups (*fakhadhs*) that unite to form tribes of about 400 members. The household and *fakhadh* leaders form a council of elders led by the leader of the tribe, known as a sheikh.⁴¹¹ This traditional form of Bedouin governance operates alongside a more formal structure in local governments.⁴¹² Although the nomadic life may be disappearing in the modern era, Bedouin traditions continue to be part of the larger national culture.^{413, 414}

Exchange 53: Do you know this area very well?

Soldier:	Do you know this area very well?	tara tu'ruf hal manTaqa zeyn?
Local:	Yes.	ee

⁴¹⁰ Jeffrey Hays, "Facts and Details: Bedouins," January 2012, <http://factsanddetails.com/world.php?itemid=1969&catid=56&subcatid=371>

⁴¹¹ Jeffrey Hays, "Facts and Details: Bedouins," January 2012, <http://factsanddetails.com/world.php?itemid=1969&catid=56&subcatid=371>

⁴¹² UAE Interact, "Political System," n.d., http://www.uaeinteract.com/government/political_system.asp

⁴¹³ Jeffrey Hays, "Facts and Details: Bedouins," January 2012, <http://factsanddetails.com/world.php?itemid=1969&catid=56&subcatid=371>

⁴¹⁴ John Walsh, "Chapter 2: Values and Attitudes," in *Culture Smart! UAE: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (London: Kuperard, 2008), 44–45.

Agriculture

With 16% of Emiratis remaining in rural areas, agriculture employs about 7% of the population and contributes less than 1% to the nation's GDP (gross domestic product).^{415, 416} Most of the nation's agricultural efforts are located in two emirates: Ra's al-Khaimah and al-Fujairah.⁴¹⁷ Despite the harsh climate, the farmers of the UAE are able to produce enough fruit, vegetables, and fish to meet domestic demand. Major crops include dates, tomatoes, cucumbers, and eggplants.⁴¹⁸



© Emmanuel Eragne
Cattle farm

Farming takes place mostly on small farms scattered throughout the nation. In the UAE's largest emirate, Abu Dhabi, there are about 23,000 citizen-owned farms and a few large government-owned farms. Most of the farms are small, averaging about 2–3 hectares (5–7.5 acres).^{419, 420} Although the government promotes the expansion of as many as 3,000 new farms a year through its subsidy program, farming remains limited by the availability of water for irrigation.⁴²¹

Because of the dry climate and the lack of rainfall, farmers must rely on irrigation to water their crops. Desalinated water is not practical as an alternative for irrigation, forcing many farmers to rely on water drawn from wells.^{422, 423} In the northern emirates, where rainfall is more plentiful, agricultural work goes on year round. Terrace farming is typical in the regions near the al-Hajar Mountains.⁴²⁴

⁴¹⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, "United Arab Emirates," in *The World Factbook*, 15 June 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

⁴¹⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "United Arab Emirates: Agriculture and Fishing," 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/615412/United-Arab-Emirates/214043/Agriculture-and-fishing>

⁴¹⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "United Arab Emirates: Agriculture and Fishing," 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/615412/United-Arab-Emirates/214043/Agriculture-and-fishing>

⁴¹⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "United Arab Emirates: Agriculture and Fishing," 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/615412/United-Arab-Emirates/214043/Agriculture-and-fishing>

⁴¹⁹ Aquastat, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "United Arab Emirates," 2013, http://www.fao.org/nr/water/aquastat/countries_regions/unt_d_arab_em/index.stm

⁴²⁰ Global Alliance of SMEs (GASME), "2011 United Arab Emirates out of a Resource-Friendly Agricultural Development, 2013, http://www.globalsmes.org/news/index.php?func=detail&detailid=975&catalog=34&lan=en&search_keywords=

⁴²¹ Aquastat, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "United Arab Emirates," 2013, http://www.fao.org/nr/water/aquastat/countries_regions/unt_d_arab_em/index.stm

⁴²² National, "We Can't Use Water for Farming in the UAE at This Rate Forever," 28 March 2013, <http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/editorial/we-cant-use-water-for-farming-in-the-uae-at-this-rate-forever>

⁴²³ Rashid Mohamed Al Shariqi, "UAE's Farming Reforms," *Khaleej Times*, 22 February 2012, http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=/data/opinion/2012/February/opinion_February84.xml§ion=opinion

⁴²⁴ Aquastat, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "United Arab Emirates," 2013, http://www.fao.org/nr/water/aquastat/countries_regions/unt_d_arab_em/index.stm

Water conservation efforts are underway to ensure a sufficient irrigation supply.^{425, 426} Another government-backed effort to increase production and reduce reliance on imported food has been the implementation of “soilless” farming, including the use of hydroponics.⁴²⁷ Despite the lack of water, organic farming is expanding to meet strong demand.^{428, 429, 430}

Employment

According to the UAE’s National Bureau of Statistics, the overall unemployment rate in the country was 4.2% in 2012—2.8% for expatriates and 14% for nationals. The overall unemployment rate was higher in rural areas (7.3%) compared to urban areas (3.5%).⁴³¹ But according to analysts, government figures can disguise important differences and variations in the labor market. For example, although about three in four persons of working age were active in the labor force in 2009, only about 47% of Emiratis were employed.⁴³² The underlying reason behind the higher unemployment rate among UAE nationals has been that most want government jobs and are unwilling to accept other forms of employment.^{433, 434}



© Michael Coghlan
Shipyard crew

⁴²⁵ National, “We Can’t Use Water for Farming in the UAE at This Rate Forever,” 28 March 2013, <http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/editorial/we-cant-use-water-for-farming-in-the-uae-at-this-rate-forever>

⁴²⁶ Rashid Mohamed Al Shariqi, “UAE’s Farming Reforms,” *Khaleej Times*, 22 February 2012, http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=/data/opinion/2012/February/opinion_February84.xml§ion=opinion

⁴²⁷ Gulf News, “UAE Farmers Urged to Adopt Soilless Methods,” 23 March 2013, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/government/uae-farmers-urged-to-adopt-soilless-methods-1.1161904>

⁴²⁸ Hermoine Macura, “UAE’s Thriving Organic Farming,” *Arabian Gazette*, 28 July 2012, <http://arabiangazette.com/organic-farming-thriving-uae/>

⁴²⁹ National, “Organic Farming Sprouts in Region,” 15 December 2009, <http://www.thenational.ae/business/retail/organic-farming-sprouts-in-region#full>

⁴³⁰ Zaraimedia, “Organic Farming in Dubai,” 20 January 2013, <http://zaraimedia.com/2013/01/20/organic-farming-in-dubai/>

⁴³¹ United Arab Emirates, National Bureau of Statistics, “Unemployment,” 2012, <http://www.uaestatistics.gov.ae/EnglishHome/tabid/96/Default.aspx>

⁴³² Samer Kherfi, “Unemployment and Labor Market Participation of UAE Youth,” *The Social-Economic Situation of Middle East Youth on the Eve of the Arab Spring* (workshop discussion paper, American University of Beirut, 8–9 December 2012), 2, http://www.shababinclusion.org/files/1893_file_kherfiuae.pdf

⁴³³ Mustafa Ali, “Unemployment Rates in UAE Are Safe for Now,” *Al-Shorfa*, 13 June 2012, http://al-shorfa.com/en_GB/articles/meii/features/main/2012/06/13/feature-02

⁴³⁴ Ingo Forstenlechner et al., “Emiratisation: Determining the Factors that Influence the Recruitment Decisions of Employers in the UAE,” *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 23, no. 2 (January 2012): 408, 410, http://www.academia.edu/1083543/Emiratisation_determining_the_factors_that_influence_the_recruitment_decisions_of_employers_in_the_UAE

