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CHAPTER 1: PROFILE

Introduction

The Palestinian people have lived for centuries in a land considered strategically important by larger regional and global powers. This has set the stage for a dramatic history that chronicles the Palestinian people's constant struggle to retain their identity. In the course of this struggle, Palestinians have been at the epicenter of many conflicts that have shaped the world.

Because they have lost the majority of the land they once lived on, Palestinians are now scattered. Even though more than 4 million people live in the Palestinian Territories, many of these are refugees from lands that now make up the country of Israel. Millions of other Palestinians are refugees in the neighboring Arab states of Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan. These Palestinian refugees have lived in poverty for several generations.



© Hanini.org / Wikimedia.org
Palestinian girl with flag

Just as the Palestinian people are divided, so are the Palestinian Territories. The territories comprise the Gaza Strip along the Mediterranean Sea and the West Bank of the Jordan River. Since 2007, the terrorist group Hamas has controlled the Gaza Strip, supplanting the legal government there of the Palestinian Authority (PA). Forced to declare a state of emergency, PA President Mahmud Abbas has governed the West Bank by decree since 2008.

The Palestinian people have lost more than their political freedom as a result of infighting. Media freedom is virtually nonexistent in both territories. The respective regimes use the media to circulate their propaganda, and have resorted to violence and coercion to access media.

The traditional economy and occupations have been drastically altered. Agriculture was once the backbone of the Palestinian economy. But in a community crammed into refugee camps and overcrowded cities, little agricultural land remains.

Population shifts have also affected Palestinian communities. In the West Bank, towns and cities that were once predominantly Christian are now majority Muslim. Additionally, Israeli Jewish settlers continue to build new settlements in the West Bank, which is now 17% Jewish. In the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip, Shi'a Islam is making inroads into a community that was solely Sunni.

Geography

The Palestinian Territories comprise the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The Gaza Strip is a short, strategic stretch of flat coastal plain along the eastern Mediterranean Sea. It is bordered by Israel to the north and east (51 km, 32 mi) and Egypt to the south (11 km, 7 mi). In total size, it measures 360 sq km (139 sq mi), more than twice the size of Washington, DC. The climate is temperate. Winters are mild (average highs are 13°C,

55°F) and summers are dry and hot (average highs are 27°C, 81°F). About 29% of the land is arable.^{1, 2}

The West Bank is higher in elevation than the Gaza Strip. The Samaritan and Judean hills run along a north–south axis through much of the West Bank. The territory borders Israel to the west, north, and south (307 km, 191 mi); its eastern border is defined by the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, which narrowly separate the West Bank from Jordan (97 km, 60 mi). The higher elevations receive an average annual rainfall of approximately 69 cm (27 in), but areas closer to the Dead Sea receive considerably less. About 16.9% of the land is arable.^{3, 4} Winters are a bit colder in the West Bank, where temperatures average 11°C (52°F). Likewise, summer is a little milder than in the Gaza Strip, with an average temperature of 20–25°C (68–77°F).⁵

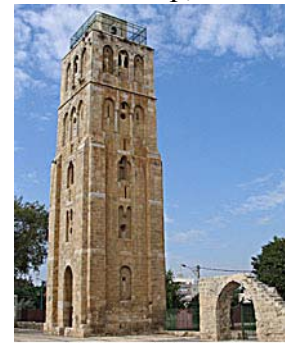


© Maglanist / Wikimedia.org
Judean Hills

History

From Ancient Times to the 1800s

The land known today as the Palestinian Territories has been populated by agriculturists since 8000 B.C.E. Throughout history, the territory has been controlled by various groups, including the Phoenicians, Israelites, Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Ottomans, and British.^{6, 7, 8, 9}



© דגנליא / Wikimedia.org
Ramla mosque built 720 A.D.

¹ Central Intelligence Agency, “Gaza Strip: Geography,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

² *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Gaza Strip: Geography,” 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/227456/Gaza-Strip/279791/Geography>

³ Central Intelligence Agency, “West Bank: Geography,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “West Bank: Geography,” 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/640076/West-Bank>

⁵ Fadia Daibes-Murad, *A New Legal Framework for Managing the World’s Shared Groundwaters: A Case Study from the Middle East* (London, UK: IWA Publishing, 2005), 329.

⁶ Norman K. Gottwald, “Chapter 5: The Historical Subject: Israel in Canaan 1250–1000 B.C.E.,” in *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel 1250–1050 BCE* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 32–44.

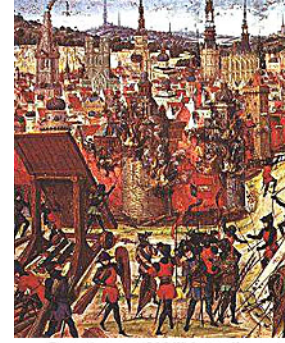
⁷ Laura S. Etheredge, ed., *Historic Palestine, Israel, and the Emerging Palestinian Autonomous Areas* (New York: Britannica Educational Publishing, 2011), 19.

⁸ Andrew Schein, “Institutional Reversals and Economic Growth: Palestine 1516–1948,” *Journal of Institutional Economics* 8, no. 1 (March 2012): 119–141.

⁹ David Aberbach, “The Roman-Jewish Wars and Hebrew Cultural Nationalism,” *Nations and Nationalism* 6, no. 3 (2000): 347–362.

Though the region was converted to Christianity under Roman rule, most inhabitants changed their religion to Islam during the Umayyad rule in the seventh century.^{10, 11, 12}

Europeans seized control of Jerusalem during the crusades of the 11th century and established four Christian states in what is today Syria, Lebanon, and Israel (including the Palestinian Territory). But their gains in the region were temporary until the late 1800s.^{13, 14}



Courtesy of Wikimedia.org
Capture of Jerusalem in 1099

In 1878, the community of Petach Tiqva was established and became the first modern Zionist settlement. The Zionists were Jews, initially primarily from Europe, who believed that the scattered Jewish peoples should return to the Holy Land to reclaim their inheritance from ancient Israelite ancestors. The Zionist movement continued to gain momentum throughout the latter part of the 19th century.^{15, 16} The *First Aliyah*, a major wave of Jewish Zionist immigration from Europe and Yemen to Ottoman-controlled Palestine, occurred in the late 1890s. But the new arrivals met resistance from both Muslims and the Old Yishuv, a small number of Jews who had remained in Palestine since ancient times.¹⁷



© Aron / Wikimedia.org
Current view of Petach Tikva

British Occupation, UN Partition, and the State of Israel

The increasing numbers of Zionist Jews from Central and Eastern Europe immigrating to Palestine antagonized the Muslim Palestinians.^{18, 19} In addition, the British had promised

¹⁰ The Roman Empire ruled Palestine from the first century B.C.E. until about 640 C.E. During that time, most of its inhabitants converted to Christianity. See Robert Schick, *The Christian Communities of Palestine from Byzantine to Islamic Rule: A Historical and Archaeological Study* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995).

¹¹ Nehemia Levtzion, "Chapter 16: Conversion to Islam in Syria and Palestine and the Survival of Christian Communities," in *Indigenous Christian Communities in Islamic Lands: Eighth to Eighteenth Centuries*, eds. Michael Gervers and Ramzi Jibran Bikhazi (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1990), 289–312.

¹² Oleg Grabar, *The Dome of the Rock* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

¹³ Ralph-Johannes Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader States, 1096–1204* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

¹⁴ Samih K. Farsoun and Naseer H. Aruri, *Palestine and the Palestinians: A Social and Political History* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2006), 27–29.

¹⁵ Gwyn Rowley, "Israel and the Palestinian Refugees: Background and Present Realities," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 9, no. 2 (1977): 81–89.

¹⁶ Margalit Shilo, "The Immigration Policy of the Zionist Institutions," *Middle Eastern Studies* 30, no. 3 (1994): 597–617.

¹⁷ Ruth Kark and Michal Oren-Nordheim, "Chapter 5: Agricultural Settlement in Jerusalem's Rural Periphery: Plans, Attempts, Successes," in *Jerusalem and Its Environs: Quarters, Neighborhoods, Villages, 1800–1948* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2011), 294–359.

¹⁸ Aharon Kellerman, "Settlement Myth and Settlement Activity: Interrelationships in the Zionist Land of Israel," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 21, no. 2 (1996): 363–378.

the Arabs an independent state in exchange for helping topple the Ottoman Empire during World War I. But the British reneged on their promises. A secret 1916 agreement between the United Kingdom, France, and Russia placed Palestine and the other Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire under British and French control.^{20, 21}

On 2 November 1917, British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour issued the Balfour Declaration, stating that Britain would support the creation of an independent Jewish state in Palestine. (This move was later supported by U.S. President Harry S. Truman.)^{22, 23, 24, 25} The terms of the League of Nations' British Mandate for Palestine, which came into effect in September 1923, legitimated British control of the region.²⁶



© G. Eric Edith Matson / flickr.com
Churchill at Jerusalem meeting

Organized Arab resistance to British occupation began in 1919 when the First Palestinian National Congress met in Jerusalem. Here they demanded full independence for Palestine, which they considered part of Syria.²⁷ By the 1930s, the Palestinians had revolted and resorted to armed conflict in protest.²⁸ Initial diplomatic attempts to appease the Palestinians failed. Subsequently, in the late 1930s, British authorities established military courts and a counterinsurgency paramilitary unit to deal with Palestinian militants.^{29, 30, 31, 32, 33}

¹⁹ Yosef Gorny, "Thoughts on Zionism as a Utopian Ideology," *Modern Judaism* 18, no. 3 (October 1998): 241–251.

²⁰ *The Avalon Project*, "The Sykes-Picot Agreement: 1916," Lillian Goldman Law Library, Yale Law School, 2008, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/sykes.asp

²¹ Isaiah Friedman, "The McMahon-Hussein Correspondence and the Question of Palestine," *Journal of Contemporary History* 5, no. 2 (1970): 83–122.

²² William M. Mathew, "War-Time Contingency and the Balfour Declaration of 1917: An Improbable Regression," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 40, no. 2 (Winter 2011): 26–42.

²³ Lawrence Davidson, "Truman the Politician and the Establishment of Israel," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 39, no. 4 (Summer 2010): 28–42.

²⁴ Benny Morris, "Chapter 4: The Second Wave: The Mass Exodus, April–June 1948," in *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 262.

²⁵ Jonathan Q.C. Newell, "Learning the Hard Way: Allenby in Egypt and Palestine, 1917–19," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 14, no. 3 (1991): 363–387.

²⁶ Dov Gavish, *A Survey of Palestine Under the British Mandate, 1920–1948* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

²⁷ Mark A. Tessler, *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 155.

²⁸ James Barker, "Monty and the Mandate," *History Today* 59, no. 3 (March 2009): 30–34.

²⁹ Penny Sinanoglou, "British Plans for the Partition of Palestine, 1929–1938," *The Historical Journal* 52, no. 1 (March 2009): 131–152.

³⁰ Eugene Rogan, *The Arabs: A History* (Philadelphia: Basic Books, 2009), 205–206.

³¹ G.W. Treadwell, *Military Courts Manual* (London: Solicitors' Law Stationery Society, 1945), vi.

³² Samuel Katz, *Israeli Elite Units Since 1948* (New York: Osprey Publishing, 1988), 4–7.

In 1947, the United Nations' Special Committee on Palestine recommended that Palestine be separated into Jewish and Palestinian states. This proposal was rejected by the Arab League, an international organization aimed at promoting the shared interests of the Arab peoples. In September, the British announced that they would end their Mandate.^{34, 35} The UN General Assembly voted in November in favor of the Special Committee's plan to split the territory.

Palestine's Jewish community proclaimed the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, sending thousands of Arab Palestinians fleeing to neighboring countries.^{36, 37} The Law of Return, passed by the Israeli parliament in 1950, declared the right of all Jews to immigrate to the new Jewish state and provided assistance with settling there. This profoundly altered Israel's demographics and created a need for additional land.³⁸ Numerous armed conflicts between Israel and the Palestinians have occurred since then.^{39, 40}



© Adnanmuf / Wikimedia.org
Refugee camp in Syria 1948

Expansion of Israel

The 1948 Arab-Israel War marked the first major armed conflict. The Israelis fought invading armies from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria to a standstill. A 1949 armistice ended hostilities and left three-quarters of Palestine under Israeli control. Egypt assumed stewardship of the Gaza Strip, and Jordan took control of and eventually annexed the West Bank.⁴¹ In the aftermath of the war and subsequent territorial divisions, several hundred thousand Palestinians were left as refugees in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria.⁴²

³³ Yoav Gelber, "The Mission of the Jewish Parachutists from Palestine in Europe in World War II," *Studies in Zionism* 7, no. 1 (1986): 51–76.

³⁴ David Tal, "The Forgotten War: Jewish-Palestinian Strife in Mandatory Palestine, December 1947–May 1948," *Israel Affairs* 6, nos. 3–4 (Spring/Summer 2000): 3–21.

³⁵ Harold M. Cubert, *The PLFP's Changing Role in the Middle East* (Portland, OR: Frank Crass, 1997), 41.

³⁶ Nadav Safran, "Chapter 5: The War of Independence and the Birth of Israel," in *Israel, the Embattled Ally* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 43–66.

³⁷ Benny Morris, *1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

³⁸ Ruth Gavison, "Chapter 1: Aliyah and the Law of Return," in *The Law of Return at Sixty Years: History, Ideology, Justification* (position paper, The Metzilah Center for Zionist, Jewish, Liberal and Humanist Thought, Jerusalem July 2010), 23,
http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/Delivery.cfm/SSRN_ID1951784_code819270.pdf?abstractid=1951784&mirid=5

³⁹ Nadav Safran, "Chapter 5: The War of Independence and the Birth of Israel," in *Israel, the Embattled Ally* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 43–66.

⁴⁰ Benny Morris, *1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

⁴¹ Yehuda Lukacs, *Israel, Jordan, and the Peace Process* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 118.

⁴² Hilde Henriksen Waage, "The Winner Takes All: The 1949 Island of Rhodes Armistice Negotiations Revisited," *Middle East Journal* 65, no. 2 (Spring 2011): 279–304.

Israel's Arab neighbors lost more territory during the Six-Day War of 1967. Israel launched preemptive strikes against gathering Arab forces and destroyed the Egyptian Air Force on the ground. The Israel Defense Force's (IDF) occupation of the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights also delivered a major blow to Palestinian aspirations for an independent state. At the subsequent Khartoum Conference of August–September 1967, Arab delegates rejected a secret Israeli offer to return the occupied territories in exchange for a peace agreement.^{43, 44}

Egyptian forces were defeated again during the Yom Kippur War of 1973. The fighting began when Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel. Israel responded by driving the Syrians back to the outskirts of Damascus and cutting off the Egyptian Third Army in the Sinai—significantly weakening the Palestinians' staunchest supporters.⁴⁵

Continuing to plot against Israel, the Arab countries cited the plight of the Palestinians as the reason for continued fighting.^{46, 47}

Palestinian Militancy

Prior to the establishment of Israel in 1948, the Arab League organized an armed force drawn from member states in 1947.^{48, 49} Within a decade of the creation of the Arab Liberation Army (ALA), Yasser Arafat, at the time a civil engineer living in Kuwait, and his business associates established the Palestinian liberation group called Fatah. Fatah has served as the main Palestinian liberation group since its creation in 1956.⁵⁰ Fatah continues to wield considerable influence in the Palestinian Territories today.



© World Economic Forum
Yasser Arafat

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), also sponsored by the Arab League, was founded in 1964 to serve as an umbrella for the various Palestinian resistance groups.⁵¹ After Jordan expelled the PLO and other Palestinian militants in

⁴³ Elizabeth Stephens, "America, Israel, & the Six Day War," *History Today* 57, no. 6 (June 2007): 12–19.

⁴⁴ Yoram Meital, "The Khartoum Conference and Egyptian Policy after the 1967 War: A Reexamination," *Middle East Journal* 54, no. 1 (Winter 2000): 64–82.

⁴⁵ Simon Dunstan, *The Yom Kippur War: The Arab-Israeli War of 1973* (New York: Osprey Publishing, 2007).

⁴⁶ Motti Golani, "Shall We Go to War? And If We Do, When? The Genesis of the Internal Debate in Israel on the Road to the Sinai War," *Israel Affairs* 6, nos. 3–4 (Spring/Summer 2000): 22–42.

⁴⁷ Michael B. Oren, "Escalation to Suez: the Egypt-Israel Border War, 1949–56," *Journal of Contemporary History* 24, no. 2 (April 1989): 347–373.

⁴⁸ Uri Milstein and Alan Sacks, "Chapter 10: The Battle for the Frontier Settlements," in *History of the War of Independence: The First Month: Volume II* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1997), 262.

⁴⁹ Efraim Karsh, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: The 1948 War* (New York: Rosen Publishing, 2009), 42–43.

⁵⁰ Altaf Gauhar and Yassir Arafat, "Yassir Arafat," *Third World Quarterly* 8, no. 2 (April 1986): 399–410.

⁵¹ Avner Yaniv, *P.L.O. (Palestine Liberation Organization): A Profile* (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Study Group for Middle Eastern Affairs, 1974), 30.

early 1971 for meddling in domestic affairs, the PLO moved its headquarters to Lebanon.^{52, 53, 54} At its meeting in Rabat, Morocco, in 1974, the 12th Palestinian National Council declared the PLO the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. This declaration undermined efforts by Jordan's King Hussein to negotiate a peace agreement with the Israeli government on behalf of the Palestinians. Also in 1974, the United Nations granted the PLO observer status, and Yasser Arafat (whose Fatah had been the leading PLO faction and who was named PLO chairman in 1969) addressed the General Assembly. At the same time, the Arab League granted the PLO full membership.⁵⁵

The Lebanese Civil War

In April 1975, Arafat aligned the PLO with the Lebanese National Movement (LNM) during the Lebanese Civil War, which lasted until October 1990. This alienated many of Arafat's supporters, who saw this as a distraction from the goal of liberating Palestine. It also earned the PLO hostility from many of the key factions vying for power in Lebanon.⁵⁶



© Tiamat / Wikimedia.org
Fatah militia in Beirut

In 1978, after years of increasing cross-border attacks from Lebanon to Israel, Fatah fighters killed 38 Israeli civilians in the Coastal Road Massacre. In response, the Israel Defense Force launched Operation Litani, seizing control of southern Lebanon to drive out Palestinian militants and establish a buffer zone. A subsequent 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon forced the PLO to evacuate and relocate to Tunisia.^{57, 58}

But some PLO operatives remained in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and were implicated in the assassination of Lebanese President-elect Bachir Gemayel. With the permission of the Israel Defense Forces, who controlled access to the camps, Lebanese militiamen (Phalangists) entered the refugee camps in September 1982 in hopes of capturing the PLO operatives. The Israelis warned the Lebanese not to target civilians, but once inside the camps, the Phalangists immediately attacked civilian targets and

⁵² Ziv Rubinovitz, "Blue and White 'Black September': Israel's Role in the Jordan Crisis of 1970," *International History Review* 32, no. 4 (2010): 687–706. doi: 10.1080/07075332.2010.534611.

⁵³ Hassan A. Barari, "Four Decades after Black September: A Jordanian Perspective," *Civil Wars* 10, no. 3 (September 2008): 231–243.

⁵⁴ Iris Fruchter-Ronen, "Black September: The 1970–71 Events and Their Impact on the Formation of Jordanian National Identity," *Civil Wars* 10, no. 3 (September 2008): 244–260.

⁵⁵ Itamar Rabinovich and Jehuda Reinharz, *Israel in the Middle East: Documents and Readings on Society, Politics, and Foreign Relations, Pre-1948 to the Present*, 2nd ed. (Lebanon, NH: Brandeis University Press, 2008), 342–344.

⁵⁶ Wendy Pearlman, *Violence, Nonviolence, and the Palestinian National Movement* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 85–86.

⁵⁷ Colin Shindler, "Chapter 7: The Road to Beirut," *A History of Modern Israel* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 147–174.

⁵⁸ Rashid Khalidi, "The Palestinians in Lebanon: Social Repercussions of Israel's Invasion," *Middle East Journal* 38, no. 2 (Spring 1984): 255–266.

killed several hundred people in 40 hours while Israeli forces did nothing to stop them.⁵⁹ This was one incident among many that turned the Israeli population and international opinion against Israeli involvement in the Lebanese Civil War. Israeli forces withdrew from Lebanon in June 1985.⁶⁰

Intifada and Oslo

In 1987, popular unrest in the Palestinian Territories led to an uprising known as the First Intifada that lasted until 1993. The PLO's inability to effectively lead the uprising brought about the formation of new militant groups, including Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, which would later challenge Fatah.⁶¹



© Sharon Farmer
Camp David Summit in 2000

A series of negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian representatives culminated in the 1993 signing of the Oslo Accords. The Accords created the Palestinian Authority, a governing organization, and provided for Palestinian control of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Under terms of the agreement, the PLO renounced the use of terrorism. The following year, Yasser Arafat became the first leader of the Palestinian Authority.^{62, 63} Confident in his position, at the 2000 Camp David Summit he flatly rejected terms offered by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak that would have created an independent Palestinian state.^{64, 65}

Palestinian Political Fragmentation

Yasser Arafat, long the face of the Palestinian liberation movement, died on 11 November 2004 from a brief but acute illness. Shortly thereafter, Mahmud Abbas, Arafat's successor as chairman of the PLO, was elected president of the Palestinian Authority.^{66, 67}

⁵⁹ Leila Shahid, "The Sabra and Shatila Massacres: Eye-Witness Reports," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 32, no. 1 (Autumn 2002): 36–58.

⁶⁰ Dalia Dassa Kaye, "The Israeli Decision to Withdraw from Southern Lebanon: Political Leadership and Security Policy," *Political Science Quarterly* 117, no. 4 (Winter 2002–2003): 561–585, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/798135.pdf?acceptTC=true>

⁶¹ Sara Roy, "Hamas and the Transformation(s) of Political Islam in Palestine," *Current History* 102, no. 660 (January 2003): 13–20, <http://carnegieendowment.org/pdf/files/2004-02-17-roy.pdf>

⁶² Nathan J. Brown, *Palestinian Politics After the Oslo Accords: Resuming Arab Palestine* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

⁶³ Mandy Turner, "Creating 'Partners for Peace': The Palestinian Authority and the International Statebuilding Agenda," *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 5, no. 1 (2011): 1–21. doi: 10.1080/17502977.2011.541777.

⁶⁴ Eitan Y. Alimi, "Relational Dynamics in Factional Adoption of Terrorist Tactics: A Comparative Perspective," *Theory and Society* 40 (2011): 95–118. doi 10.1007/s11186-010-9137-x

⁶⁵ Danny Dor, *Intifada Hits the Headlines: How the Israeli Press Misreported the Outbreak of the Second Palestinian Uprising* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 148.

⁶⁶ Ali Jarbawi and Wendy Pearlman, "Struggle in a Post-Charisma Transition: Rethinking Palestinian Politics After Arafat," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 36, no. 4 (Summer 2007): 6–21.

Citing the high costs of maintaining Israeli settlements in Gaza, Israeli forces withdrew from the Gaza Strip in August–September 2005. This Disengagement Plan included forcibly removing those Israeli settlers who refused to evacuate Jewish settlements therein. The Disengagement Plan was also intended to enhance Israeli security by lessening the likelihood of IDF engagements with Palestinian terrorists.^{68, 69}

Hamas overwhelmingly won parliamentary elections in the Palestinian Authority in January 2006. By late 2006 and early 2007, infighting between Hamas and Fatah had escalated into a virtual Palestinian civil war.^{70, 71}

Although PA President Abbas reasserted control of the West Bank in mid-2007, Hamas militants seized control of the Gaza Strip—a dynamic that remains in place today.⁷²



© Trango / Wikimedia.org
Hamas leader Khaal Meshaal

Movement Toward a Two-State Solution

In a move to defuse tensions, U.S. President Barack Obama called for an end to Israeli construction of settlements in the Palestinian Territories and for Arab recognition of the state of Israel. In mid-2009, President Obama also endorsed a two-state solution to the Palestinian question. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has voiced support for the idea of establishing a separate, independent Palestinian state.⁷³



© Pete Souza
Abbas with President Obama

Yet Hamas is continuing its struggle by seeking new allies in its pursuit of Israel's destruction.^{74, 75} An incident in May 2010 complicated international relations with Israel.

⁶⁷ Amy H. Blackwell, "Arafat, Yasir (1929–2004)," in *Conflict and Conquest in the Islamic World: A Historical Encyclopedia*, ed. Alexander Mikaberidze (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2011), 136–138.

⁶⁸ Oren Yiftachel, "Neither Two States nor One: The Disengagement and 'Creeping Apartheid' in Israel/Palestine," *The Arab World Geographer* 8, no. 3 (2005): 125–129, <http://arabworldgeographer.socsci.uva.nl/forum2005/AWG83Yiftachel.pdf>

⁶⁹ Sapir Handelman, *Conflict and Peacemaking in Israel-Palestine: Theory and Application* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 33.

⁷⁰ Sapir Handelman, *Conflict and Peacemaking in Israel-Palestine: Theory and Application* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 33.

⁷¹ David Kenner, "The Fatah-Hamas Rift Deepens," *Passport* (blog), 21 January 2009, http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/01/19/the_fatah_hamas_rift_deepens

⁷² Beverley Milton-Edwards, "The Ascendance of Political Islam: Hamas and Consolidation in the Gaza Strip," *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 8 (2008).

⁷³ Mohamed A. El-Khawas, "Obama and the Middle East Peace Process: Challenge and Response," *Mediterranean Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (2010): 25–44.

⁷⁴ Isabel Kershner, "Deadly Israeli Raid Draws Condemnation," *New York Times*, 31 May 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/01/world/middleeast/01flotilla.html?pagewanted=all>

⁷⁵ James Traub, "Turkey's Rules," *New York Times*, 20 January 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/23/magazine/23davutoglu-t.html?pagewanted=all>

The controversial episode involved an aid flotilla that intended to break the Israeli blockade to deliver aid to the Gaza Strip. An Israeli interception of the flotilla left several wounded and nine dead.^{76, 77}

In September 2011, President Abbas made a formal request for full membership of the Palestinian Territories in the United Nations. But the U.S. effectively blocked the request by threatening to veto any such motion in the Security Council. Had the bid succeeded, the Palestinian Territories would have become a *de facto* independent state.⁷⁸

Government

Under the terms of the 1993 Oslo Accords, the Palestinian Authority is the legitimate government of the Palestinian Territories. That government comprises three divisions: executive, legislative, and judicial.

Executive

The president is directly elected for a 4-year term; however, no presidential elections have been held since 2005. Elections aimed at reconciling the two Palestinian territories, which have previously been put off indefinitely, were slated for 4 May 2012 but were later delayed. Mahmud Abbas is the current Palestinian president, having been elected to that post in the 2005 elections.⁷⁹

Following the violence that erupted after the 2006 parliamentary elections, Abbas declared a state of emergency. Later, on 14 June 2008 he appointed an emergency government. At this time Salam Fayyad was named the PA prime minister.⁸⁰



© Lawrence Jackson
President Mahmoud Abbas

Despite these emergency government appointments, the Hamas terrorist organization has been the *de facto* government of the Gaza Strip since 2007. They have gained power by effectively driving out all who oppose them. The United States continues to recognize the Abbas administration as the legitimate governing body of both Palestinian territories. When the emergency government was appointed in June 2007, Ismail Haniyah was

⁷⁶ Isabel Kershner, "Deadly Israeli Raid Draws Condemnation," *New York Times*, 31 May 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/01/world/middleeast/01flotilla.html?pagewanted=all>

⁷⁷ James Traub, "Turkey's Rules," *New York Times*, 20 January 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/23/magazine/23davutoglu-t.html?pagewanted=all>

⁷⁸ Louis Charbonneau, "U.N. Panel Draft Signals Palestinian U.N. Bid Doomed," Reuters, 8 November 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/11/08/us-palestinians-israel-un-idUSTRE7A74VP20111108>

⁷⁹ *Telegraph* (UK), "Palestinian Elections to Be Held on May 4, Mahmoud Abbas Hopes," 28 November 2011, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/palestinianauthority/8920775/Palestinian-elections-to-be-held-on-May-4-Mahmoud-Abbas-hopes.html>

⁸⁰ Jane's, "Gaza and the West Bank: Political Leadership," *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment—Eastern Mediterranean*, 6 September 2011.

dismissed from his position as prime minister of the Palestinian Authority. But he continues to function as prime minister in the Hamas de facto government in Gaza.^{81, 82}

Legislative

The Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) is a unicameral body. The Palestinian people directly elect the body's 132 members. The PLC has not met since 2007. As a result, President Abbas has essentially ruled by decree under the terms of the 1993 Oslo Accords.⁸³



Judicial

The Ramallah Appeal and High Court serves as the top court for the Palestinian Authority. The judiciary has been stymied by the partition of the Palestinian territories.⁸⁴

Media

According to the Central Intelligence Agency, Palestinian Territories residents have a number of media outlets. The Palestinian Authority owns and operates a television station and a radio station. Additionally, dozens of privately owned television and radio stations operate in the West Bank; Jordanian stations and satellite TV are also accessible.⁸⁵ There are three daily Palestinian newspapers operating in the West Bank, but they are banned from circulation in the Gaza Strip.⁸⁶ In the Gaza Strip, Hamas controls all media outlets, including two newspapers, a television station, and numerous radio stations. Hamas confiscated all private media outlets and banned all media outlets not under Hamas control.^{87, 88, 89, 90}

⁸¹ The United States Department of State has listed Hamas as a Designated Foreign Terrorist Organization. <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm>

⁸² Jane's, "Gaza and the West Bank: Political Leadership," *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment—Eastern Mediterranean*, 6 September 2011.

⁸³ Jane's, "Gaza and the West Bank: Internal Affairs," *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment—Eastern Mediterranean*, 5 April 2011.

⁸⁴ Jane's, "Gaza and the West Bank: Internal Affairs," *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment—Eastern Mediterranean*, 5 April 2011.