The unemployment rate has been particularly high for women, who have relatively limited career choices in the UAE and are restricted to careers considered culturally and religiously appropriate. For example, women cannot work in occupations that require them to be away at night, relocate away from their families, or travel frequently. Because working on farms is generally not considered women's work, many rural women have few opportunities.⁴³⁵

Healthcare

Healthcare, although adequate in the nation's urban areas, may be relatively unavailable in the more remote rural regions of the UAE, particularly in the desert villages.⁴³⁶

To remedy the situation, new primary healthcare clinics have been or are being built in several regions. Each will include laboratories and pharmacies and are designed to offer a variety of services, including treatment for the chronically ill. New hospitals are being built in al-Fujairah, Umm al-Qaiwain, and Sharjah.⁴³⁷ Mobile clinics also serve the rural regions of the country.^{438, 439}

⁴³⁵ Samer Kherfi, "Unemployment and Labor Market Participation of UAE Youth," *The Social-Economic Situation of Middle East Youth on the Eve of the Arab Spring* (workshop discussion paper, American University of Beirut, 8–9 December 2012), 10–11, http://www.shababinclusion.org/files/1893_file_kherfiuae.pdf

⁴³⁶ Smartraveller, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "United Arab Emirates: Health," 22 March 2013, http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/United_Arab_Emirates

⁴³⁷ National, "New Health Care Plan for Remote Rural Areas," 15 April 2011, <http://www.thenational.ae/featured-content/latest/new-health-care-plan-for-remote-rural-areas>

⁴³⁸ Health Authority Abu Dhabi, "Health Statistics 2011" (data, 4 October 2012), C12–C13, <http://www.haad.ae/HAAD/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=JY0sMXQXrOU%3d&tabid=1243>

⁴³⁹ Trade Arabia, "Mobile Diabetes Clinic Tours UAE's Rural Areas," 27 January 2013, http://www.tradearabia.com/news/HEAL_229634.html

Education

Emirati citizens are entitled to free public education from kindergarten through university.^{440, 441} Noncitizen residents must attend fee-based private schools unless they live in remote regions that lack private schools. All citizens must complete 9 years of schooling: primary school (grades 1–5) and secondary school (grades 6–9). Upper secondary school (grades 10–12) is not compulsory.^{442, 443, 444} Following the end of upper secondary school, students may attend a technical school or a university.^{445, 446}



© Jose Jaf
Abu Dhabi University

Every village in the UAE has at least one public primary school. Although about 40% of students nationwide attend private schools, few private schools are available in the most remote rural areas.^{447, 448, 449}

The school year, which lasts 180 days, begins in September and ends in June. In addition to the summer break between mid-June and September, there is a three-week break in mid-December and a two-week break near the end of March.^{450, 451}

⁴⁴⁰ UAE Interact, “Education,” n.d., <http://www.uaeinteract.com/education/>

⁴⁴¹ Thamer Al Subaihi, “The UAE Education System Is Changing for the Better,” National, 17 October 2012, <http://www.thenational.ae/lifestyle/the-uae-education-system-is-changing-for-the-better>

⁴⁴² Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, “2012 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: UAE,” n.d., <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/#wrapper>

⁴⁴³ National Qualifications Authority, “The UAE Education System: Overview of Performance in Education” (report, United Arab Emirates, February 2013), 6, <http://www.nqa.gov.ae/En/MediaCenter/Publications/The%20UAE%20Education%20System%20Report.pdf>

⁴⁴⁴ UAE Interact, “Education,” n.d., <http://www.uaeinteract.com/education/>

⁴⁴⁵ UAE Interact, “Education,” n.d., <http://www.uaeinteract.com/education/>

⁴⁴⁶ Embassy of the United Arab Emirates, Cultural Division, “Education in the UAE: K–12 Education,” 2011, <http://www.uaecd.org/k-12-education>

⁴⁴⁷ Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, “Education,” 2012, <http://www.sheikhmohammed.co.ae/vgn-ext-templating/v/index.jsp?vgnextoid=1e8c4c8631cb4110VgnVCM100000b0140a0aRCRD>

⁴⁴⁸ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, “2010 Human Rights Report: United Arab Emirates,” 8 April 2011, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/nea/154475.htm>

⁴⁴⁹ Embassy of the United Arab Emirates, Cultural Division, “Education in the UAE: K–12 Education,” 2011, <http://www.uaecd.org/k-12-education>

⁴⁵⁰ Arabian Campus, “Study in UAE: UAE Education System,” 14 April 2012, <http://www.arabiancampus.com/studyinuae/edusys.htm>

⁴⁵¹ Abu Dhabi Government, “Education System in Abu Dhabi,” 2013, http://www.abudhabi.ae/egovPoolPortal_WAR/appmanager/ADeGP/Citizen?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=p19654&lang=en

Rural Governance

All powers not specifically under the purview of the federal government are under the authority of the local governments of the seven emirates. In the smallest and most remote rural regions, the ruler of the emirate may choose a local representative who functions as a conduit between the government and the people. Usually, the representative is a respected local figure.⁴⁵²

Exchange 54: Does your sheikh live here?

Soldier:	Does your sheikh live here?	tara ish sheyKh yeskin min naa?
Local:	Yes.	ee

Exchange 55: Can you take me to your sheikh?

Soldier:	Can you take me to your sheikh?	tigdar taaKhiThnee lil sheyKh?
Local:	Yes.	ee

Local systems of governance often coexist alongside community councils that meet to discuss issues of local concern and then inform the leader of the tribe, who makes final decisions.⁴⁵³

Exchange 56: Can I help you?

Soldier:	Can I help you?	agdar asaa'dak?
Local:	I have information for you.	tara 'indee ma'loomaat lak

Exchange 57: Respected sheikh, we need your help.

Soldier:	Respected sheikh, we need your help.	ma'aalee ish sheyKh, niHtaaj musaa'adtak
Local:	I can help you.	agdar asaa'dak

⁴⁵² UAE Interact, "Political System," n.d., http://www.uaeinteract.com/government/political_system.asp

⁴⁵³ UAE Interact, "Political System," n.d., http://www.uaeinteract.com/government/political_system.asp

Transportation

Although roads are generally in good condition throughout the UAE, driving can be dangerous. Incidents of traffic accidents, a leading cause of death in the country, are among the highest in the world.⁴⁵⁴ Motorists often drive unsafely at high speeds, tailgate, ignore lane markings and traffic signals, and pass recklessly.⁴⁵⁵ Other driving hazards include unmarked speed bumps, fog, pedestrians and animals along the roadside, and drifting sands.^{456, 457} Those traveling in more remote desert regions are advised to carry plenty of water and a Global Positioning System to assist in navigation.⁴⁵⁸



© Bob McCaffrey
Rural road

Exchange 58: My car broke down, can you help me?

Soldier:	My car broke down, can you help me?	sayaartee Kharbaana, tigdar itsa'idnee?
Local:	Yes, I can help	ee, agdar asaa'dak

The nation has a zero-tolerance policy for driving under the influence of alcohol; if caught, drivers often remain in jail for many days while awaiting a court appearance. Penalties can include jail time, fines, and lashings, even for U.S. citizens if they are Muslims. If an accident results in the hospitalization of another person, the driver of the car responsible for the accident is placed in jail until the patient is released from the hospital. If an accident results in the death of another, the driver must pay compensation (*dhiyya*), typically about USD 55,000.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁴ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "United Arab Emirates Country Specific Information: Traffic Safety and Road Conditions," 19 November 2012, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1050.html#traffic_safety

⁴⁵⁵ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, "United Arab Emirates: Local Travel," 22 March 2013, http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/United_Arab_Emirates

⁴⁵⁶ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "United Arab Emirates Country Specific Information: Traffic Safety and Road Conditions," 19 November 2012, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1050.html#traffic_safety

⁴⁵⁷ Smartraveller, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "United Arab Emirates: Local Travel," 22 March 2013, http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/United_Arab_Emirates

⁴⁵⁸ Smartraveller, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "United Arab Emirates: Local Travel," 22 March 2013, http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/United_Arab_Emirates

⁴⁵⁹ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "United Arab Emirates Country Specific Information: Traffic Safety and Road Conditions," 19 November 2012, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1050.html#traffic_safety

Buses and minibuses facilitate travel among the emirates.⁴⁶⁰ Taxis are usually available in most towns. For journeys outside cities, the fare usually must be negotiated before entering the taxi.⁴⁶¹

Restrictions for riders often apply to public transportation. In Dubai, for example, intoxicated persons are prohibited from riding on public transport. Passengers may not drink, chew gum, or smoke on public transportation. Violators are subject to fines and can be detained.⁴⁶²

Border Crossings and Checkpoints

The UAE shares land borders with Oman (410 km/255 mi) and Saudi Arabia (457 km/284 mi).⁴⁶³ Individuals who are not citizens of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) are allowed to use border crossings with Oman at al-Darah (at Tibat, for Musandam), Wajaja (Hatta), Khatmat Malahah (near Jebel Hafeet), and al-Hilli (al-Ain-Buraimi). The only land crossing to Saudi Arabia is at Gheweifat, although it is for GCC citizens only.^{464, 465}



© Michael Coghlan
UAE / Oman border

Entering the UAE by sea is possible for non-GCC citizens at Port Khalid in Sharjah, which is served by ferry from Bandar-e Abba in Iran.⁴⁶⁶

Police and military checkpoints may be located throughout the UAE, especially near the border areas. Travelers may be stopped and required to show their passport.^{467, 468}

⁴⁶⁰ Lonely Planet, "United Arab Emirates: Getting Around," 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/transport/getting-around>

⁴⁶¹ Hotel Travel, "United Arab Emirates Travel Guides: Domestic Transport," 1999, <http://www.hoteltravel.com/uae/guides/transport.htm>

⁴⁶² Anglo Info, "Public Transport in Dubai," 2013, <http://dubai.angloinfo.com/information/transport/public-transport/>

⁴⁶³ Central Intelligence Agency, "United Arab Emirates: Geography," in *The World Factbook*, 15 June 2013, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

⁴⁶⁴ Lonely Planet, "United Arab Emirates: Getting There and Away," 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/transport/getting-there-away>

⁴⁶⁵ Bassma Al Jandaly, "New Border Crossing at Hatta to Open Soon," Gulf News, 13 March 2012, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/visa/new-border-crossing-at-hatta-to-open-soon-1.993397>

⁴⁶⁶ Lonely Planet, "United Arab Emirates: Getting There and Away," 2013, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/united-arab-emirates/transport/getting-there-away>

⁴⁶⁷ Expat Woman, "The Hatta Oman Visa Run," 23 January 2013, <http://expatwomandubai.blogspot.com/2013/01/the-hatta-oman-visa-run.html>

⁴⁶⁸ Arabian Business, "UAE Guide: Living and Working in the Emirates," 3 September 2007, <http://www.arabianbusiness.com/uae-guide-living-working-in-emirates-56509.html>

Landmines

There are no known minefields in the UAE, which remains relatively uncontaminated by antipersonnel ordnances. Although the country has expressed interest, the UAE has not yet acceded to the Mine Ban Treaty. But the country has publicly supported international efforts to ban antipersonnel munitions and recently contributed to international mine-clearing operations. According to the government, the UAE does not stockpile mines, but evidence from independent sources disputes this claim.⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁶⁹ Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, “United Arab Emirates: Mine Ban Policy,” 2009, <http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php/publications/display?url=lm/2005/uae.html>

CHAPTER 5 ASSESSMENT

1. About 40% of the population in the UAE lives in rural areas.
FALSE
About 16% of the Emirati population lives in rural areas.
2. Most farms in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi are small, averaging about 2–3 hectares (5–7.5 acres).
TRUE
In Abu Dhabi, the largest emirate, there are about 23,000 citizen-owned farms and a few large government-owned farms. Most of the farms are small, averaging about 2–3 hectares (5–7.5 acres).
3. Healthcare is readily available throughout the rural areas of the UAE.
FALSE
Healthcare, although adequate in the nation’s urban areas, may be relatively unavailable in the more remote regions of the UAE, particularly in the desert villages.
4. The unemployment rate in the UAE is higher in rural areas.
TRUE
According to the UAE’s National Bureau of Statistics, the overall unemployment rate in the country was 4.2% in 2012—2.8% for expatriates and 14% for nationals. The overall unemployment rate was higher in rural areas (7.3%) than in urban areas (3.5%).
5. Most Bedouins continue to live as nomads in the rural areas of the UAE.
FALSE
In the past, bedouins were nomadic herders of camels and goats who roamed the Arabian peninsula in search of food, but today most Bedouins in the UAE have integrated into modern urban culture. Most who have remained in rural areas struggle as small farmers. Some continue to live as nomads.

CHAPTER 6: FAMILY LIFE

Introduction

Family is the backbone of society and the center of social life among the Emirati.^{470, 471, 472} Traditionally, arranged marriages among relatives, particularly first cousins, were common but this practice is changing.^{473, 474} Marriage is an important rite of passage granting prestige and recognition to both spouses.⁴⁷⁵ Modernization has brought changes to the traditional family structure including delayed first marriage, more nuclear households, larger numbers of marriages to non-Emirati, and changing family roles.^{476, 477, 478, 479, 480}



© Srdjan Jovanovic
Smiling men

Being related to the royal families or the ruling tribes in the UAE imparts greater social and economic opportunity.⁴⁸¹ UAE nepotism is the normal way of life.^{482, 483} Marriage is the means

⁴⁷⁰ Hoda Rashad, Magued Osman, and Farzaneh Roudi-Fahimi, "Marriage in the Arab World," (Brief to the Population Reference Bureau, September 2005):1-2, http://www.igwg.org/pdf05/MarriageInArabWorld_Eng.pdf

⁴⁷¹ Sulayman Najm Khalaf, "United Arab Emirates: Marriage, Family, and Kinship," Countries and their Cultures, 2013, <http://www.everyculture.com/To-Z/United-Arab-Emirates.html>

⁴⁷² Fatma Hassan Beshir Gomaa, "Children's Rights in the United Arab Emirates (UAE)," (report for Public Policies and Child Rights Diploma, 2011-2012), 2, <http://dppcr.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/childrens-rights-in-uae-fatma-beshir-cairo.pdf>

⁴⁷³ Hoda Rashad, Magued Osman, and Farzaneh Roudi-Fahimi, "Marriage in the Arab World," (Brief to the Population Reference Bureau, September 2005):1-2, http://www.igwg.org/pdf05/MarriageInArabWorld_Eng.pdf

⁴⁷⁴ Michael Luchies, "United Arab Emirates (UAE) Family and Marriage Information and Statistics," Yahoo, 13 July 2013, <http://voices.yahoo.com/united-arab-emirates-uae-family-marriage-information-3792798.html>

⁴⁷⁵ Hoda Rashad, Magued Osman, and Farzaneh Roudi-Fahimi, "Marriage in the Arab World," (Brief to the Population Reference Bureau, September 2005):3-4, http://www.igwg.org/pdf05/MarriageInArabWorld_Eng.pdf

⁴⁷⁶ Bindu Suiresh Rai, "Single at 30? Why UAE Residents Put Marriage on Hold," Emirates 24/7, 17 March 2013, <http://www.emirates247.com/news/emirates/single-at-30-why-uae-residents-put-marriage-on-hold-2013-03-17-1.498840>

⁴⁷⁷ Susan Muaddi Darraj and Meredyth Puller, *Creation of the Modern Middle East: United Arab Emirates*, (New York: Chelsea House, 2009), 53.