⁸⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, "West Bank: Communications," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

⁸⁶ Freedom House, "Freedom of the Press 2011: Israeli-Occupied Territories and Palestinian Authority," 23 September 2011, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4e7c84f528.html>

⁸⁷ Reporters Without Borders, "Predators of Press Freedom: Palestinian Territories—Hamas Security Forces in Gaza," 3 May 2011, http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/publisher.RSF_PSE_4dc2b52ac.0.html

⁸⁸ Khalil Shahin, "Palestinian Territories," in *Media Sustainability Index 2008: The Development of Sustainable Independent Media in the Middle East and North Africa*, eds. Leon Morse et al. (Washington, DC: IREX, 2009), 82–94, http://www.irex.org/system/files/MENA_MSI_2008_Book_Full_0.pdf

⁸⁹ Freedom House, "Freedom of the Press 2011: Israeli-Occupied Territories and Palestinian Authority," 23 September 2011, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4e7c84f528.html>

Both the Hamas and Palestinian Authority governments have a poor record concerning media freedom. Palestinian journalists are heavily censored. The government and terrorist organizations expect the media to promote nationalist and liberation propaganda.⁹¹ Both governments have media outlets affiliated or aligned with their particular faction. Detention and illegal prosecution of journalists are rampant. The regimes have blocked websites deemed to be opposed to their own views. Complicating matters in the West Bank, Palestinian Authority legislation appears to contradict itself, with some laws promoting freedom of the press and others inhibiting it. Palestinian security forces routinely attempt to force journalists to become informants. Outside observers report that Hamas agents consistently beat journalists and use other forms of coercion to assure compliance. Such fear leads many journalists to self-censorship, inhibiting their ability to report objectively.⁹²

Economy

Agriculture, once the backbone of the Palestinian economy, accounts today for about 4% of gross domestic product (GDP) and employs about 16% of the workforce in the West Bank and 5% in the Gaza Strip.⁹³ The loss of territory in the 1948 Arab–Israeli War, along with Israeli-imposed restrictions on water usage and access to markets, have contributed to this trend. About 17% of the land in the West Bank and 29% of the land in the Gaza Strip are suited to growing crops. Major agricultural products from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip include beef, dairy, flowers, fruit, olives, and vegetables.^{94, 95}



© Oxfam International / flickr.com
Olives for olive oil

The security barriers that Israel has constructed to separate it from the Palestinian Territories have greatly diminished the ability of Palestinian farmers to sell their produce in the more lucrative Israeli market. In some instances, these security barriers have cut through agricultural land, leaving Palestinian farmers unable to access their properties.⁹⁶

⁹⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, “Gaza: Communications,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

⁹¹ Doha Centre for Media Freedom, “Future of Palestinian Media after Reconciliation,” 16 May 2011, <http://www.dc4mf.org/en/content/future-palestinian-media-after-reconciliation>

⁹² Khalil Shahin, “Palestinian Territories,” in *Media Sustainability Index 2008: The Development of Sustainable Independent Media in the Middle East and North Africa*, eds. Leon Morse et al. (Washington, DC: IREX, 2009), 82–94, http://www.irex.org/system/files/MENA_MSI_2008_Book_Full_0.pdf

⁹³ Central Intelligence Agency, “West Bank: Economy,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

⁹⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, “Gaza Strip: Economy,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

⁹⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, “West Bank: Economy,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

⁹⁶ Jane’s, “Gaza and the West Bank: Economy,” *Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment—Eastern Mediterranean*, 24 June 2011, https://www.intelink.gov/Reference/janes/display.html?type=S&nav=C_12&sn=emedsu&ed=emedsu31&docid=ddf4a6edaa3e7694fb12af919ef80576

Fishing, once a staple of the Gazan economy, has been negatively affected by the Israeli blockade. The World Food Programme claims the fishing catch was cut by one-third in 2011 alone. Palestinians now import much of their fish from Egypt.⁹⁷



© Grassroots International / flickr.com
Fishing off shores of Gaza

The Palestinian Water Authority is seeking to increase the amount of fresh water available for drinking and agricultural use. The agency has proposed a project that would divert water from the Feshkha Springs, along the shores of the Dead Sea, to a desalinization facility, and on to a reservoir.⁹⁸

In 2010, the industrial sector employed 16% of the Gazan workforce and 28% of the West Bank workforce. Estimates for 2011 are that industry provided nearly 14% of the Palestinian Territories' gross domestic product (GDP). Major industries revolve around food processing, quarrying, small-scale manufacturing, souvenirs, and textiles.^{99, 100}



© Tiamat / Wikimedia.org
Soap factory in West Bank

The service sector accounted for nearly 83% of GDP in the combined Palestinian Territories in 2011. In 2010, it employed 56% of the workforce in the West Bank and 79% of the workforce in the Gaza Strip.^{101, 102} Social services, healthcare, and government are the key components of the sector. Government accounts for more than one-quarter of the workforce.^{103, 104} Much of the Palestinian economy operates without government regulatory supervision and frequently on the black or grey markets, making a deeper economic analysis difficult.

⁹⁷ World Food Programme, United Nations, "Fishing Catch," *Food Security and Market Monitoring Report* 29 (July–October 2011), 1, <http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp244029.pdf>

⁹⁸ Michael Schreuder, "Econ Visit to Feshkha Springs," *Palestinian Economy*, 17 May 2010, <https://www.intelink.gov/cas/palecon/2010/05/17/econ-visit-to-feshkha-springs/>

⁹⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, "Gaza Strip: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

¹⁰⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, "West Bank: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

¹⁰¹ Central Intelligence Agency, "Gaza Strip: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

¹⁰² Central Intelligence Agency, "West Bank: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

¹⁰³ Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute, *Overview of the Palestinian Economy* (Ramallah: Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute, 2010), http://www.pic-palestine.ps/userfiles/file/pdfs/invest_in_palestine_en.pdf

¹⁰⁴ Jad Isaac, Abeer Khair, and Jane Hilal, eds., "Chapter 3: Socio-Economic Development in the oPt," in *Status of the Environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory: A Human Rights-Based Approach, 2011* (Jerusalem: Applied Research Institute, Jerusalem, 2011), 133–302. https://www.opensource.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_200_203_0_43/content/Display/25233049/GMP20120101745006002.pdf

Trade

The Palestinian Authority's ability to trade continues to be hampered by Israeli control of its borders and the blockade on the Gaza Strip. Israel maintains a strict embargo on products into the Gaza Strip. Yet smuggling under the border between Gaza and Egypt via tunnel has assured a somewhat steady stream of the basic necessities.¹⁰⁵



© Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs
IDF check ship near Gaza

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 72% of imports in 2008 were from Israel.¹⁰⁶ In 2009, the main imports were chemicals, consumer goods, construction materials, food, and petroleum, exceeding USD 3.6 billion. The most important export commodities comprise fruit, olives, stone, and vegetables; however, they only generate about USD 518 million, leaving a more than USD 3 billion trade deficit in 2009.^{107, 108} For the 2008 fiscal year, foreign direct investment was USD 1.34 billion. The continued security issues in the region make it unlikely that this situation will improve soon.¹⁰⁹

The combined Palestinian Territories' estimated revenues for the 2011 fiscal year were USD 2.15 billion. Expenditures for the same year were an estimated USD 3.23 billion, resulting in a budget deficit of more than USD 1 billion.¹¹⁰

Palestine Monetary Authority

The Palestine Monetary Authority (PMA) is the central banking arm of the Palestinian Territories. Currently, the Palestinian Authority does not mint its own currency.¹¹¹ Instead it relies upon the United States dollar (USD), the Israeli new shekel (ILS), and the

¹⁰⁵ World Food Programme, United Nations, "Gaza Strip Import–Export: Changes in the Tunnel Trade Dynamics," *Food Security and Market Monitoring Report* 29 (July–October 2011), 5–6, <http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp244029.pdf>

¹⁰⁶ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Palestinian National Authority, "The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) Announces the Preliminary Results of the Palestinian Foreign Trade in Goods—2008," n.d., http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/tejara_E_08.pdf

¹⁰⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, "Gaza Strip: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

¹⁰⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, "West Bank: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

¹⁰⁹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Palestinian National Authority, "The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) and Palestine Monetary Authority (PMA) Announce the Results of the Foreign Investments Survey—2008, 2009," n.d., http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/AdjDrFIS09-E.pdf

¹¹⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, "West Bank: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

¹¹¹ Palestine Monetary Authority, "About PMA: Mission," 2012, http://www.pma.ps/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=48&Itemid=68&lang=en

Jordanian dinar (JOD), as stipulated by the Oslo Accords.¹¹² The PMA supervises and regulates the Palestinian banking system and is responsible for enforcing laws against money laundering, which is a major concern in a region rife with terrorist activity.¹¹³

Since Hamas seized control of the Gaza Strip in 2007, Israeli banks have withdrawn from business in the Palestinian Territories and are severely restricted in their business with Palestinian banks. As a result, the ILS is no longer viable as a currency in the Palestinian Territories.¹¹⁴ The banking situation in the Gaza Strip is highly unstable. In March 2010, Hamas militants raided a Bank of Palestine branch and seized a reported USD 400,000—raising doubts about the safety of banking in the territory.¹¹⁵



Ethno-Religious Groups and Languages

Religion largely defines groups in the Palestinian Territories and much of the Middle East. It is cited by some as a justification for the violence in the region. Most Palestinians are Muslims; however, a Christian minority dates from an era under Roman and Byzantine rule when Christians were the majority. Additionally, nearly 200,000 Jewish settlers have established communities in the West Bank and do not answer to the Palestinian Authority.¹¹⁶ Radical interpretations of both Islam and Judaism have spurred tension and conflict between various communities.^{117, 118, 119, 120}

¹¹² Jihad K. Wazir, Mohammad Atallah, and Shaker A. Sarsour, “Chapter 6: From Occupation to an Independent Monetary Policy,” in *Money in the Middle East and North Africa: Monetary Policy Frameworks and Strategies*, eds. David Cobham and Ghassan Dibeh (New York: Routledge, 2011), 106.

¹¹³ International Monetary Fund, “Program Note: West Bank and Gaza,” 25 October 2011, <http://www.imf.org/external/np/country/notes/wbg.htm>

¹¹⁴ Jihad K. Wazir, Mohammad Atallah, and Shaker A. Sarsour, “Chapter 6: From Occupation to an Independent Monetary Policy,” in *Money in the Middle East and North Africa: Monetary Policy Frameworks and Strategies*, eds. David Cobham and Ghassan Dibeh (New York: Routledge, 2011), 119–120.

¹¹⁵ Reuters, “Arab Bank Closes Two Gaza Branches,” *Jordan Times*, 7 May 2010, <http://archive.jordantimes.com/?news=26359>

¹¹⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, “West Bank: People and Society: Population,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

¹¹⁷ Jane’s Information Group, “Israel: Groups: Middle East: Active: Jewish Extremist Groups,” *Jane’s World Insurgency and Terrorism*, 06 April 2005. https://www.intelink.gov/Reference/janes/display.html?type=S&nav=C_2&sn=jwit&ed=jwit35&docid=4a4e0de10b27cd677635db970e71540f

¹¹⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, “West Bank: People and Society: Population,” in *The World Factbook*, 08 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

¹¹⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, “Gaza Strip: People and Society: Population,” in *The World Factbook*, 08 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

¹²⁰ Loren D. Lybarger, “Chapter One: Islamism and Secular Nationalism,” in *Identity and Religion in Palestine: The Struggle between Islamism & Secularism in the Occupied Territories* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 1-26. <http://books.google.com/books?id=hf8-ukQBtaQC&pg=PA1#v=onepage&q&f=false>

Palestinian Muslims

Today, about 75% of the West Bank is Muslim. In the Gaza Strip 99% of the population is Muslim. Muslims from both areas are predominantly Sunni, but in the Gaza Strip, where the Hamas regime relies heavily on Shi'ite allies, Shi'ite conversions may be increasing.¹²¹ Palestinian Muslims speak Arabic. Many also speak Hebrew and/or English.^{122, 123}



© Yaakov Shoham
Dome of the Rock

Palestinian Christians

The Roman Empire conquered Palestine in the first century B.C.E. Roman rule over Palestine continued into the Byzantine era until about 640 C.E. During that time, most of its inhabitants converted to Christianity.¹²⁴ After the Arab conquest of the region in the seventh century, the majority of Palestinians converted to Islam. Today, about 8% of the West Bank is Christian and other religions while in the Gaza Strip a mere 0.7% is Christian. Even towns such as Bethlehem and Nazareth, which had long had a Christian majority, are now predominantly Muslim.^{125, 126}

More than half of Christians living in the West Bank are Greek Orthodox.¹²⁷ Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic, Coptic, and Maronite denominations round out the majority of Christian affiliations, though many other denominations are active in the Palestinian Territories.^{128, 129} Palestinian Christians speak Arabic. Many also speak English and/or Hebrew.¹³⁰

¹²¹ Saud al-Zahed and Abeer Tayel, "Shiites on the Rise in Sunni Gaza, Sunnis on the Rise in Shiite Iran," *Al Arabiya News*, 14 April 2011, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/04/14/145357.html>

¹²² Central Intelligence Agency, "West Bank: People and Society: Languages," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

¹²³ Central Intelligence Agency, "Gaza Strip: People and Society: Languages," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

¹²⁴ Robert Schick, *The Christian Communities of Palestine from Byzantine to Islamic Rule: A Historical and Archaeological Study* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995).

¹²⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, "West Bank: People and Society: Population," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

¹²⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, "Gaza Strip: People and Society: Population," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

¹²⁷ Romell Soudah, "Christians in the Holy Land: Across the Political and Economic Divide," in *The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel* (Jerusalem: Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, 2006), 54, <http://www.sabeel.org/pdfs/the%20sabeel%20survey%20-%20english%202008.pdf>

¹²⁸ Romell Soudah, "Christians in the Holy Land: Across the Political and Economic Divide," in *The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel* (Jerusalem: Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, 2006), 54, <http://www.sabeel.org/pdfs/the%20sabeel%20survey%20-%20english%202008.pdf>

¹²⁹ Romell Soudah, "Christians in the Holy Land: Across the Political and Economic Divide," in *The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel* (Jerusalem: Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation

Jewish Settlers

Although the Jewish faith has a long history in the Palestinian Territories, the vast majority of Jews there today are recent immigrants from Europe and the Mediterranean. The IDF has forcibly removed Jewish settlers from settlements in the Gaza Strip, but Jewish settlers continue to build in the West Bank, where they make up 17% of the population.^{131, 132} The settlers speak Hebrew. Some are also conversant in Arabic or English.¹³³



© Daniel Ventura
Jewish Settlement in Itamar

Theology Center, 2006), 54, <http://www.sabeel.org/pdfs/the%20sabeel%20survey%20-%20english%202008.pdf>

¹³⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, “West Bank: People and Society: Languages,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

¹³¹ Central Intelligence Agency, “West Bank: People and Society: Population,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

¹³² Central Intelligence Agency, “Gaza Strip: People and Society: Population,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

¹³³ Central Intelligence Agency, “Israel: People and Society: Languages,” in *The World Factbook*, 23 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/is.html>

Chapter 1 Assessment

1. In 2000, Yasser Arafat rejected an Israeli proposal that would have created an independent Palestine.
True
At the 2000 Camp David Summit Yasser Arafat flatly rejected terms offered by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak that would have created an independent Palestinian state.
2. Palestinian Authority President Mahmud Abbas governs the West Bank by decree.
True
Following the violence that erupted after the 2006 parliamentary elections, Abbas declared a state of emergency. Later, he appointed an emergency government on 14 June 2008. He has ruled by decree since that time.
3. Unlike the Hamas regime in the Gaza Strip, the Palestinian Authority has a strong track record of supporting media freedom.
False
Both Hamas and the Palestinian Authority have poor records concerning media freedom. Security forces and terrorists frequently intimidate journalists, and the government imposes censorship.
4. In general, the Palestinian Territories have suffered from huge trade and budget deficits.
True
Exports in 2009 generated USD 518 million in annual revenues, but imports account for USD 3.6 billion. This resulted in a more than USD 3 billion trade deficit. Budgetary revenue for the 2011 fiscal year was estimated at USD 2.15 billion and expenditures at USD 3.23 billion, resulting in a more than USD 1 billion deficit.
5. Shi'a Islam is making inroads among the Sunni Muslim population of the Gaza Strip.
True
There are some indications that Shi'ite conversions are on the rise, especially in the Gaza Strip, where the Hamas regime relies heavily on Shi'ite allies, namely Iran and Hizballah.