⁴⁷⁸ Samir Salama, "'Encourage Emiratis to Marry UAE Countrywomen,' Federal National Council Tells Government," Gulf News, 30 April 2013, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/government/encourage-emiratis-to-marry-uae-countrywomen-federal-national-council-tells-government-1.1177618>

⁴⁷⁹ Michael Luchies, "United Arab Emirates (UAE) Family and Marriage Information and Statistics," Yahoo, 13 July 2013, <http://voices.yahoo.com/united-arab-emirates-uae-family-marriage-information-3792798.html>

⁴⁸⁰ Bindu Suiresh Rai, "Single at 30? Why UAE Residents Put Marriage on Hold," Emirates 24/7, 17 March 2013, <http://www.emirates247.com/news/emirates/single-at-30-why-uae-residents-put-marriage-on-hold-2013-03-17-1.498840>

⁴⁸¹ Mohamed Branine, "Chapter 15: Arab Countries," in *Managing Across Cultures: Concepts, Policies and Practices*, (London, England: Sage Publications Ltd., 2011), 453-454,

of fortifying and prolonging the existing social structures. By means of arranged marriages, sons marry their cousins or more distant relatives from the same tribe and thereby cement their hold on tribal lands.⁴⁸⁴

Exchange 59: Does your family live here?

Soldier:	Does your family live here?	'aa-iltak yeskinoo min naa?
Local:	Yes.	ee

Tribes are reluctant to grant citizenship to outsiders. Moreover, they are reluctant to share their wealth with foreigners. This explains why Gulf families have been able to resist the encroachment of the twentieth century pan-Arabism of other Arab states. Sons and daughters remain at home until their marriage. After marriage they often live in the family residence for several years until they have achieved financial standing.^{485, 486}

Exchange 60: Did you grow up here?

Soldier:	Did you grow up here?	tara itrabeyt min naa?
Local:	Yes.	ee

<http://books.google.com/books?id=XT3gf5b3iVsC&pg=PA454&lpg=PA454&dq=Nepotism++in+the+UAE&source=bl&ots=6tN7QckTSs&sig=U6KnOcE49wYAvYEt2LpvJ5Q67Qo&hl=en&sa=X&ei=MRRYUovQFqGziwKQ74DICA&ved=0CFgQ6AEwBjgK#v=onepage&q=Nepotism%20%20in%20the%20UAE&f=false>

⁴⁸² World Business Culture, "Business Culture in UAE," 2012, <http://www.worldbusinessculture.com/Doing-Business-in-UAE.html>

⁴⁸³ Nabila Usman, "Nepotism in Dubai," Emiratisation NOW, 28 August 2010, <http://www.emiratisationnow.com/2010/08/nepotism-in-dubai.html>

⁴⁸⁴ William Smyth, "Chapter 1: Historical Setting: Tribal Nature of Gulf Society," in *Persian Gulf States: Country Studies*, Helen Chapin Metz, ed. (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1993): 38-39, <http://countrystudies.us/persian-gulf-states/17.htm>

⁴⁸⁵ Frauke Heard-Bey, "The Tribal Society of the UAE and its Traditional Economy," in *United Arab Emirates: A New Perspective* 2nd ed., Ibrahim al Abed and Peter Hellyer, eds. (London, England: Trident Press Ltd., 2001): 99, 114, http://uaeinteract.com/uaeint_misc/pdf/perspectives/04.pdf

⁴⁸⁶ Sulayman Najm Khalaf, "United Arab Emirates: Marriage, Family, and Kinship," *Countries and their Cultures*, 2013, <http://www.everyculture.com/To-Z/United-Arab-Emirates.html>

Typical Household and Family Structure

Emirati households average around 10 people with rural households generally being even larger.^{487, 488} Fertility is dropping, however, and in 2012, the birth rate had diminished to approximately two children per family.⁴⁸⁹ Historically, Emiratis lived in extended families but today, 80% of families live in nuclear households.⁴⁹⁰ Generally patriarchal, the absolute power and authority of Emirati men within the household has declined.^{491, 492, 493} The oldest male or the father of the family is still considered to be the central authority figure. In decision making, sons defer to their older brothers or fathers.^{494, 495}



Exchange 61: Do you have any brothers?

Soldier:	Do you have any brothers?	akoo 'indak iKhwaan?
Local:	Yes.	ee

⁴⁸⁷ Dubai Statistics Center, Government of Dubai, "Households and Communal Housing by Selected Main Characteristics at the Census years—Emirate of Dubai," 2012, http://www.dsc.gov.ae/Reports/DSC_SYB_2012_01%20_%2004.pdf

⁴⁸⁸ Department of Economic Development, "Analyzing the Results of the Household Budget Survey," p. 2, September 2009, <http://ded.abudhabi.ae/Studies%20and%20Reports%20%202/Analyzing%20the%20Results%20of%20the%20Household%20Budget%20SurveyRR.pdf>

⁴⁸⁹ Ikram al-Yacoub, "UAE Grapples with Rise in Divorces, Drop in Fertility," Al Arabiya News, 17 April 2012, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/04/17/208437.html>

⁴⁹⁰ Sulayman Najm Khalaf, "United Arab Emirates: Marriage, Family, and Kinship," Countries and their Cultures, 2013, <http://www.everyculture.com/To-Z/United-Arab-Emirates.html>

⁴⁹¹ Sulayman Najm Khalaf, "United Arab Emirates: Marriage, Family, and Kinship," Countries and their Cultures, 2013, <http://www.everyculture.com/To-Z/United-Arab-Emirates.html>

⁴⁹² Gina Crocetti Benesh, "Chapter 3: The Emiratis," in *Culture Shock! A Survival Guide to Customs and Etiquette; United Arab Emirates*, (Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish Corporation, 2010), 61-67, <http://books.google.com/books?id=DRqJAAAAQBAJ&pg=PA62&lpg=PA62&dq=patriarchy+in+the+uae&source=bl&ots=aD-8989tbl&sig=mZky01MD9ockg36PimydRptMv8E&hl=en&sa=X&ei=QjZUUs7BK-mmigLHvoCIDw&ved=0CHYQ6AEwCQ#v=onepage&q=patriarchy%20in%20the%20uae&f=false>

⁴⁹³ Yahya El-Haddad, "Major Trends Affecting Families in the Gulf Countries," in *Major Trends Affecting Families* (New York: United Nations, 2003), 12, <http://undesadspd.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=mfxch4leC4s%3D&tabid=282>

⁴⁹⁴ TRADOC, "Arab Cultural Awareness: 58 Factsheets," in *TRADOC DCSINT Handbook no. 2*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, US Army Training and Doctrine Command, January 2006), 57, <http://www.fas.org/irp/agency/army/arabculture.pdf>

⁴⁹⁵ Yusuf M. Sidani and John Thornberry, "The Current Arab Work Ethic: Antecedents, Implications, and Potential Remedies," *Journal of Business Ethics*, 91, no. 1 (2010): 43, http://www.academia.edu/187669/The_Current_Arab_Work_Ethic_Antecedents_Implications_and_Potential_Remedies

The average family in the UAE has male and female domestic servants. Married women commonly have a maid and a nurse if there are more than two children.^{496, 497}

Exchange 62: Are these people part of your family?

Soldier:	Are these people part of your family?	tara haaThol in naas juzo min 'aa-iltak?
Local:	No.	laa

Exchange 63: How many people live in this house?