CHAPTER 2: RELIGION

Overview of Major Religions

Religion plays a major role in defining groups in the Palestinian Territories and the rest of the Middle East. Religion is a frequent justification for the violence that plagues the region. Most Palestinians are Muslim but there is a Christian minority that dates to Roman and Byzantine eras. Additionally, more than 300,000 Jewish settlers have established communities in the West Bank.¹³⁴



© marsmet542 / flickr.com
Temple Mount and Dome of Rock

Islam

Islam is a monotheistic religion, meaning that its followers believe in a single deity. The Muslim community, or *umma*, calls this deity Allah. The Arabic term *islam* means “to submit” or “to surrender.” Therefore, a Muslim is one who submits to the will of Allah.¹³⁵ Muslims believe that Allah revealed his message to the Prophet Muhammad, a merchant who lived in Arabia from 570 to 632 C.E. They consider Muhammad as the last in a long line of prophets including Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. Allah’s message, as relayed by Muhammad, is delivered in the Quran, the sacred text of Islam.^{136, 137}



© The Advocacy Project / flickr.com
Muslims in Bethlehem

The essential beliefs and rites of the Muslim faith are embodied in the five pillars of Islam. The first and central pillar is the faithful recitation of the *shahada*, or Islamic creed, “There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is Allah’s messenger.” The remaining pillars include performing ritual prayers five times per day; giving alms to the poor; fasting during the holy month of Ramadan; and undertaking a pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca.¹³⁸ Muslims believe that Allah will judge them for their actions on earth. This judgment determines whether the follower’s afterlife is spent in heaven or hell.¹³⁹

¹³⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, “West Bank: People and Society: Population,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

¹³⁵ Frederick Mathewson Deny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1994), 177.

¹³⁶ Gordon D. Newby, *A Concise Encyclopedia of Islam* (Oxford, UK: Oneworld, 2004).

¹³⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Islam,” 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/295507/Islam>

¹³⁸ Frederick Mathewson Deny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1994), 118–136.

¹³⁹ Michael Anthony Sells, *Approaching the Qur’an: The Early Revelations* (Ashland, OR: White Cloud Press, 2005), 35–40.

By 638, Arab Muslims pushing into Palestine gradually seized control from the Byzantines. Beginning in 661, the Umayyad caliphs ruled Palestine from Damascus. During this time, the Muslim rulers constructed the Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa mosques, both built on the ruins of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem.^{140, 141}

Today, about 75% of the West Bank is Muslim. In the Gaza Strip 99% of the population is Muslim. Muslims from both areas are predominantly Sunni, but in the Gaza Strip, where the Hamas regime relies heavily on Shi'ite allies, Shi'ite conversions may be increasing.^{142, 143, 144}

Christianity

Christianity grew from the teachings of Jesus Christ, who Christians believe to be the son of God and the savior of humankind. The holy texts of Christianity are the Old and New Testaments. Many Christians believe the New Testament is the final and complete revelation from God to humanity. They further believe that Jesus died on a cross to save humanity from its sins. On other doctrines and theology, the various branches of Christianity differ, often quite drastically.^{145, 146}



©Beautiful Faces of Palestine/flickr.com
Greek Orthodox mass

The Roman Empire conquered Palestine in the first century B.C.E. Roman rule over Palestine continued into the Byzantine era, until about 640 C.E. During that time, most of its inhabitants converted to Christianity.¹⁴⁷ After the Arab conquest of the region in the seventh century, the vast majority of Palestinians converted to Islam. Today, about 8% of the West Bank is Christian and other religions while in the Gaza Strip a mere 0.7% is Christian. Even

¹⁴⁰ Nehemia Levtzion, "Chapter 16: Conversion to Islam in Syria and Palestine and the Survival of Christian Communities," in *Indigenous Christian Communities in Islamic Lands: Eighth to Eighteenth Centuries*, eds. Michael Gervers and Ramzi Jibran Bikhazi (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1990), 289–312.

¹⁴¹ Oleg Grabar, *The Dome of the Rock* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

¹⁴² Saud al-Zahed and Abeer Tayel, "Shiites on the Rise in Sunni Gaza, Sunnis on the Rise in Shiite Iran," *Al Arabiya News*, 14 April 2011, <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/04/14/145357.html>

¹⁴³ Central Intelligence Agency, "West Bank: People and Society: Languages," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

¹⁴⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, "Gaza Strip: People and Society: Languages," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

¹⁴⁵ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Christianity," 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/115240/Christianity>

¹⁴⁶ John Stephen Bowden, ed., *Encyclopedia of Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹⁴⁷ Robert Schick, *The Christian Communities of Palestine from Byzantine to Islamic Rule: A Historical and Archaeological Study* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995).

towns such as Bethlehem and Nazareth, which had been majority-Christian, are now predominantly Muslim.^{148, 149}

More than one-half of all Palestinian Christians are Greek Orthodox.¹⁵⁰ Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic, Coptic, and Maronite denominations round out the other majority Christian affiliations.^{151, 152, 153, 154} Many other denominations are active in the Palestinian Territories.¹⁵⁵ Palestinian Christians speak Arabic. Many also speak English and/or Hebrew.¹⁵⁶

Judaism

According to Jewish tradition, the Old Testament patriarch Abraham concluded a covenant with God. His people then abandoned their polytheism for a strict monotheism in which Jehovah was elevated to the sole deity. The prophet Moses established the rituals and laws that defined the Jewish religious system. The Old Testament is the primary religious text of Judaism, supplemented by the Talmud and other Hebrew works.

Jewish religious life centers upon the Sabbath, observed from sunset on Friday until sunset on Saturday. Services in synagogues consist primarily of readings from religious texts and prayer.^{157, 158}



© Laika slips the lead / flickr.com
Jews pray at Western Wall

¹⁴⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, “West Bank: People and Society: Population,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

¹⁴⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, “Gaza Strip: People and Society: Population,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

¹⁵⁰ Romell Soudah, “Christians in the Holy Land: Across the Political and Economic Divide,” in *The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel* (Jerusalem: Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, 2006), 54, <http://www.sabeel.org/pdfs/the%20sabeel%20survey%20-%20english%202008.pdf>

¹⁵¹ For more information on the Greek Catholic Church, see *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Greek Catholic Church,” 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/244548/Greek-Catholic-church>

¹⁵² For more information on Roman Catholicism, see *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Roman Catholicism,” 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/507284/Roman-Catholicism>

¹⁵³ For more information on the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria, see *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria,” 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/136928/Coptic-Orthodox-Church-of-Alexandria>

¹⁵⁴ For more information on the Maronite Church, see *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Maronite Church,” 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/366006/Maronite-church>

¹⁵⁵ Romell Soudah, “Christians in the Holy Land: Across the Political and Economic Divide,” in *The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel* (Jerusalem: Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, 2006), 54, <http://www.sabeel.org/pdfs/the%20sabeel%20survey%20-%20english%202008.pdf>

¹⁵⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, “West Bank: People and Society: Languages,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

¹⁵⁷ Judith R. Baskin, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Judaism & Jewish Culture* (New York: Cambridge University, 2011).

Although the Jewish faith has a long history in the Palestinian Territories, the vast majority of Jews there today are relatively recent immigrants from Europe and the Mediterranean. In 70 C.E., the Roman Emperor Titus quashed a revolt in Judah and destroyed the Second Jewish Temple. Roman authorities then forcibly expelled the Jews from their homeland.^{159, 160} From 118–138, the Roman Emperor Hadrian allowed some Jews to return. But after a subsequent revolt, Roman troops leveled Jerusalem and sold the Jews into slavery.^{161, 162} For much of the subsequent millennia, the Jews were scattered around Europe, Asia, and North Africa. Not until the late 19th century did Jews begin to return to the region in significant numbers.¹⁶³

Today few Palestinians are Jewish. Although the Israel Defense Force has forcibly removed Jewish settlers from settlements in the Gaza Strip, Jewish settlers continue to build in the West Bank, where they make up 17% of the population.^{164, 165}

Religion in Government and Daily Life

Religion defines identity in the Palestinian Territories and much of the Middle East. The role of religion in the daily lives of Palestinians cannot be underestimated. Even among organizations that claim a secular ideology (e.g., Fatah), Islam remains an essential component of their identity.¹⁶⁶



© mateus27_24-25 / flickr.com
Hamas soldiers in Gaza

Palestinian Basic Law is the temporary constitution of the Palestinian Authority until the establishment of an independent state. Under it, Islam is the official religion of the Palestinian Territories.^{167, 168} The Palestinian Basic Law

¹⁵⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Judaism,” 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/307197/Judaism>

¹⁵⁹ Larry Kreitzer, “Apotheosis of the Roman Emperor,” *The Biblical Archaeologist* 53, no. 4 (December 1990): 210–217.

¹⁶⁰ David Aberbach, “The Roman-Jewish Wars and Hebrew Cultural Nationalism,” *Nations and Nationalism* 6, no. 3 (2000): 347–362.

¹⁶¹ David Aberbach, “The Roman-Jewish Wars and Hebrew Cultural Nationalism,” *Nations and Nationalism* 6, no. 3 (2000): 347–362.

¹⁶² Thorsten Oppen, *Hadrian: Empire and Conflict* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 89–91.

¹⁶³ Ruth Kark and Michal Oren-Nordheim, “Chapter 5: Agricultural Settlement in Jerusalem’s Rural Periphery: Plans, Attempts, Successes,” in *Jerusalem and Its Environs: Quarters, Neighborhoods, Villages, 1800–1948* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2001), 294–359.

¹⁶⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, “West Bank: People and Society: Population,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

¹⁶⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, “Gaza Strip: People and Society: Population,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

¹⁶⁶ Islah Jad, “Feminism between Secularism and Islamism: The Case of Palestine (West Bank and Gaza)” (paper, Conflicts Forum, July 2010), 4, <http://conflictsforum.org/briefings/CaseOfPalestine.pdf>

¹⁶⁷ Nathan J. Brown, “Constituting Palestine: The Effort to Write a Basic Law for the Palestine Authority,” *Middle East Journal* 54, 1 (Winter 2000): 25–43, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4329430>

¹⁶⁸ *BBC News*, “Hamas Takes Full Control of Gaza,” 15 June 2007, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/6755299.stm>

states that shari'a law is the foundation for all legislation.¹⁶⁹ The same law also provides for the free expression of other religions as long as it does not disrupt public order. Currently, the law is only recognized in the West Bank.¹⁷⁰

Hamas considers itself the legitimate government of the Palestinian Territories; Hamas does not abide by the Basic Law in the Gaza Strip, and non-Muslims are routinely subjected to abuse. The Hamas regime uses terror to control the lives of residents. The media is censored and used mainly as a propaganda machine. This includes programming aimed at children.¹⁷¹

Religious Conventions and Gender Roles

Like many Muslim societies, Palestinian culture is patriarchal. Women are expected to perform traditional domestic roles and are discouraged from working outside the home. Men make most family decisions, including those regarding finances and social matters.¹⁷² If they can, parents continue providing for their children after they leave home. In the absence of or death of a father, a son must make family decisions and look after his widowed mother and his sisters. In many cases, a widowed woman will return to her girlhood home or the home of one of her children.¹⁷³



Despite the male-dominated culture, some women have had significant leadership roles. For example, women have been involved in everything from political leadership to terrorist attacks and suicide bombings. The Hamas charter allows women to serve as jihadists, even without the support of their father or husband. This latter point is in stark contrast to long-standing gender roles, wherein females must receive the blessing of male family members for most actions in life.¹⁷⁴

Religious Holidays and Events

Palestinian Muslims celebrate Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, and other religious holidays. The dates of these holidays vary each year because they are determined by the Islamic lunar calendar, which changes annually in accordance with the phases of the

¹⁶⁹ Palestinian National Authority, "2003 Amended Basic Law," *The Palestinian Basic Law*, 18 March 2003, <http://www.palestinianbasiclaw.org/basic-law/2003-amended-basic-law>

¹⁷⁰ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "Israel and the Occupied Territories," in *July–December, 2010 International Religious Freedom Report*, 13 September 2011, http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2010_5/168266.htm

¹⁷¹ Jonathan R. Pieslak, *Sound Targets: American Soldiers and Music in the Iraq War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 69.

¹⁷² Robert H. Griffin, "Palestine, West Bank, and Gaza Strip," *Countries and their Cultures*, 2012, <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html>

¹⁷³ CultureGrams World Edition, "West Bank and Gaza," 2012, 5, http://online.culturegrams.com/pdf/world_pdf.php?id=176

¹⁷⁴ Claudia Brunner, "Hegemonic Discourse on Palestinian Women Suicide Bombers and the Logic of Gender," in *Gender in Conflicts: Palestine, Israel, Germany*, eds. Ulrike Auga and Christina von Braun (Münster, Germany: LIT Verlag, 2006), 29.

moon (unlike the fixed dates of the Western solar calendar adopted by much of the world).

Ramadan

Ramadan is the name for the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar during which Muslims celebrate the Archangel Gabriel's revelation of the Quran to Muhammad. Throughout this month, Muslims fast during daylight hours. The fast is broken at sunset by a prayer and a meal called *iftar*, which is shared with the family. Ramadan is a time to visit family and friends as well as a time for prayer and reflective thinking. Visitors are welcome to join celebrations; there are no restrictions that prevent outsiders from participating.¹⁷⁵



© Uzi Yachin
Ramadan in Jerusalem

Eid al-Fitr

Beginning the first day after the holy month of Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, the three-day “festival of fast breaking,” celebrates the end of Ramadan. People dress in new clothes, engage in community prayers, and visit with friends and relatives. Many Muslims also visit the cemeteries to pay respects to their departed loved ones.¹⁷⁶ 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. During this time, restaurants, cafés, and bakeries see an upsurge in business as people flock to them for celebratory meals and dishes.^{177, 178}



© Asim Bharwani
Eid prayer at Dome of the Rock

Exchange 1: Happy Eid!

Visitor:	Happy Eid!	kul 'aam wa-inteh bi-KheyR, 'eed sa'eed!
Local:	Same to you, too!	wa-inteh bi-KheyR, 'eed sa'eed 'eed sa'eed 'aleyk wa-'eed sa'eed 'aleynaa

Eid al-Adha

¹⁷⁵ Victoria Kennick Urubshurow, *Introducing World Religions* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 157.

¹⁷⁶ United States Forces–Iraq, United States Army, “Syrian Forces Kill Seven People on Eid al-Fitr,” Consolidated Open Source Daily Monitor, 31 August 2011.
https://www.intelink.gov/inscom/osp/Baghdad_Mosquito/20110831%20Consolidated%20Open%20Source%20Daily%20Monitor.pdf

¹⁷⁷ Gordon D. Newby, “Īd al-Fitr,” *Concise Encyclopedia of Islam* (Oxford, UK: Oneworld Publications, 2004), 95.

¹⁷⁸ Jamal J. Elias, *Islam* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 75.

Eid al-Adha commemorates the patriarch Ibrahim's (Abraham's) willingness to sacrifice his son Ismail. During the celebration, which occurs concurrently with the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca, Muslims don their finest clothing and perform the obligatory prayers. Families that can afford the expense also make an animal sacrifice. The meat is then shared with the needy and with friends and family.¹⁷⁹



© Asim Bharwani
Giving candy on Eid al-Adha

Christmas

Although the Palestinian Authority includes Christmas among its official holidays, Hamas has removed it as one in the Gaza Strip.¹⁸⁰

Buildings of Worship

Mosques

The Mosque of Omar in Bethlehem and the Great Mosque of Gaza are well known in the Palestinian Territories. The former is prominently situated along the Manger Square and is the largest place of worship in Bethlehem.¹⁸¹ The latter was originally built by the Crusaders as the Church of St. John and partly constructed with pillars that had been part of a synagogue. It is now the largest mosque in the Gaza Strip.¹⁸²



© Michael Loadenthal
Mosque in Jericho

Mosques are not only places of worship; they also play a significant cultural and educational role.

Exchange 2: May I enter the mosque?

Visitor:	May I enter the mosque?	baqdaR adKhul 'al il-masjid?
Local:	Yes.	aa

Visitors are expected to follow the mosque rules and show respect. Women must dress modestly by covering the whole body and head. No makeup or perfume should be worn. Likewise, men should be conservatively dressed.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁹ Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1994), 134.

¹⁸⁰ Phoebe Greenwood, "Gaza Christians Long for Days before Hamas Cancelled Christmas," *Guardian* (UK), 23 December 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/dec/23/gaza-christians-hamas-cancelled-christmas>

¹⁸¹ Linda Cabasin and Caroline Treffer, *Fodor's Israel*, 8th ed. (New York: Fodor's Travel, 2011), 217.

¹⁸² Moshe Sharon, *Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palaestinae* 4, –G–, *Handbook of Oriental Studies* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill Academic, 2008), 32.

When visiting mosques, shoes should be removed. Do not touch anything without permission. Do not walk in front of a person who is praying; this invalidates the prayer and may be upsetting.¹⁸⁴

Exchange 3: Where should I place my shoes?

Guest:	Where should I place my shoes?	weyn laazim aHuT kundaRtee?
Local:	Here on the rack.	hon, 'al iR-Raf

Churches

Although Christians are a small minority in the Palestinian Territories today, in the past most Palestinians were Christian. As a result, many churches were built throughout the territories and Israel. Many of those churches are no longer standing; others were converted into mosques, though some remain. Also, churches have been built in the modern era.



© Bilal Randeree
Bethlehem Church of Nativity

In Bethlehem, St. Catherine's Church and the Armenian Orthodox Church of the Nativity are important pilgrimage sites for Christians. Many congregate at these two churches to celebrate Christmas in the town historically tied to the birth of Jesus Christ.^{185, 186} Just as the various Christian communities differ on doctrine and ritual, the architecture of their churches varies significantly.¹⁸⁷

Palestinian terrorist organizations and Jewish militants have targeted Christian churches. Vandals have left graffiti death threats against the Christian community. Christian churches have also been the target of firebombings.^{188, 189}

¹⁸³ Muslim Public Affairs Council, "Mosque Etiquette for Law Enforcement," 2010, <http://www.mpac.org/programs/anti-terrorism-campaign/mosque-etiquette-for-law-enforcement.php>

¹⁸⁴ Muslim Public Affairs Council, "Mosque Etiquette for Law Enforcement," 2010, <http://www.mpac.org/programs/anti-terrorism-campaign/mosque-etiquette-for-law-enforcement.php>

¹⁸⁵ Associated Press, "Hundreds Pack Bethlehem Church for Christmas Mass," *USA Today*, 25 December 2011, <http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/story/2011-12-24/christmas-bethlehem/52215368/1>

¹⁸⁶ Douglas Hamilton, "Palestinians Ask for U.N. Recognition for Bethlehem's Nativity Church," FaithWorld, Reuters, 7 February 2011, <http://blogs.reuters.com/faithworld/2011/02/07/palestinians-ask-u-n-recognition-for-bethlehems-nativity-church/>

¹⁸⁷ Holly Hayes, "Sacred Sites in Israel and the West Bank," *Sacred Destinations*, 2011, <http://www.sacred-destinations.com/israel/sacred-sites>

¹⁸⁸ Associated Press, "Catholics Ask Israeli Leader to Help End Attacks," CBS News, 27 February 2012, http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-501713_162-57385647/catholics-ask-israeli-leader-to-help-end-attacks/

¹⁸⁹ Associated Press, "Palestinian Area Churches Attacked," Ynetnews.com, 16 September 2006, <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3304545,00.html>

As with any sacred site, it is imperative to show respect when visiting Christian churches. Follow the example of locals. Dress conservatively. Ask for permission to enter and to photograph.

Synagogues

In general, anyone may enter a synagogue, so long as they are respectful of the customs and traditions. Typically, the Jewish settler communities in the West Bank are quite closed. Access to synagogues there may be restricted. The more radical interpretations of Judaism and Zionism are more prevalent in these settler communities.¹⁹⁰ One should dress conservatively when visiting a synagogue.



© Gellerj / Wikimedia.org
Synagogue in Petah Tikva

Exchange 4: Is this acceptable to wear?

Visitor:	Is this acceptable to wear?	haada il-libis maqbool?
Local:	Yes.	aa

Men and women entering synagogues or other Jewish sacred spaces must cover their heads. In many synagogues, head coverings (*yarmulke*) are available at the back of the building. In Orthodox synagogues, men wear *tallitot* (prayer shawls), but this is not mandatory for non-Jews.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ Reese Erlich, "Hebron Settlers," Green Planet Monitor, 27 November 2011, <http://www.greenplanetmonitor.net/news/2011/11/hebron-settlers/>

¹⁹¹ Susan Sapiro, "Heritage and Heresy: The First Galizianer Traditional-Egalitarian Congregation," *Jewish Folklore and Ethnology Review* 19, nos. 1–2 (1997): 28.

Chapter 2 Assessment

1. Most Palestinians are Christians.

False

Although most Palestinians were Christian during the Roman and Byzantine eras, today the majority of the population in the Palestinian Territories is Muslim. Additionally, nearly all Palestinian refugees are Muslim, although a small Christian minority remains.

2. The majority of Palestinian Muslims follow Shi'a Islam.

False

The vast majority of Palestinian Muslims are Sunni. In the Gaza Strip where the Hamas regime relies heavily on Shi'ite allies, Shi'ite conversions may be increasing.

3. The Palestinian Basic Law, the temporary constitution of the Palestinian Authority, allows for freedom of religion.

True

Palestinian Basic Law is the temporary constitution of the Palestinian Authority. Although the law specifies that Islam is the official religion of the land, it also provides for the free expression of other religions. But Hamas has rejected the law in its governance of Gaza.

4. Palestinian culture is patriarchal, and women are primarily relegated to domestic occupations.

True

Like many Muslim societies, Palestinian culture is patriarchal. Women are expected to perform traditional domestic roles and are discouraged from working outside the home. Men make most family decisions, including those regarding finances and social matters.

5. Christmas is an officially sanctioned holiday in both Gaza and the West Bank.

False

While the Palestinian Authority deems Christmas an official holiday, Hamas has banned the celebration of the holiday in the Gaza Strip.

CHAPTER 3: TRADITIONS

Introduction

Palestinian clans include multiple extended families claiming descent from a shared male ancestor. When a woman marries, she assumes membership in their husband's clan. The importance of the clans has increased since the onset of the conflict between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas.¹⁹²

Historically, clans were a source of socioeconomic and physical safety. Through the sharing of land, tools, and labor, the clans met the needs of the predominantly agrarian communities.¹⁹³



© afps 14 / flickr.com
Grandfather and children

Prior to the conflict between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, the strength of the clans in the West Bank was in decline. This general decline began during Ottoman rule in the 19th century and persisted under the British Mandate in the 20th century. The decline continued into the early 1980s with the building of Jewish settlements in the West Bank. In addition, the emergence of frustrated youth, many of whom have rejected the traditional social system in favor of radical Islam, contributed to the waning strength and importance of clans.^{194, 195, 196}

Today, the structure of some clans is changing. The traditional clan systems have been reconstructed, especially in the refugee camps. Clans there are based on origins rather than family. Some of the fabricated relationships in the refugee camps have brought displaced extended families into influential local clans.^{197, 198, 199}

¹⁹² Scott Allen, "Hamula Organisation and Masha'a Tenure in Palestine," *Man* 21, no. 2 (June 1986): 271–295.

¹⁹³ Samih K. Farsoun and Naseer H. Aruri, *Palestine and the Palestinians: A Social and Political History*, 2nd. ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2006), 23.

¹⁹⁴ Mohammed Ayoob, *The Many Faces of Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Muslim World* (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2008), 19–20.

¹⁹⁵ Gudrun Krämer, *A History of Palestine: From the Ottoman Conquest to the Founding of the State of Israel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

¹⁹⁶ Laura Etheredge, ed., *Historic Palestine, Israel, and the Emerging Palestinian Autonomous Areas* (New York: Britannica Educational Publishing, 2011), 60.

¹⁹⁷ Sari Hanafi, "Social Capital, Transnational Kinship and Refugee Repatriation Process: Some Elements for a Palestinian Sociology of Return," in *Palestinian Refugees: Challenges of Repatriation and Development*, eds. Rex Brynen and Roula El-Rifai (New York: Palgrave Macmillan: 2007), 46–78.

¹⁹⁸ Sari Hanafi, "Governing Palestinian Refugee Camps in the Arab East: Governmentalities in Search of Legitimacy" (working paper, Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, American University of Beirut, Lebanon, October 2010), 17, http://www.aub.edu.lb/ifi/public_policy/pal_camps/Documents/working_papers_series/20101206ifi_pc_wp_s01_sari_hanafi_english.pdf

¹⁹⁹ Landinfo, "2: The Clan System in the Palestinian Territory," in *Conflicts in the Palestinian Territories* (Oslo, Norway: Country of Origin Information Centre, 2008), 6, http://landinfo.no/asset/753/1/753_1.pdf

The al-Husseini and al-Nashashibi clans are among the most prominent today. Both are noted for their nationalist fervor and leadership. Although adamant rivals, they have occasionally set aside differences to work for Palestinian unity.²⁰⁰

Exchange 5: Does your clan leader live here?

Official:	Does your clan leader live here?	sheyKh qabeeltak bi'eesh hon?
Local:	No.	laa

Clans in the Post-Oslo Era

Modern clans have altered their focus from shared agrarian activity to more urban endeavors. Many have launched joint ventures, including NGOs and foundations that continue to pool resources and manage their finances.²⁰¹ This is especially true in Gaza, where such ventures have helped diminish hardship through a reallocation of resources and redistribution of wealth. Remittances from the Palestinian diaspora also have helped clan members financially.²⁰²



© jillylovesdurham / flickr.com
Refugee family

In an attempt to undermine Hamas-affiliated organizers, former Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat championed a 1996 election law that divided the Palestinian Territories into 16 electoral districts. The law's purpose was to empower local clan leaders and keep them firmly in Arafat's camp, effectively crippling Hamas.²⁰³

Yet this division of the territories served to factionalize Arafat's powerbase. For example, parts of the Palestinian security forces associated with particular clans and viewed each other as rivals. This was a major factor in the complete collapse of the governing Palestinian Authority's security forces during the Second Intifada (2000–2005).²⁰⁴ With Arafat's death in November 2004, the last link binding the clans together was broken.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁰ Nafez Y. Nazzal and Laila A. Nazzal, *Historical Dictionary of Palestine* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1997), 97, 136.

²⁰¹ Liana Lopes, "The World Bank and the Palestinian NGO Project: Assessing the Impact on Actors and Relationships" (paper, Third Global International Studies Conference, University of Porto, Portugal, 17–20 August 2011), http://www.wisnetwork.org/porto2011/papers/WISC_2011-515.pdf

²⁰² International Crisis Group, "3: Kinship Networks in Operation," in *Inside Gaza: The Challenge of Clans and Families* (Brussels, Belgium: International Crisis Group, 2007), 7, http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Israel%20Palestine/71_insider_gaza_the_challenge_of_clans_and_families.pdf

²⁰³ Arthur Neslen, *In your Eyes a Sandstorm: Ways of Being Palestinian* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 8.

²⁰⁴ Yezid Sayigh, "'We Serve the People': Hamas Policing in Gaza" (Crown Paper 5, Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA, April 2011), 50–55, <http://www.brandeis.com/crown/publications/cp/CP5.pdf>

²⁰⁵ Ali Jarbawi and Wendy Pearlman, "Struggle in Post-Charisma Transition: Rethinking Palestinian Politics after Arafat," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 36, no. 4 (Summer 2007): 6–21, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/10.1525/jps.2007.36.4.6.pdf>

Most of the West Bank clans have remained within the Fatah fold, although those in the Gaza Strip have not. Though Fatah continues to try to use the clans against Hamas, success has been limited.²⁰⁶

Exchange 6: Respected clan leader, we need your help.

Official:	Respected clan leader, we need your help.	yaa HaDRit sheyKhna, iHna bHaajeh la-musaa'ad-tak
Local leader:	Okay.	Tayib

The clans in the Gaza Strip have remained politically active. Able to provide large blocs of voters, volunteers, or militiamen, they have served as a counterbalance to Hamas at times. This is especially true when multiple clans have united to oppose Hamas' policies. Initially, the clans also controlled the smuggling tunnels along the Egyptian border, collecting fees for their use. Currently, Hamas has largely reigned in the power of the clans and taken over the smuggling tunnels, acquiring the wealth from these operations.^{207, 208}

Honor and Values

Mithaq al-sharaf is the formal code of honor between Palestinian clan members. Although once an oral tradition, today it can be a lengthy legal document.²⁰⁹ This social contract involves a pledge of loyalty to the clan and a willingness to defend any clan member. An attack against one clan member is an attack on all clan members.²¹⁰ This mutual defense mechanism serves as a deterrent to the blood feuds in Palestine.^{211, 212}



© Rusty Stewart
Family of a suicide bomber

Some groups in the Palestinian Territory actively encourage suicidal acts of terrorism. By engaging in acts of terrorism that aid the liberation movement, a person is believed to be guaranteed a place in paradise after death. Representative of this belief are the sermons

²⁰⁶ Ed Blanche, "Gaza's War of the Clans," *Middle East* 380 (July 2007): 6–11.