Soldier:	How many people live in this house?	cham waaHid yeskin min naa?
Local:	Ten.	'ashra

⁴⁹⁶ Sulayman Najm Khalaf, “United Arab Emirates: Marriage, Family, and Kinship,” Countries and their Cultures, 2013, <http://www.everyculture.com/To-Z/United-Arab-Emirates.html>

⁴⁹⁷ Sharmila Dhal, “94% of Dubai Children Reared by Nannies,” Gulf News, 17 March 2011, <http://gulfnews.com/life-style/parenting/94-per-cent-of-dubai-children-reared-by-nannies-1.778358>

Male/Female Interactions within the Emirati Family

Gender roles within Emirati families commonly follow traditional models. Men are responsible for the family's economic well-being.⁴⁹⁸ They are the authority figure in the home and legally entitled to obedience from their wives.⁴⁹⁹ Women are responsible for managing family and domestic affairs including household budgets and supervising servants. Many of the daily household duties, including caring for children, are carried out by servants rather than by Emirati women in the household.^{500, 501, 502, 503}

In accordance with Islamic tradition, men and women are not allowed to mix freely in the UAE, and this extends to the home. Males and females are segregated occupying different social spaces including separate dining and sitting areas as well as separate bathrooms for men and women.^{504,}

⁵⁰⁵ Males and females may dine together, especially when there are no guests, but in large families it is not uncommon for men and women to eat separately.⁵⁰⁶

⁴⁹⁸ Bob Riel, "The Cultural Context—United Arab Emirates," (cultural context profile for Eaton Consulting Group, n.d.), 2, <http://www.bobriel.com/pdf%20files/cultural%20context%20-%20uae.pdf>

⁴⁹⁹ Social Institutions and Gender Index, "United Arab Emirates, 2012, <http://genderindex.org/country/united-arab-emirates>

⁵⁰⁰ Gina Crocetti Benesh, "Chapter 3: The Emiratis," in *Culture Shock! A Survival Guide to Customs and Etiquette; United Arab Emirates*, (Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish Corporation, 2010), 65-66, <http://books.google.com/books?id=DRqJAAAAQBAJ&pg=PA62&lpg=PA62&dq=patriarchy+in+the+uae&source=bl&ots=aD-8989tb1&sig=mZky01MD9ockg36PimydrPtMv8E&hl=en&sa=X&ei=QjZUUs7BK-mmigLHvoCIDw&ved=0CHYQ6AEwCQ#v=onepage&q=patriarchy%20in%20the%20uae&f=false>

⁵⁰¹ Sharmila Dhal, "94% of Dubai Children Reared by Nannies," Gulf News, 17 March 2011, <http://gulfnews.com/life-style/parenting/94-per-cent-of-dubai-children-reared-by-nannies-1.778358>

⁵⁰² United Arab Emirates Ministry of State for Federal National Council Affairs, "Women in the United Arab Emirates: A Portrait of Progress," (report), p. 3, 2008, http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session3/AE/UPR_UAE_ANNEX3_E.pdf

⁵⁰³ Bob Riel, "The Cultural Context—United Arab Emirates," (cultural context profile for Eaton Consulting Group, n.d.), 2, <http://www.bobriel.com/pdf%20files/cultural%20context%20-%20uae.pdf>

⁵⁰⁴ John Walsh, "Chapter 5: The Emiratis at Home," in *Culture Smart!: UAE; The Essential Guide to Customs and Culture*, (London, England: Kuperard: 2008), 95, http://www.amazon.com/UAE-Culture-essential-customs-culture/dp/1857334515/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1381186162&sr=8-1&keywords=culture+and+customs+of+the+UAE#reader_1857334515

⁵⁰⁵ David C. King, *Cultures of the World: United Arab Emirates*, (Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish Benchmark, 2008), 5.

⁵⁰⁶ Ali Al Saloom, "Ask Ali: On Women's Rights in the UAE," The National, 5 April 2012, <http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/culture-comment/ask-ali-on-womens-rights-in-the-uae>

Status of Women

Although women are constitutionally guaranteed equality, discrimination based on gender is not explicitly prohibited.⁵⁰⁷ In spite of being one of the most liberal Gulf States, the UAE ranks low in gender equity according to the 2009 Social Institutions and Gender index.^{508, 509} Women are subject to both legal and economic discrimination. Women may not, for example, marry non-Muslim men. If married to non-Emirati citizens, women may not pass their citizenship on to their children.⁵¹⁰ Although legally allowed freedom of movement within and outside the nation, Emirati husbands and fathers often restrict the right of wives and unmarried daughters to leave the country.⁵¹¹



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Covered women

Women are guaranteed equal rights to education, healthcare, social welfare and work outside the home including equal pay.^{512, 513, 514} Women have made great strides, particularly in the area of education where nearly three out of every four post secondary students are women.⁵¹⁵

Although women have the right to inherit and own land, it is not considered culturally appropriate for women to own property or live alone. Access to bank loans and credit and engaging in business is difficult without the permission of husbands or a male guardian.⁵¹⁶

⁵⁰⁷ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, US Department of State, "United Arab Emirates 2012 Human Rights Report: Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012*, 2012, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/204599.pdf>

⁵⁰⁸ Social Institutions and Gender Index, "United Arab Emirates, 2012, <http://genderindex.org/country/united-arab-emirates>

⁵⁰⁹ BBC News Middle East, "United Arab Emirates Profile," 4 July 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14703998>

⁵¹⁰ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, US Department of State, "United Arab Emirates 2012 Human Rights Report: Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012*, 2012, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/204599.pdf>

⁵¹¹ Social Institutions and Gender Index, "United Arab Emirates, 2012, <http://genderindex.org/country/united-arab-emirates>

⁵¹² Gina Crocetti Benesh, "Chapter 3: The Emiratis," in *Culture Shock! A Survival Guide to Customs and Etiquette; United Arab Emirates*, (Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish Corporation, 2010), 62-63, <http://books.google.com/books?id=DRqJAAAAQBAJ&pg=PA62&lpg=PA62&dq=patriarchy+in+the+uae&source=bl&ots=aD-8989tb1&sig=mZky01MD9ockg36PimydrPtMv8E&hl=en&sa=X&ei=QjZUUs7BK-mmigLHvoCIDw&ved=0CHYQ6AEwCQ#v=onepage&q=patriarchy%20in%20the%20uae&f=false>

⁵¹³ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, US Department of State, "United Arab Emirates 2012 Human Rights Report: Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012*, 2012, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/204599.pdf>

⁵¹⁴ United Arab Emirates Ministry of State for Federal National Council Affairs, "Women in the United Arab Emirates: A Portrait of Progress," (report), p. 3, 2008, http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session3/AE/UPR_UAE_ANNEX3_E.pdf

⁵¹⁵ Natasha Ridge, "Why Women Graduates Outnumber Men in the UAE," Gulf News, 14 April 2011, <http://gulfnews.com/gn-focus/getex/why-women-graduates-outnumber-men-in-the-uae-1.790849>

Emirati women participate in all areas of public life including all branches of government.⁵¹⁷ Several women hold cabinet posts and some are members of the judiciary.^{518, 519} Others have joined the armed forces, police and customs agencies. Women compose approximately two-thirds of the public workforce.⁵²⁰ Some females, including those from the royal family, have competed in past Olympics.^{521, 522}

Status of Elders and Children

Elderly

Emiratis place a high value on family and on the idea that it is the responsibility of children to care for their aging parents. Because the overwhelming majority of elderly prefer to live with family and because most families prefer to keep aging relatives at home, there are few elder care facilities throughout the nation.^{523, 524, 525}