²⁰⁷ Noah Schachtman, "Gaza's Tunnels Re-Open with Hamas in Charge," *Wired*, 23 January 2009, <http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2009/01/hamas-takes-con>

²⁰⁸ Erin Cunningham, "Long the Glue of Gaza, Clans Say Hamas is Undermining Tribal Justice," *Christian Science Monitor*, 22 January 2010, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2010/0122/Long-the-glue-of-Gaza-clans-say-Hamas-is-undermining-tribal-justice>

²⁰⁹ Menachem Klein, "Competing Brothers: The Web of Hamas-PLO Relations," in *Religious Radicalism in the Greater Middle East*, eds. Bruce Maddy-Weitzman and Efraim Inbar (Portland, OR: Cass, 1997), 117–118.

²¹⁰ Arthur Neslen, *In your Eyes a Sandstorm: Ways of Being Palestinian* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 9.

²¹¹ Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, *Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 21.

²¹² Doron Pely, "When Honor Trumps Basic Needs: The Role of Honor in Deadly Disputes within Israel's Arab Community," *Negotiation Journal* 27, no. 2 (April 2011): 205–225.

delivered in radical Palestinian mosques and broadcast over Palestinian and Hizballah media. One such televised broadcast was made during the Second Intifadah in 2001 by Sheikh Ibrahim Madhi, a cleric employed at the time by the Palestinian Authority. During the Friday sermon at the Ijlin Mosque in Gaza City, he repeatedly called upon Palestinians and sympathetic Muslims to martyr themselves in suicide attacks against Israelis.²¹³

Although Fatah is more secular, the group has used suicide bombers in the West Bank. Hamas use martyrs more extensively—merging a previously Shi'ite narrative of martyrdom with more predominantly Sunni conceptualizations of jihad as a response to oppression. The result has been a “cult of martyrdom” that romanticizes and legitimizes acts of suicidal terrorism.²¹⁴

Politeness, Hospitality, and Gift Giving

In general, Palestinians are friendly and welcoming.²¹⁵ Palestinian men greet each other with a handshake, and women kiss each other on the cheeks. Such greetings include a smile, direct eye contact, and social commentary about family. When greeting the opposite gender, allow the Palestinian to initiate the interaction to avoid social transgressions.²¹⁶



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Tea time in home

Speaking loudly signifies the importance of the subject, as does repetition of the point. To show respect, a Palestinian usually expresses agreement in front of an outsider but this does not necessarily reflect the person's true beliefs. Families make collective decisions. The eldest male is often the family spokesman. Although most official appointments will be attended in a timely manner, Palestinians often meet less formal engagements with less punctuality.²¹⁷

Friends and neighbors frequently call upon one another for brief visits, during which hosts serve sweets and hot beverages (usually coffee or tea). When invited to dinner, Palestinians consider it courteous to first decline the invitation to avoid imposition. Yet if the host persists in the invitation, it should be accepted.^{218, 219}

²¹³ The Middle East Media Research Institute, “Friday Sermon on PA TV: Blessings to Whoever Saved a Bullet to Stick It in a Jew’s Head,” 8 August 2001, <http://www.memri.org/report/en/print492.htm>

²¹⁴ Paul Middleton, “Chapter 6: Martyrdom in Islam,” in *Martyrdom: A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: T&T Clark International, 2011), 182.

²¹⁵ Afaf Ibrahim Meleis, *Theoretical Nursing: Development and Progress*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia: Lippincot Williams & Wilkins, 2005), 384–389.

²¹⁶ Robert H. Griffin, “Palestine, West Bank, and Gaza Strip,” *Countries and their Cultures*, 2012, <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html>

²¹⁷ Afaf Ibrahim Meleis, *Theoretical Nursing: Development and Progress*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia: Lippincot Williams & Wilkins, 2005), 384–389.

²¹⁸ Robert H. Griffin, “Palestine, West Bank, and Gaza Strip,” *Countries and their Cultures*, 2012, <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html>

Etiquette dictates what a person wears. Both genders are expected to dress conservatively, including proper head coverings. Additionally, women are expected to conceal their upper arms, shoulders, and bosom.²²⁰

Exchange 7: I really appreciate your hospitality.

Guest:	I really appreciate your hospitality.	aana kteeR mamnoonak li-Deeyaافتك
Host:	It's my pleasure.	ah-la wa wah-la, haada waajbee

Reflecting the Palestinians' agrarian traditions, the most common gifts are seasonal flowers, fruits, and herbs.²²¹ Gifts may also be the payment of educational and healthcare fees. This monetary gift type usually comes from relatives living abroad and helps connect them to their home communities.²²² Gift giving also greases the wheels of government bureaucracy. Gifts are given to those in positions to help one's family socially, financially, and politically.²²³



© delayed gratification / flickr.com
Women visiting

Male/Female Interaction

Palestinian society typically relegates women to the domestic sphere and frowns upon women in the workforce. Women are expected to honor their fathers and husbands through obedience and submission.²²⁴ Although women have been actively engaged in the organizations and movements aimed at Palestinian liberation, Palestinian authorities have not made gender equality a major priority.²²⁵

²¹⁹ Afaf Ibrahim Meleis, *Theoretical Nursing: Development and Progress*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2005), 384–389.

²²⁰ Robert H. Griffin, "Palestine, West Bank, and Gaza Strip," *Countries and their Cultures*, 2012, <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html>

²²¹ Samih K. Farsoun, *Culture and Customs of the Palestinians* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004), 27, 78.

²²² Sari Hanafi, "The Sociology of Return: Palestinian Social Capital, Transnational Kinships and the Refugee Repatriation Process," in *Israel and the Palestinian Refugees*, eds. Eyal Benvenisti, Chaim Gans, and Sari Hanafi (New York: Springer, 2007), 16.

²²³ Julie Marie Peteet, *Landscape of Hope and Despair: Palestinian Refugee Camps* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 75.

²²⁴ Robert H. Griffin, "Palestine, West Bank, and Gaza Strip: Gender Roles and Statuses," *Countries and their Cultures*, 2012, <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html>

²²⁵ Simona Sharoni, "Chapter 5: Palestinian Women and the Intifada," in *Gender and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The Politics of Women's Resistance* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 69–89.

According to estimates, about one-quarter of Palestinian women have been physically abused.²²⁶ Although there are existing laws prohibiting such acts, the laws are poorly enforced.^{227, 228} A woman claiming sexual abuse must endure virginity tests, even against her will.

Honor killings, in which male family members murder female relatives thought to have dishonored the family, are treated lightly in the Palestinian Territory.^{229, 230} Although 33 cases of honor killings were reported in 2004, human rights groups suspect that the actual number may be much higher and on the rise. This trend may be a result of the more conservative gender codes in the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip.^{231, 232}

Because men and women do not interact equally in Palestinian society, visitors should be especially sensitive to their interactions with the opposite gender. Even perceived improprieties could result in tragedy. Westerners should avoid establishing intimate relationships, flirting, or even privately conversing with Palestinian women.²³³

Eating Habits and Types of Food

Palestinian cuisine reflects the region's turbulent history, drawing upon traditions from the empires that vied for control of the area. Arab, Persian, Egyptian, Turkish, and European influences have merged with local traditions to create a unique culinary tradition. Despite the small area of the Palestinian Territories and historical Palestine, there are perceptible regional variations in Palestinian dishes. For



© Basel15 / Wikimedia.org
Musakhan

²²⁶ Associated Press, "Report: 23 percent of Palestinian Women Endure Domestic Violence," *Haaretz*, 11 July 2006, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/report-23-percent-of-palestinian-women-endure-domestic-violence-1.204497>

²²⁷ Sarah Lea Whitson, "U.S.: Bush Should Urge Abbas to Respect Rights," Human Rights Watch, 26 May 2005, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2005/05/25/us-bush-should-urge-abbas-respect-rights>

²²⁸ Euromed Gender Equality Programme, European Commission, "National Situation Analysis Report: Women's Human Rights and Gender Equality: Occupied Palestinian Territory: Enhancing Equality between Men and Women in the Euromed Region (2008-2011)," European Commission, 2012, 6–7, 16, http://www.enpi-info.eu/files/publications/Situation%20Analysis_Report_OPT.pdf

²²⁹ Associated Press, "Report: 23 percent of Palestinian Women Endure Domestic Violence," *Haaretz*, 11 July 2006, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/report-23-percent-of-palestinian-women-endure-domestic-violence-1.204497>

²³⁰ Dawn Perlmutter, "The Semiotics of Honor Killing & Ritual Murder," *Anthropoetics* 17, no. 1 (Fall 2011), <http://www.anthropoetics.ucla.edu/ap1701/1701perlmutter.htm>

²³¹ Sarah Lea Whitson, "U.S.: Bush Should Urge Abbas to Respect Rights," Human Rights Watch, 26 May 2005, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2005/05/25/us-bush-should-urge-abbas-respect-rights>

²³² Euromed Gender Equality Programme, "National Situation Analysis Report: Women's Human Rights and Gender Equality: Occupied Palestinian Territory: Enhancing Equality between Men and Women in the Euromed Region (2008-2011)," European Commission, 2012, 7, http://www.enpi-info.eu/files/publications/Situation%20Analysis_Report_OPT.pdf

²³³ Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, U.S. Army, *TRADOC DCSINT Handbook No. 2: Arab Cultural Awareness: 58 Factsheets* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: TRADOC, 2006), 9, <http://www.fas.org/irp/agency/army/arabculture.pdf>

example, Gazans are known to use more hot spices and fish.²³⁴ In the West Bank and among the refugee communities of the Palestinian diaspora, meat dishes are more common. Fruits, nuts, and vegetables are important elements of Palestinian cuisine.^{235, 236}

Meat must be ritualistically butchered in accordance with Quranic instructions (halal). Under these same stipulations, Muslim Palestinians are prohibited from eating pork, carnivorous animals, and certain fish. Additionally, alcohol is forbidden though some moderate Muslims are known to drink.²³⁷

Exchange 8: What type of meat is this?

Guest:	What type of meat is this?	shoo no' haay il-laHmeh?
Host:	Chicken.	jaaj

Food is typically taken from communal dishes. When dining with Palestinians or in public, use only your right hand for eating and passing or accepting dishes or drinks. The left hand, used only for private sanitation, is considered unclean. Hands should be washed before a meal. It is appropriate to leave a small portion of food on one's plate when finished. This reflects on the host's generosity and wealth. As an outsider, one should avoid controversial topics during dinner conversation (e.g., politics, faith, gender relations). Once the meal is finished, pay respect to the hosts and begin to depart.²³⁸

Coffee and tea feature significantly in Palestinian culture. Men frequently drink either beverage while conversing and conducting business in homes, cafés, restaurants, or offices.²³⁹

²³⁴ Ken Albala, ed., "Palestinian Territories," in *Food Cultures of the World Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2011), 286.

²³⁵ Liora Gvion, "Narrating Modernity and Tradition: The Case of Palestinian Food in Israel," *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 16, no. 4 (2009): 391–413, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10702890903020869>

²³⁶ Mai M. Farsakh, "The Rich Flavors of Palestine," Institute for Middle East Understanding, This Week in Palestine, 21 June 2006, <http://imeu.net/news/article001840.shtml>

²³⁷ Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, U.S. Army, *TRADOC DCSINT Handbook No. 2: Arab Cultural Awareness: 58 Factsheets* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: TRADOC, 2006), 16, <http://www.fas.org/irp/agency/army/arabculture.pdf>

²³⁸ Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, U.S. Army, *TRADOC DCSINT Handbook No. 2: Arab Cultural Awareness: 58 Factsheets* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: TRADOC, 2006), 16, <http://www.fas.org/irp/agency/army/arabculture.pdf>

²³⁹ Robert H. Griffin, "Palestine, West Bank, and Gaza Strip," *Countries and their Cultures*, 2012, <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html>

Exchange 9: I would like coffee.

Customer:	I would like coffee.	bidee qah-weh
Waiter:	Sure.	akeed

Dress Codes

Although many Palestinian youth and men wear Western attire, older and more conservative men wear traditional headdresses known as *kaffiyehs*.²⁴⁰ Originally protection from the sun, today the *kaffiyeh* serves as a symbol of Palestinian nationalism. The late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat was seldom seen without a *kaffiyeh*.^{241, 242}



© gnuckx / flickr.com
Traditional dress of women

Exchange 10: Can I buy a *kaffiyeh* with this much money?

Buyer:	Can I buy a <i>kaffiyeh</i> with this much money?	baqdaR ashtRee koofeeyeh bi-hadol il-maSaaRee?
Seller:	No.	laa

Muslim women are less likely to wear Western clothing, especially in the Gaza Strip and in conservative communities in the West Bank. Many dress in a *hijab* (a checkered headscarf) and *jilbab* (a loose-fitting coat also known as the “shari’a dress”).²⁴³ Since Hamas seized power in the Gaza Strip, such attire is now required in many of the schools under its control.²⁴⁴ Far less common, some women wear the *thob* (traditional outer dress) and the *niqab* (face veil). These items are more likely worn on Fridays when women attend mosques.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁰ Fiona Macdonald et al., *Peoples of Western Asia* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 2007), x.

²⁴¹ Heather Marie Akou, “Building a New ‘World Fashion’: Islamic Dress in the Twenty-First Century,” *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 11, no. 4 (December 2007): 403–421.

²⁴² Tony Walker and Andrew Gowers, *Arafat: The Biography* (London, UK: Virgin Books, 2003), 16.

²⁴³ Loren D. Lybarger, “Chapter 5: Karama Camp: Islamist-Secularist Dynamics in the Gaza Strip,” in *Identity and Religion in Palestine: The Struggle between Islamism & Secularism in the Occupied Territories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 180.

²⁴⁴ Sara Roy, “Chapter 7: A Changing Islamist Order? From Civic Empowerment to Civic Regression—The Second Intifada and Beyond,” in *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza: Engaging the Islamist Social Sector* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 123–124.

²⁴⁵ Heather Marie Akou, “Building a New ‘World Fashion’: Islamic Dress in the Twenty-First Century,” *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 11, no. 4 (December 2007): 403–421.

Non-Religious Holidays

In addition to numerous Islamic holidays, Palestinians celebrate a handful of secular holidays, mainly focused on Palestinian nationalism. These include Yawm al-Ardh (3 March), Labor Day (1 May), Yawm al-Nakba (15 May), and Independence Day (15 November).

Yawm al-Nakba (Day of Catastrophe)

On 15 May each year Palestinians throughout the Middle East commemorate the forced exodus of Palestinians that began after the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. During the annual holiday, Palestinians and other Arabs demonstrate against what they view as the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Such demonstrations frequently result in clashes with Israel Defense Forces.^{246, 247, 248}



© Shy halatzi
Girl joins protest on Nakba Day

Independence Day

Palestinian Independence Day is celebrated on 15 November. This day commemorates the 1988 adoption of the Palestinian Declaration of Independence. Although the declaration has not yet lead to an independent Palestinian state, the political environment is now more open to negotiations aimed at a two-state resolution to the Palestinian–Israeli conflict. The declaration also gave the Palestine Liberation Organization better standing in the international community, including the United States.²⁴⁹

Dos and Don'ts

Do respect a Palestinian woman's privacy.

Do stand when a woman enters the room.

Do leave a little food on your plate after eating.

Do offer guests a snack. When a guest yourself, do accept the offering of food or drink but only after declining the first offer.

Do place your right palm over your heart and slightly bow your head to convey thanks.

Do snap your head quickly upward while clicking your tongue to convey disagreement.