© David Lisbona
Elderly man at market

Modernization has affected family structure and values, however, particularly toward the elderly. The role of the elderly within the family is no longer as strong as it once was. Although children are taught to respect and revere their elders, traditional forms of authority within the family are weakening including elder authority.⁵²⁶

⁵¹⁶ Social Institutions and Gender Index, “United Arab Emirates, 2012, <http://genderindex.org/country/united-arab-emirates>

⁵¹⁷ Paula Vine, ed., “Chapter 17: Women,” in *The United Arab Emirates Yearbook* (London, England: Trident Press, 2010), 189, http://www.uaeinteract.com/uaeint_misc/pdf_2010/Yearbook2010_EN/#190

⁵¹⁸ Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations, “Women in UAE,” n.d., <http://www.un.int/wcm/content/site/uae/cache/offonce/home/pid/19817>

⁵¹⁹ United Arab Emirates Ministry of State for Federal National Council Affairs, “Women in the United Arab Emirates: A Portrait of Progress,” (report), p. 4, 2008, http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session3/AE/UPR_UAE_ANNEX3_E.pdf

⁵²⁰ Paula Vine, ed., “Chapter 17: Women,” in *The United Arab Emirates Yearbook* (London, England: Trident Press, 2010), 189, http://www.uaeinteract.com/uaeint_misc/pdf_2010/Yearbook2010_EN/#190

⁵²¹ Paula Vine, ed., “Chapter 17: Women,” in *The United Arab Emirates Yearbook* (London, England: Trident Press, 2010), 189, http://www.uaeinteract.com/uaeint_misc/pdf_2010/Yearbook2010_EN/#190

⁵²² Marisa Nickle, “Arabian Cultural Briefing Handout,” (Brief: Greater Seattle International Study Mission, 2009): 6, <http://seattletradealliance.com/events/uae/images/culture/cultural-guide.pdf>

⁵²³ Marwan Asmar, “Most Families Have Positive Attitudes Towards Elderly—Survey” Gulf News, 12 September 2003, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/general/most-families-have-positive-attitudes-towards-elderly-survey-1.365605>

⁵²⁴ Mitya Underwood, “Elderly Emiratis A Key Part of Family Life,” The National, 5 October 2013, <http://www.thenational.ae/uae/health/elderly-emiratis-a-key-part-of-family-life>

⁵²⁵ Aisha Zayed Al Ali, “Aging in the UAE and Services Available for the Elderly: Structured Interviews with Experts in the Field,” (Policy brief, Dubai School of Government, February 2013), 2, http://www.dsg.ae/portals/0/Publications/PolicyBreif_34_en.pdf

Children

Children are welcome in Emirati families and more children may be viewed as a testament to the virility of the father.⁵²⁷ Many parents, however, surrender the actual duties of raising the children to maids and nannies.⁵²⁸ Childhood, like much of life in the UAE, is strongly influenced by religion. Parents take great care to ensure their children are raised to be good Muslims and daily study of the Quran is an integral piece of children's daily lives.⁵²⁹ Children are raised together until about the age of eight when they are segregated with girls sequestered in a separate part of the house.⁵³⁰



© Land Rover MENA / flickr.com
Children with their father

Children's lives are not, however, always easy. Recent reports show that as many as 42% of UAE children suffer from neglect and 25% from abuse.⁵³¹ To reduce these rates, the government implemented a federal child protection law and policies are being developed throughout the emirates to protect children and educate children on the importance of good parenting.^{532, 533, 534}

⁵²⁶ Yahya El-Haddad, "Major Trends Affecting Families in the Gulf Countries," in *Major Trends Affecting Families* (New York: United Nations, 2003), 6, <http://undesadspd.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=mfxch4leC4s%3D&tabid=282>

⁵²⁷ Grapeshia, "Family and Women in Arab Culture," n.d., <http://www.grapeshisha.com/about-uae/arabs-and-women.html>

⁵²⁸ Rayeesa Absal, "Parents Warned on Child-rearing," Gulf News, 1 February 2012, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/education/parents-warned-on-child-rearing-1.974121>

⁵²⁹ John Walsh, "Chapter 5: The Emiratis at Home," in *Culture Smart!: UAE; The Essential Guide to Customs and Culture*, (London, England: Kuperard: 2008), 101, http://www.amazon.com/UAE-Culture-essential-customs-culture/dp/1857334515/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1381186162&sr=8-1&keywords=culture+and+customs+of+the+UAE#reader_1857334515

⁵³⁰ John Walsh, "Chapter 5: The Emiratis at Home," in *Culture Smart!: UAE; The Essential Guide to Customs and Culture*, (London, England: Kuperard: 2008), 99, http://www.amazon.com/UAE-Culture-essential-customs-culture/dp/1857334515/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1381186162&sr=8-1&keywords=culture+and+customs+of+the+UAE#reader_1857334515

⁵³¹ Noorhan Barakat, "Neglect of Children is Most Common Form of Abuse in UAE," Gulf News, 25 July 2012, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/crime/neglect-of-children-is-most-common-form-of-abuse-in-uae-1.1053671>

⁵³² Shafaat Shahbandari, "Zero Tolerance for Child Abuse in UAE," Gulf News, 20 November 2012, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/society/zero-tolerance-for-child-abuse-in-uae-1.1107692>

⁵³³ Noor Nazzal, "Child-abuse Awareness Campaign Held in Dubai," Gulf News, 26 April 2013, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/education/child-abuse-awareness-campaign-held-in-dubai-1.1175495>

⁵³⁴ Gulf News, "UAE Tackles Child Abuse with Sharjah Helpline," Akbawabam 5 August 2013, <http://www.albawaba.com/editorchoice/uae-tackles-child-abuse-helpline-511794>

Marriage and Divorce

Marriage

Although all Emirati are expected to marry and raise a family, many Emirati are postponing marriage or foregoing it altogether. The average age of marriage for Emirati men is 26 with some waiting into their thirties.⁵³⁵ Spinsterhood, once nearly unheard of, is increasing as more women choose to remain unmarried. In 2012, approximately 60% of women over 30 were not married, up from 20% in the mid 1990s.⁵³⁶

Though a man may have up to four wives under Islamic law, having a second wife is infrequent, and third and fourth wives are rare.⁵³⁷ In order to legally marry another wife, the law requires that the man get permission from his current wife/wives. A man must also be financially able to provide for all wives equally.⁵³⁸ Many second marriages are to a foreign wife.⁵³⁹ Muslim Emiratis, whether male or female, may not marry a non-Muslim.⁵⁴⁰



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Family in the park

Exchange 64: Are these your children?

Soldier:	Are these your children?	tara haaThol awlaadak?
Local:	Yes.	ee

Emirati men are allowed to marry non-Emirati women but the practice is causing concern among officials. A law restricting marriages to non-Emirati women is under consideration, requiring men to get permission from the Ministry of Interior before marrying a foreigner.⁵⁴¹ Over one-third of marriage contracts in the UAE involved marriages between Emirati men and foreigners

⁵³⁵ Ikram al-Yacoub, "UAE Grapples with Rise in Divorces, Drop in Fertility," Al Arabiya News, 17 April 2012, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/04/17/208437.html>

⁵³⁶ Bindu Suresh Rai, "Single at 30? Why UAE Residents Put Marriage on Hold," Emirates 24/7, 17 March 2013, <http://www.emirates247.com/news/emirates/single-at-30-why-uae-residents-put-marriage-on-hold-2013-03-17-1.498840>

⁵³⁷ Dubai Statistics Center, Government of Dubai, "They Polygamy Rate is 2.2% Among Citizens and 1% Among Expatriates," 25 June 2012, <http://www.dsc.gov.ae/en/newsmedia/newsreleases/pages/detail.aspx?newsid=98>

⁵³⁸ Social Institutions and Gender Index, "United Arab Emirates, 2012," <http://genderindex.org/country/united-arab-emirates>

⁵³⁹ Dubai Statistics Center, Government of Dubai, "They Polygamy Rate is 2.2% Among Citizens and 1% Among Expatriates," 25 June 2012, <http://www.dsc.gov.ae/en/newsmedia/newsreleases/pages/detail.aspx?newsid=98>

⁵⁴⁰ Gabriel Sawma, "The Law of Marriage and Divorce in the United Arab Emirates," 13 March 2012, <http://gabrielsawma.blogspot.com/2012/03/uae-islamic-divorce-in-united-states.html>

⁵⁴¹ Alexandra Sandels, "United Arab Emirates: Top Religious Leader Calls for Restrictions on Marriages to Foreigners," *Los Angeles Times*, 28 August 2010, <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/babylonbeyond/2010/08/dubai-top-religious-leader-calls-for-curbing-mixed-marriages.html>

in 2011 compared to only 4% for Emirati women and foreigners.⁵⁴² In addition to social and cultural concerns, such marriages often end in divorce. Between 37% and 39% of these mixed marriages ended in divorce in 2011.^{543, 544}

Exchange 59: Is this your entire family?

Soldier:	Is this your entire family?	haay kul 'aa-iltak?
Local:	No.	laa

Legally, men must pay a dowry, or *mahr*, to his intended bride which becomes solely her property.⁵⁴⁵ The government encourages prospective grooms to reduce the price of the dowry to reduce overall wedding costs. Dowries can range from less than 1 USD to 13,600 USD.^{546, 547D}

Divorce

The UAE has the highest divorce rate in the region. It was estimated to be between 30%-33% in 2009.^{548, 549} Polygamy has been identified as a major factor in divorce with nearly 32% of divorces citing bigamy as the main reason for seeking divorce.⁵⁵⁰ Other significant factors include poor communication and economic difficulty.⁵⁵¹

The process and consequences of divorce are different for men and women. Men may obtain a divorce without any judicial process through the process of repudiation. Women, on the other hand, must petition the courts and go through “guidance” and “arbitration” processes before a

⁵⁴² National Bureau of Statistics, United Arab Emirates, “Marriage Contracts and Divorce Certificates Registered at Courts by Spouse Nationality and Emirate, 2011,” 2011

<http://www.uaestatistics.gov.ae/EnglishHome/tabid/96/Default.aspx>

⁵⁴³ Mohammed Al Sadafy, “Emiratis Advised To Not Wed Foreign Women,” Emirates 24/7, 20 January 2012, <http://www.emirates247.com/news/emirates/emiratis-advised-to-not-wed-foreign-women-2012-01-20-1.438608>

⁵⁴⁴ National Bureau of Statistics, United Arab Emirates, “Marriage Contracts and Divorce Certificates Registered at Courts by Spouse Nationality and Emirate, 2011,” 2011

<http://www.uaestatistics.gov.ae/EnglishHome/tabid/96/Default.aspx>

⁵⁴⁵ Gabriel Sawma, “The Law of Marriage and Divorce in the United Arab Emirates,” 13 March 2012, <http://gabrielsawma.blogspot.com/2012/03/uae-islamic-divorce-in-united-states.html>

⁵⁴⁶ Oanda, “Currency Converter,” 9 October 2013, <http://www.oanda.com/>

⁵⁴⁷ Wam, “The Lowest Dowry Paid in Dubai in 2011 Was...,” Emirates 24/7, 23 May 2012, <http://www.emirates247.com/news/emirates/the-lowest-dowry-paid-in-dubai-in-2011-was-2012-05-23-1.460025>

⁵⁴⁸ Shveta Pathak, “10 Reasons Why UAE Marriages Fail,” Gulf News, 4 September 2013, <http://gulfnews.com/about-gulf-news/al-nisr-portfolio/xpress/news/10-reasons-why-uae-marriages-fail-1.1227513>

⁵⁴⁹ Loveday Morris, “Statistics Illuminate Life in Abu Dhabi, from Cradle to Grave,” *The National*, 12 August 2010, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/statistics-illuminate-life-in-abu-dhabi-from-cradle-to-grave>

⁵⁵⁰ Eman Al Baik, “Polygamy a Major Cause of Divorce: Study,” Khaleej Times, 9 December 2005, http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=data/theuae/2005/December/theuae_December248.xml§ion=theuae

⁵⁵¹ Shveta Pathak, “10 Reasons Why UAE Marriages Fail,” Gulf News, 4 September 2013, <http://gulfnews.com/about-gulf-news/al-nisr-portfolio/xpress/news/10-reasons-why-uae-marriages-fail-1.1227513>

divorce can be granted. Women may request a khula divorce, to which the husband must consent. In this type of divorce, a woman forfeits her dowry and the right to financial support from the husband.^{552, 553, 554}

UAE joint custody of children laws do not exist. Men are viewed as the natural guardians of children although women retain physical, if not legal, custody of any children. Following divorce, girls stay with their mothers until the age of 13 and sons until the age of 10 when custodial arrangements are revisited. Women who remarry lose custodial rights to the children.^{555, 556} Fathers are required to provide support for children but often fail to do so.⁵⁵⁷ If a woman with young children remarries, she jeopardizes those custodial arrangements. The young children may be placed in the custody of her female relatives until they reach the age where they must return to their father's household—usually 10 for boys and 13 for girls.^{558, 559}

Divorced women are often stigmatized and have difficulty remarrying. A failed marriage is seen as being the woman's fault. Families may disown their divorced daughters, exclude them from inheritances, or require the women to move back to her parents' house.⁵⁶⁰

⁵⁵² Social Institutions and Gender Index, "United Arab Emirates, 2012, <http://genderindex.org/country/united-arab-emirates>

⁵⁵³ Gabriel Sawma, "The Law of Marriage and Divorce in the United Arab Emirates," 13 March 2013, <http://gabrielsawma.blogspot.com/2012/03/uae-islamic-divorce-in-united-states.html>

⁵⁵⁴ United Nations Children's Fund, Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa, "United Arab Emirates: MENA Gender Equality Profile; Status of Girls and Women in the Middle East and North Africa," (Report), p. 2, October 2011, <http://www.unicef.org/gender/files/UAE-Gender-Eqaulity-Profile-2011.pdf>

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⁵⁵⁷ Ayesha Almazroui, "Single Mothers in UAE Will Shoulder Blame After Most Divorces," The National, 7 March 2013, <http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/comment/single-mothers-in-uae-will-shoulder-the-blame-after-most-divorces>

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Family Social Events

Weddings

The preferred time for wedding in the UAE is summer.⁵⁶¹ In Emirati culture, wedding ceremonies are not officiated by an imam (Muslim cleric). Instead, signing the wedding contract (*nikah*) constitutes the religious portion of the ritual. Once the paperwork is completed, the celebrations, can begin. Most celebrations last approximately three days but they can go on for a week or more. Before the actual wedding day, there are often a series of parties held at home. One of the parties will most certainly be a henna party (*Laylat al Henna*) where a prospective bride is painted with elaborate henna designs. During a second party, known as the “gold night,” the bride is given gold jewelry from the groom as a part of her dowry. The last night of celebrations is the actual wedding and is commonly held at a wedding hall or hotel.⁵⁶²



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Groom's welcome party

Emirati weddings, like much of life in the emirates, are segregated with separate parties for males and females. Both parties typically involve eating traditional foods, conversation and dancing. Once the men have concluded their festivities, the groom goes to the women's party to meet his bride. At this time, all guests, save for immediate family, depart.^{563, 564}