²⁴⁶ Open Source Center, Director of National Intelligence, "BBC Monitoring: World Media Review 0845 GMT 16 May 11," 16 May 2011.

²⁴⁷ Xinhua english.news.cn, "Dozens Arrested in Eastern Jerusalem on Nakba Day," 16 May 2011, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2011-05/16/c_13876023.htm

²⁴⁸ Michael Weiss, "Breaking: Syrian State Documents 'Show Assad Orchestrated Nakba Day Raids on Golan Heights,'" *Telegraph*, 13 June 2011, <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/michaelweiss/100092061/breaking-syrian-state-documents-show-assad-orchestrated-nakba-day-raids-on-golan-heights/>

²⁴⁹ As'ad Ghanem, *Palestinian Politics after Arafat: A Failed National Movement* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 10–12.

Do maintain eye contact; failure to do so conveys contempt for the other party.

Do show respect for the practice of daily and public prayer. If possible remain indoors during prayers. If you must be outside, refrain from walking in front of Muslims engaged in prayer.

Don't mistreat a copy of the Quran.

Don't shake hands with a Palestinian woman unless she initiates it.

Don't flirt, touch, or engage in private conversations with Palestinian women.

Don't ask Palestinian men about their female family members.

Don't use the left hand for eating or for touching a Palestinian.

Don't drink untreated water or iced drinks; public water is frequently unsanitary.

Don't crook your finger to call someone to come; instead, place your right hand palm up and repeatedly curl your fingers toward yourself.

Don't assume that handholding between members of the same gender indicates homosexuality. It is a culturally acceptable display of affection.

Don't use the OK sign common in Western cultures. It is an inappropriate gesture.

Don't show the soles of your feet or shoes when you sit. This would convey disrespect for those around you.

Don't eat, drink, or smoke in front of a Muslim engaged in fasting.

Chapter 3 Assessment

1. Today, clans are a potent force in Palestinian culture and politics.

True

Although weakened by foreign rule and Israeli incursions, today clans factor significantly in contemporary politics within the Palestinian Territories. Historically, clans were a source of socioeconomic and physical safety.

2. Palestinian culture especially romanticizes and legitimizes acts of suicidal terrorism.

True

Both the Palestinian Authority and Hamas have capitalized on the merging of the concepts of martyrdom and jihad to further their liberation ideologies. The result has been the creation of a “cult of martyrdom” that romanticizes and legitimizes acts of suicidal terrorism.

3. It is common for men and women to embrace publicly when greeting.

False

Although Palestinians are friendly and welcoming, their culture is conservative. Men and women rarely greet each other in public with more than a handshake.

4. Giving gifts to people in government positions can help Palestinians develop good relationships with those who can help their families.

True

Aside from giving gifts to friends and family, gifts also grease the wheels of government bureaucracy and establish relationships with those in positions to help one’s family socially, financially, and politically.

5. When invited to dine with a Palestinian, one should expect to remain long after the meal is concluded.

False

The meal and the conversation held during dining are the culmination of one’s invited visit. Shortly after the meal is finished, one should politely begin to depart.

CHAPTER 4: URBAN LIFE

Introduction

The Palestinian Territories are increasingly urban, with an estimated 72% of the population living in cities in 2008.²⁵⁰ In addition, Palestinian refugee camps in neighboring Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria have merged with nearby urban areas, making urbanization common among Palestinians at home and abroad.²⁵¹



© Ralf Lotys
Ramallah in West Bank

The consequences of such extensive urbanization are many, and largely undesirable. Sanitation problems, overcrowding, astronomical unemployment, scarce resources, insufficient infrastructure, and a host of other ills plague Palestinian cities.

Additionally, travel within the Palestinian Territories is highly restricted. Though petty crime rates in the Palestinian Territories are low, many threats make travel there extremely dangerous.

Urbanization Problems

The rampant growth of Palestinian cities—resulting in particular from homes constructed largely without government oversight or adherence to building codes—poses a considerable threat to the region’s archaeological sites and undiscovered cultural treasures.²⁵² But more urgent is the overcrowding in the cities and refugee camps. Large families crowd into small enclosures that lack proper doors, windows, heating, or protection from the elements.²⁵³ This overcrowding also affects the availability and quality of resources, including education.²⁵⁴



© Jonas Hansel
Crowded refugee city

Water shortages are a continuing concern in the Palestinian Territories. The lack of drinkable water poses a health risk to urban residents.²⁵⁵ Authorities have taken steps to

²⁵⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, “West Bank: People and Society: Urbanization,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

²⁵¹ Mohamed Kamel Dorai, “From Camp Dwellers to Urban Refugees? Urbanization and Marginalization of Refugee Camps in Lebanon” (working paper, Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen, Norway, n.d.), <http://www.cmi.no/file/?121>

²⁵² Salah H. al-Houdalieh and Robert R. Sauders, “Building Destruction: The Consequences of Rising Urbanization on Cultural Heritage in the Ramallah Province,” *International Journal of Cultural Property* 16, no. 1 (2009): 1–23.

²⁵³ Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, “Occupied Palestinian Territory: Narratives Under Siege: Overcrowded Living,” ReliefWeb, 14 December 2011, <http://reliefweb.int/node/464934>

²⁵⁴ Nasser Najjar, “Overcrowded Schools in Gaza Hit Education,” *Gulf News* (Dubai), 1 January 2011, <http://gulfnews.com/news/region/palestinian-territories/overcrowded-schools-in-gaza-hit-education-1.738902>

integrate stormwater harvesting to enhance water resources. Initial indications are that such measures could provide safe water for urban residents and for agricultural irrigation in rural areas. But a lack of proper management has hampered implementation of this project.²⁵⁶

The Palestinian Authority and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) have been unable to provide adequate water for the basic needs of the Palestinian people. Islamist and terrorist groups have exploited this inability. These Islamist and terrorist groups offer social services, including water, to the families of those they are trying to recruit into the liberation movement.²⁵⁷

Work Problems in Urban Areas

Terrorist groups also use the high unemployment rates in the Palestinian Territories to bolster recruitment, particularly among 15- to 24-year-olds in the West Bank, of whom an estimated 46.9% are unemployed. Overall unemployment rates are 43% in the Gaza Strip and about 24% in the West Bank.^{258, 259} The rates are higher in the refugee camps and do not take into account the number of Palestinians who are underemployed or have stopped looking for employment.^{260, 261}

Because some parents cannot provide sufficient income for their families, many Palestinian children are forced to work, often full-time, to supplement the family

²⁵⁵ Monica Awad, “UNICEF and AusAID Support Improved Sanitation for Palestinian Students,” UNICEF Newline, 11 April 2011, http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/oPt_58270.html

²⁵⁶ Sami Hamdan, “Artificial Recharge of Groundwater with Stormwater as a New Water Resource—Case Study of the Gaza Strip, Palestine” (PhD dissertation, Technische Universität Berlin, Germany, 2012), http://opus.kobv.de/tuberlin/volltexte/2012/3382/pdf/hamdan_sami.pdf

²⁵⁷ Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism, and Political Change in Egypt* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 152–153.

²⁵⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, “West Bank,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

²⁵⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, “Gaza Strip,” in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

²⁶⁰ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, “Aida Refugee Camp,” n.d., <http://www.unrwa.org/etemplate.php?id=104>

²⁶¹ The World Bank Group, “Country Brief: Middle East & North Africa Region: West Bank and Gaza,” September 2008, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWESTBANKGAZA/Resources/WBG-ENG_2008AMpdf.pdf

income.^{262, 263} This dynamic is mirrored in the Palestinian refugee camps outside of the Palestinian Territories.²⁶⁴

Most businesses in the Palestinian Territories are family-owned and -operated. Thus, they generate few jobs. Because of staggering unemployment and the lack of opportunities, many Palestinians, especially men and including highly skilled workers, emigrate either permanently or as migrant laborers.²⁶⁵

Healthcare

The Palestinian healthcare system has three tiers. The primary level includes the community healthcare services that are typically a patient's first contact point. The secondary level has specialists whom patients are typically referred to from their primary care providers. The third level comprises surgeons, neurologists, and other scarce and more highly specialized practitioners. Specialists are only available in intensive care facilities in Jerusalem and are largely inaccessible to the majority of Palestinians.²⁶⁶ Advanced medical treatment is available in Israel but must be applied for. Applications are frequently denied by Israeli authorities based on security concerns, especially for those known to have been involved with terrorist groups and liberation movements.^{267, 268}



© delayed gratification / flickr.com
Hospital waiting room

Exchange 11: Is Dr. Khoury in, Sir?

Visitor:	Is Dr. Khoury in, Sir?	yaa sayid, id-duktoor KhooRee mawjood?
Local:	No.	laa

The Palestinian Ministry of Health of the Palestinian Authority oversees the healthcare system in the West Bank. Government services are augmented by the United Nations,

²⁶² Ahmad Sub Laban, "Child Labor Becoming Widespread," *Palestine Report* 10, no. 16 (15 October 2003), <http://www.palestinereport.ps/article.php?article=117>

²⁶³ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, *Annual Report: Palestine Children—Issues and Statistics, Child Statistics Series (No. 14)* (Ramallah: Palestinian Authority, 2011), 43–44.
http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_PCBS/Downloads/book1740.pdf

²⁶⁴ Matern Boeselager, "Child Labor Rises as Palestinian Children Lose Faith in Learning," *Daily Star* (Lebanon), 21 November 2009, <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Local-News/Nov/21/Child-labor-rises-as-Palestinian-children-lose-faith-in-learning.ashx#axzz1oS6VWUiP>

²⁶⁵ ProQuest, "West Bank and Gaza," CultureGrams World Edition, 2012, 6.

²⁶⁶ Adel Zagha, "Fiscal Decentralisation and Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations in Palestine," in *The Palestinian Economy: Theoretical and Practical Challenges, Volume II: Proceedings of the Conference*, eds. Gianni Vaggi, Marco Missaglia, and Fadi Kattan (Pavia, Italy: Pavia University Press, 2010), 350, <http://www.paviauniversitypress.it/scientifica/download/vaggi-volume02-def-20oct2010-sito.pdf#page=104>

²⁶⁷ Rajaie Batniji et al., "Health as Human Security in the Occupied Palestinian Territory," *Lancet*, 28 March 2009, <http://www.raija-leena-punamaki.net/pdf%27s/PDF09.pdf>

²⁶⁸ Nisreen el-Shamayleh, "Palestinian Healthcare System Paralysed by Separation Wall," *Al-Jazeera*, 9 July 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XSWQU8JCII>

nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and an emerging for-profit private healthcare alternative.^{269, 270} The Palestinian Authority is the principal source for health insurance in the West Bank.²⁷¹ In the Gaza Strip, where Hamas' Health Ministry controls the healthcare system, the situation is worse. Because of recurring power blackouts and the unavailability of medical supplies, resulting in part from the Israeli blockade, healthcare providers in Gaza operate in near primitive conditions.^{272, 273}

Exchange 12: I have pain, Doctor. Can you help me?

Patient:	I have pain, doctor. Can you help me?	aana Haasis ib-waja' yaa daktoR. btiqdaR tsaa'idnee?
Doctor:	Yes, I can help you.	aa, baqdaR asaa'dak

Some international observers believe that the entire Palestinian healthcare system is on the brink of collapse. Other contributing factors to this dilemma include gross mismanagement, ongoing security issues, and Palestinian political wrangling.²⁷⁴

A shocking 10% of Palestinian children suffer from stunted growth.²⁷⁵ Children living in urban areas have higher rates of asthma.²⁷⁶ High rates of coronary heart disease, obesity, and diabetes plague Palestinian adults, especially men. Lack of exercise and largely sedentary work practices have contributed to these issues.²⁷⁷

²⁶⁹ Ministry of Health, Palestinian Authority, "Palestinian Health Information Center (PHIC)," n.d., <http://www.moh.ps/?lang=1&page=4&pid=84>

²⁷⁰ Adel Zagha, "Fiscal Decentralisation and Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations in Palestine," in *The Palestinian Economy: Theoretical and Practical Challenges, Volume II: Proceedings of the Conference*, eds. Gianni Vaggi, Marco Missaglia, and Fadi Kattan (Pavia, Italy: Pavia University Press, 2010), 349–350. <http://www.paviauniversitypress.it/scientifica/download/vaggi-volume02-def-20oct2010-sito.pdf#page=104>

²⁷¹ Michael Schoenbaum, Adel K. Afifi, and Richard J. Deckelbaum, *Strengthening the Palestinian Health System* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2005), xi, http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2005/RAND_MG311-1.sum.pdf

²⁷² International Committee of the Red Cross, "Gaza: Ailing Health-Care System Puts Lives at Risk," ICRC Resource Centre, 7 January 2010, <http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/interview/palestine-interview-250610.htm>

²⁷³ James Burgess, "Energy Crisis in the Gaza Strip Threatens Hospitals," OilPrice.com, 21 February 2012, <http://oilprice.com/Latest-Energy-News/World-News/Energy-Crisis-in-the-Gaza-Strip-Threatens-Hospitals.html>

²⁷⁴ Inter Press Service, "Palestinian Healthcare System in Deep Trouble," OneWorld South Asia, 31 August 2009, <http://southasia.oneworld.net/globalheadlines/palestinian-healthcare-system-in-deep-trouble>

²⁷⁵ BBC News, "Palestinian Health Care 'Ailing,'" 5 March 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7924199.stm>

²⁷⁶ M.M. Hasan, R. Gofin, and E. Bar-Yishay, "Urbanization and the Risk of Asthma among Schoolchildren in the Palestinian Authority," *Journal of Asthma* 37, no. 4 (2000): 353–360.

²⁷⁷ Dafna Merom et al., "Lifestyle Physical Activity among Urban Palestinians and Israelis: A Cross-Sectional Comparison in the Palestinian-Israeli Jerusalem Risk Factor Study," *BioMed Central Public Health* 12, no. 90 (2012): <http://www.biomedcentral.com/content/pdf/1471-2458-12-90.pdf>

Exchange 13: Is there a hospital nearby?

Visitor:	Is there a hospital nearby?	fee mistashfa qaReeb min hon?
Local:	Yes, in the center of town.	aa, waaHid ibnuS il-balad

Education and Urban Schools

Palestinians place a high value on education. Parents have the option of sending children to public or private schools. The former are funded by the government, and the latter are financed largely by religious institutions—primarily Muslim or Christian.²⁷⁸ Just as with healthcare, the United Nations operates a separate system for refugees. But overcrowding has led to high student-to-teacher ratios, the need for teaching students in shifts, and other strains upon the education system.²⁷⁹



© Darcy Vallance
Boys secondary English class

Exchange 14: Is there a school nearby?

Official:	Is there a school nearby?	fee madRaseh qaReeb min hon?
Local:	Yes.	aa

Within the Palestinian Territory, education is compulsory for ages 6–18. Schools are divided into primary, grades 1–6; preparatory, grades 7–9; and secondary, grades 10–12. Additionally, children may enroll in kindergarten at age 3. During the first year of secondary education, students determine whether to follow a social studies or science track. Parents prefer the latter because it generally provides a higher income and more opportunities. At the conclusion of their secondary education, students take a college-entrance exam, the *tawjihi*. Scores determine which schools a student may apply to and which majors they may pursue.²⁸⁰

Exchange 15: Do your children go to school?