Weddings are major and expensive affairs often costing upwards of 136,000 USD.^{565, 566} To help defray the costs, Sheik Zayid bin Sultan al Nahyan established a wedding fund in 1992. The intent of the fund, in addition to defraying the high costs of weddings, was to discourage young couples from putting off their marriages because of economic burdens. Couples can receive up to 27,220 USD from the fund.⁵⁶⁷

⁵⁶¹ WAM, “Classy Weddings with a Traditional Touch,” Gulf News, 10 May 2009, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/heritage-culture/classy-weddings-with-a-traditional-touch-1.68255>

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⁵⁶⁴ Grapeshia, “Weddings in the UAE,” n.d., <http://www.grapeshisha.com/about-uae/uae-weddings.html>

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⁵⁶⁷ Oanda, “Currency Converter,” 9 October 2013, <http://www.oanda.com/>

Funerals

Emirati funerals follow Islamic rituals and Sharia law. The deceased should be buried on the same day as death or as quickly thereafter as possible. The body must be washed and then dried. Next, it is perfumed with several scents before being wrapped in clean white sheets (*kafan*). The body is then carried to the mosque by male friends and relatives where a prayer for the dead is offered. The body is then carried to the cemetery where it is buried, with no coffin. The grave is covered with a layer of tiles and soil.^{568, 569}

Mourners, which can include non-Muslims, pray for the deceased and offer their sympathies to the family. Female relatives may go to the cemetery but they must remain separated from the men. For three days following the death, friends and family arrive to offer sympathies to the deceased's family. Males and females conduct these visits in separate parts of the house.⁵⁷⁰

The clothing and personal effects of the deceased are generally given away because the Emirati believe it is better to give to the needy than to keep the items at home.⁵⁷¹

⁵⁶⁸ Wafa Issa, "Traditional Burial and Funeral Rituals," Gulf News, 30 May 2009, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/heritage-culture/traditional-burial-and-funeral-rituals-1.70229>

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Births

Births are a cause for celebration among the Emirati, especially if the child is male. Immediately after birth, the father takes the child and whispers the call to prayer (*adhan*) into the child's ear. This ensures that the first word the child hears is "Allah."^{572, 573,}
⁵⁷⁴ Sometimes, a softened date is rubbed on the baby's gums.^{575,}
⁵⁷⁶ Newborn males are circumcised at the hospital usually before going home.^{577, 578}



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 Father and son

Once home, guests visit the mother and her baby. Within the first weeks of birth, the father arranges a party called an *aqiqa* which involves slaughtering an animal to provide food for guests and neighbors. Portions of the feast are often given to the poor. Men recite verses from the Quran.^{579, 580} One tradition still followed by many is shaving the baby's head. The hair is then weighed and an equivalent weight of silver is given to charity.⁵⁸¹

⁵⁷² Islamic Resource and Information Service (IRIS), "Family," n.d., <http://www.iris.org.nz/family.php>

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⁵⁷⁴ Squeakies, "Cultural and Religious Traditions," Baby Center, 30 January 2009, http://community.babycentre.co.uk/post/a1474135/cultural_and_religious_traditions

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Naming Conventions

Names among the Emirati often reflect strong traditions based on Islam and Arabic culture. Nearly every Emirati family will have at least one member named Fatima and Mohammad.⁵⁸² Names in the UAE generally have numerous parts: the first or personal name, father's first name, grandfather's first name, and a family name. Names may also include an honorific, a tribal or regional name, and an ancestral name.^{583, 584}



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Girl in Dubai school

For example, in 2013, the name of the president of the UAE was Khalifa (first name) bin (son of) Zayid (father's name) Al Nahyan (family name). This literally means Khalifa, son of Zayid, Al Nahyan.^{585, 586}

Women's names follow a similar pattern except that "bin" (son of) is changed to "bint" (daughter of). For example, the name of the senior wife of the 2013 prime minister is Hind (first name) bint Maktoum (father's name) bin Juma (grandfather's name) Al Maktoum (family name) literally meaning Hind, daughter of Maktoum son of Juma, Al Maktoum.^{587, 588, 589} Women do not generally change their names once they marry but they may adopt the husband's family name. The title '*haram*,' '*hurma*,' or '*hurmat*' (meaning wife of) may be used in front of a name such as *hurma* Mohammad bin Ahmad Al Qasimi which means wife of Mohammad, son of Ahmad, Al Qasimi.⁵⁹⁰

⁵⁸² Fatma Salem, "Arabic Names Carry Cultural Significance," Gulf News, 31 July 2010, <http://gulfnews.com/uaessentials/events-calendar/arabic-names-carry-cultural-significance-1.661762>

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CHAPTER 6 ASSESSMENT

1. Emirati families are typically large averaging around 10 people per family.

True

Emirati households average around 10 people with rural households generally being even larger.

2. Divorce is prohibited in the UAE.

False

Both men and women may initiate a divorce though the process is different. The UAE has the highest divorce rate in the region. It was estimated to be between 30%-33% in 2009.

3. Polygamy is legal in the UAE.

True

Though a man may have up to four wives under Islamic law, having a second wife is infrequent, and third and fourth wives are rare.

4. Discrimination based on gender is prohibited by the national constitution.

False

Although women are constitutionally guaranteed equality, discrimination based on gender is not explicitly prohibited.

5. Emiratis are prohibited from marrying non-Emirati.

False

Emiratis are allowed to marry foreign nationals and non-Emirati. Emiratis may not, however, legally marry a non-Muslim.

FINAL ASSESSMENT

1. The al-Hajar Mountains form part of the border with Saudi Arabia.
True or False?
2. Foreign residents make up about 85% of the population of the UAE.
True or False?
3. The United Arab Emirates has one of the freest economies in the world.
True or False?
4. In the seventh century, Islam was readily accepted by the people living in what today is the UAE.
True or False?
5. The territories of what is today the UAE were protected by Britain prior to independence.
True or False?
6. Citizens of the UAE are free to choose their own religion.
True or False?
7. It is illegal to eat or drink in public during the daylight hours of Ramadan in the UAE.
True or False?
8. Men and women must remain segregated in public.
True or False?
9. Friday is the holy day for Muslims.
True or False?
10. Eid al-Fitr is the feast of slaughter signaling the end of the hajj pilgrimage season.
True or False?
11. Males and females often socialize separately in the home.
True or False?
12. The UAE has one of the highest levels of gender equality in the Arab world.
True or False?

13. Today, a large number of young women in the UAE are not getting married.
True or False?
14. Federal law requires women in the UAE to wear a full face veil.
True or False?
15. National identity is the most important aspect of personal identity among the Emirati.
True or False?
16. Fewer than one-half of Emirati citizens participate in the labor force.
True or False?
17. It is inappropriate to tip in restaurants in the UAE.
True or False?
18. All Emirati citizens are guaranteed free healthcare.
True or False?
19. Because Emiratis prefer to eat at home, they rarely eat out.
True or False?
20. Shops in the UAE are closed all day on Friday.
True or False?
21. A sheikh is traditionally the leader of a tribe.
True or False?
22. Education is mandatory for all citizens of the UAE through grade 12.
True or False?
23. Traffic accidents are a leading cause of death in the UAE.
True or False?
24. The UAE's border with Saudi Arabia is contaminated by landmines.
True or False?
25. Farmers in the UAE are able to produce enough fruit, vegetables, and fish to meet domestic demand.
True or False?

26. Women are not permitted to work outside the home in the UAE.
True or False?

27. Most Emirati children are raised by nannies or housemaids.
True or False?

28. The majority of Emirati live in extended households.
True or False?

29. Men must pay a dowry to women in order to marry.
True or False?

30. Women are prohibited from burial services.
True or False?

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