Official:	Do your children go to school?	oolaadak biRooHoo 'al il-madRaseh?
Local:	Yes.	aa

²⁷⁸ Robert H. Griffin, “Palestine, West Bank, and Gaza Strip,” *Countries and Their Cultures*, 2012, <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html>

²⁷⁹ Edward Sayre and Samia al-Botmeh, “Youth Exclusion in the West Bank and Gaza Strip: The Impact of Social, Economic and Political Forces” (working paper, Wolfenshohn Center for Development, Dubai School of Government, November 2009), http://www.shababinclusion.org/files/1525_file_Palestine_final.pdf

²⁸⁰ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, “Palestine,” in *World Data on Education*, 7th ed. (Paris: UNESCO, 2011), http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/WDE/2010/pdf-versions/Palestine.pdf

Despite their fairly conservative culture, many Palestinian families encourage their daughters to pursue higher education, but in academic areas that will keep them in their local communities. Teaching is a popular field of study for women.²⁸¹

Student groups affiliated with Palestinian terrorist or militant groups often recruit students who attend the various universities, colleges, and technical schools within the Palestinian Territories.²⁸²

Restaurants

Dining out at a Palestinian restaurant is similar to dining out in the United States. A wide array of specialties are available in the West Bank. Restaurants tend to be family-friendly, with high chairs, play areas, and children's menus. A 10% gratuity is advisable.²⁸³

Exchange 16: Do you have dessert?

Customer:	Do you have dessert?	indkoo Hiloo?
Waiter:	Yes, we do.	aa, 'inaa



© OneArmedMan / Wikimedia.org
Falafel shop in Ramallah

Palestinian terrorists are known to target restaurants and other public venues. Extreme caution should be used when visiting such places.²⁸⁴

Market Place and Street Vendors

Street vendors are common in Palestinian cities. Many Palestinians frequent them to purchase light fare and snacks between meals.²⁸⁵ This is not recommended for outsiders, who have a lack of immunity to the lax sanitary practices of such establishments.

Palestinian cities have large open-air markets, referred to as *souqs*. One can purchase nearly anything at such markets: foodstuffs, clothing, jewelry, furniture, etc.



© delayed gratification / flickr.com
Street vendors in Old Jerusalem

²⁸¹ ProQuest, "West Bank and Gaza," CultureGrams World Edition, 2012, 7.

²⁸² Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, "Palestinian Territory, Occupied: Forced Recruitment by Hamas, Fatah or Any Other Organization in the West Bank; in Particular Whether Forced Recruitment by These Groups Occurs in Universities; the Consequences for Individuals Who Refuse to Join These Groups," 15 February 2008, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country....PSE..4804c0e023.0.html>

²⁸³ Amelia Thomas et al., *Israel & the Palestinian Territories* (Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet, 2010), 69–75.

²⁸⁴ Anti-Defamation League, "Major Terrorist Attacks in Israel," 2004, http://www.adl.org/israel/israel_attacks.asp

²⁸⁵ Robert H. Griffin, "Palestine, West Bank, and Gaza Strip," *Countries and Their Cultures*, 2012, <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html>

Though bargaining is common, it is poor manners to spend too much time negotiating without arriving at a reasonable price that is mutually acceptable.²⁸⁶

Exchange 17: Is the *souq* nearby?

Visitor:	Is the <i>souq</i> nearby?	is-sooq qaReeb min hon?
Local:	Yes, over there on the right.	aa, hunaak 'al il-yameen

Palestinian terrorists are known to target markets and other public venues. One should use extreme caution when choosing to patronize such establishments.^{287, 288}

Exchange 18: Do you have any more of these?

Buyer:	Do you have any more of these?	indak kamaan min hadol?
Seller:	No.	laa

Urban Traffic & Transportation

Numerous security checkpoints exist within the Palestinian Territories and along their borders with Israel. As a result, Palestinians' freedom of movement is restricted. Although many urban Palestinians enjoy trips to the countryside to visit family and friends or engage in outdoor activities, such visits are hampered by these security measures.²⁸⁹



© Michael Loadenthal
Nablus city traffic

Exchange 19: Please get out of the car.

Guard:	Please get out of the car.	law samaHt, inzil min is-sayaaRa
Driver:	Okay.	Tayib

Buses are the standard mode of transportation for many Palestinians who do not own automobiles. Although automobile ownership has increased in recent years, the transportation infrastructure is inadequate and poorly maintained, contributing to an increase in traffic problems.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁶ Daniel Jacobs, *Israel and the Palestinian Territories: The Rough Guide* (New York: Penguin Books, 1998).

²⁸⁷ Anti-Defamation League, "Major Terrorist Attacks in Israel," 2004, http://www.adl.org/israel/israel_attacks.asp

²⁸⁸ Mitchell Bard, "Palestinian Terrorists Show No Remorse Despite Israeli Clemency," *The Cutting Edge*, 08 December 2011, <http://www.thecuttingedgenews.com/index.php?article=53308&pageid=13&pagename=Analysis>

²⁸⁹ ProQuest, "West Bank and Gaza," CultureGrams World Edition, 2012, 6.

²⁹⁰ ProQuest, "West Bank and Gaza," CultureGrams World Edition, 2012, 7.

Exchange 20: Will the bus be here soon?

Visitor:	Will the bus be here soon?	RaayiH yikoon il-baaS hon 'an qaReeb?
Local:	Yes.	aa

There are two types of taxis in Palestinian cities. Knowing the difference between them is important. Palestinian-licensed taxis display a white license plate, whereas Israeli-licensed taxis have a yellow plate. In periods of unrest the Israeli-licensed vehicles are potential targets. Palestinians could mistake any passenger for an Israeli or Jewish settler. There have been instances of Palestinians hurling projectiles at Israeli-licensed taxis. Although placing a *kaffiyeh* on the dashboard may prevent being mistakenly targeted by terrorists while in the Palestinian Territory, the headpiece should be removed when arriving at Israeli checkpoints.²⁹¹

Exchange 21: Show us the car registration.

Guard:	Show us the car registration.	waRjeena RuKhSit is-sayaaRa
Driver:	Okay.	Tayib

Street Crime, Terrorism, and Civil Unrest

The most common street crimes in the Palestinian Territories are breaking into parked vehicles, pick-pocketing, and purse snatching. Additionally, the manufacture and selling of counterfeit and pirated merchandise is rampant. Of far more concern to public safety are the frequent terrorist attacks and expressions of civil unrest in the Palestinian Territories and refugee camps, along with the reciprocal attacks of the Israel Defense Forces.^{292, 293} Kidnapping, though rarer than in the past, is a major concern, especially in the Gaza Strip. In April 2011, terrorists kidnapped and killed an Italian pro-Palestinian activist.^{294, 295}



© Avi Ohayon / Wikimedia.org
Classroom after rocket strike

²⁹¹ Amelia Thomas et al., *Israel & the Palestinian Territories* (Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet, 2010), 302.

²⁹² Smartraveller, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "Israel, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank," 31 January 2012, http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Israel_Gaza_Strip_and_West_Bank

²⁹³ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "International Travel Information: Israel, the West Bank and Gaza Country Specific Information," 7 February 2012, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1064.html#crime

²⁹⁴ Fares Akram, " Hamas Says It Found Body of Italian Activist," *New York Times*, 14 April 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/15/world/middleeast/15gaza.html>

²⁹⁵ Smartraveller, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "Israel, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank," 31 January 2012, http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Israel_Gaza_Strip_and_West_Bank

Chapter 4 Assessment

1. Palestinian refugee camps are primarily urban.

True

Palestinian refugee camps throughout the Levant have merged with nearby urban areas, making urbanization common among Palestinians at home and abroad.

2. The collaboration between the Palestinian Authority, nongovernmental organizations, and the United Nations has met the growing needs of urban Palestinian populations.

False

Although the Palestinian Authority, nongovernmental organizations, and the United Nations (and to a lesser extent Hamas) collaborate to provide services, their combined resources are outstripped by overcrowding in Palestinian cities and refugee camps.

3. The Palestinian Authority has managed to keep unemployment under control.

False

Unemployment is extremely high, with rates of 40% in the Gaza Strip and nearly 24% in the West Bank. Unemployment is significantly higher among youths and estimated at 46.9% among 15- to 24-year-olds, who are targeted for recruitment by Islamists.

4. The Palestinian healthcare system teeters on the verge of collapse.

True

Mismanagement, security issues, Palestinian political infighting, power blackouts, and lack of medical supplies have contributed to the poor conditions of healthcare in the Palestinian Territories and refugee camps.

5. Because of the low crime rate in the Palestinian Territories, visitors should feel safe in public venues.

False

Although petty crime rates in the Palestinian Territories are low, terrorists and militants have targeted foreigners for kidnapping and murder. Public venues such as markets and restaurants are common settings for such attacks.

CHAPTER 5: RURAL LIFE

Introduction

Less than one-third of the current population of the Palestinian Territories lives in rural areas, a dramatic change for the historically agrarian society. The demographic shift follows decades of warfare that has led to the displacement of many Palestinians. Forced from their ancestral villages and farms after the creation of Israel in 1948, the Palestinian people began an exodus to the urban centers and refugee camps of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and neighboring states.²⁹⁶



© Almonroth / Wikimedia.org
Small town in West Bank

Prior to this phenomenon, Palestinian farming techniques were simple, and agriculture was largely for subsistence, with only a few commercial ventures. But citrus farming and horticulture had been more developed and provided job opportunities to locals.²⁹⁷

Today, resources of the Palestinian Authority and Hamas are stretched to the breaking point to provide for the urban population. These organizations have largely ignored the lack of services in rural areas.

Palestinian Clan and Bedouin Tribal Distributions

The powerful Palestinian clans, which were rivals for power against the colonial and central governments in the Palestinian Territories, are politically active today. This is especially true in the Gaza Strip, because clans in the West Bank have largely aligned with the Fatah movement. Although the clans' influence is felt in the rural area, they factor most prominently in the urban setting.^{298, 299, 300} Among the most powerful Gazan clans are the al-Shawa, operating in and around Gaza City; the Abu Middain, originally a Bedouin family that owns large tracts of Gazan land; and the Dughmush, a clan associated with the Jaish al-Islam terrorist organization and the black market.³⁰¹

²⁹⁶ Joseph Massad, "Chapter 7: Return or Permanent Exile?" in *The Palestinian Refugees: The Right of Return*, ed. Nasser Aruri (Sterling, VA: Pluto Press, 2001), 115.

²⁹⁷ Atif Kubursi, "Chapter 13: Valuing Palestinian Losses in Today's Dollar," in *The Palestinian Refugees: The Right of Return*, ed. Nasser Aruri (Sterling, VA: Pluto Press, 2001), 229.

²⁹⁸ International Crisis Group, *Inside Gaza: The Challenge of Clans and Families* (Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2007), 7,
http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Israel%20Palestine/71_insi_de_gaza_the_challenge_of_clans_and_families.pdf

²⁹⁹ Noah Schachtman, "Gaza's Tunnels Re-Open with Hamas in Charge," *Wired*, 23 January 2009,
<http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2009/01/hamas-takes-con>

³⁰⁰ Erin Cunningham, "Long the Glue of Gaza, Clans Say Hamas is Undermining Tribal Justice," *Christian Science Monitor*, 22 January 2010, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2010/0122/Long-the-glue-of-Gaza-clans-say-Hamas-is-undermining-tribal-justice>

³⁰¹ Jane's Information Group, "Groups: Middle East – Active: Gaza and the West Bank: Jaish al-Islam," *Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism*, 16 January 2012.

Bedouin tribal confederations (*saffs*), another significant social force in the Palestinian Territories, are more common in rural areas. The Bedouins, once nomadic herdsman from the harsh climate of the Negev, were forced into a sedentary lifestyle through resettlement at the hands of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in the 1950s and 1960s. Some Bedouin tribes, including the Ahyawat and Tiyaha, had migrated earlier to Egypt's Sinai Peninsula to escape the Arab-Israeli War and the resettlement programs.³⁰² Other Bedouin, including the Tarabin and Azazmeh, were resettled in Israel proper.^{303, 304} The Jahalin and other smaller groups were relocated to the West Bank, near the main encampments of Ma'ale Adumim and Khan al-Ahmar.³⁰⁵



© Farfahinne / flickr.com
Displaced Palestinian family

To make room for the expansion of nearby Jewish settlements, Israeli authorities recently planned to relocate the Jahalin again, after years in their current tent encampments. Though the plan has been placed on hold, it may come to fruition later. In anticipation of this eventuality, the Jahalin have requested they be returned to their traditional lands in the Negev.³⁰⁶



© Peter Mulligan
Bedouin near Jericho

Even the Bedouin tribal confederations located outside the Gaza Strip have played active roles in the politics of the territory. The Tarabin, who live in areas along the Gaza-Israeli border, facilitated Iran's arming of Hamas.³⁰⁷ Likewise, the Tiyaha, who control large swaths of territory in the Sinai, served as middlemen by smuggling arms, drugs, and people into Gaza and Israel.³⁰⁸ But Egyptian authorities have recently convinced the Tiyaha to end such operations and to help ferret out others engaged in them.^{309, 310}

³⁰² Steven C. Dinero, *Settling for Less: The Planned Resettlement of Israel's Negev Bedouin* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 3.

³⁰³ Steven C. Dinero, *Settling for Less: The Planned Resettlement of Israel's Negev Bedouin* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 52.

³⁰⁴ Steven C. Dinero, *Settling for Less: The Planned Resettlement of Israel's Negev Bedouin* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 3, 12.

³⁰⁵ Amnesty International, "Israel: Cancel Plan to Forcibly Displace Jahalin Bedouin Communities," 8 February 2012, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/israel-cancel-plan-forcibly-displace-jahalin-bedouin-communities-2012-02-08>

³⁰⁶ Amnesty International, "Israel: Cancel Plan to Forcibly Displace Jahalin Bedouin Communities," 8 February 2012, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/israel-cancel-plan-forcibly-displace-jahalin-bedouin-communities-2012-02-08>

³⁰⁷ DEBKAfile, "Iran Recruits Somali Pirates to Replenish Hamas Arms Stocks," 18 January 2009,

³⁰⁸ DEBKAfile, "Egypt Hires Sinai Bedouin Militias to Combat Palestinian, al Qaeda Terror," 27 August 2011.

³⁰⁹ Steven C. Dinero, *Settling for Less: The Planned Resettlement of Israel's Negev Bedouin* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 3.

³¹⁰ DEBKAfile, "Iran Recruits Somali Pirates to Replenish Hamas Arms Stocks," 18 January 2009.

Land Distribution

Under terms of the 1995 Oslo interim agreement, the Palestinian Territories were divided into three security zones. This left the Palestinian Authority with administrative and security control over most of the urban centers. Israel retained control over much of the rural areas. According to the agreement, the Palestinian government was to gradually gain greater control over the rural areas. But its difficulties managing the security and administration of the urban areas have convinced the Israelis that the Palestinians cannot control more territory. As a result, Palestinians have been limited in their access to much of the rural lands in the West Bank.³¹¹



© W. Hagens / Wikimedia.org
West Bank barrier near Ramallah

Hamas controls the Gaza Strip, including its small rural areas. Palestinians are required to obtain permits from Israeli authorities to access rural properties. Recurring operations in the Israeli zone, including the intrusion of Jewish settlers and the destruction of private and public properties, have further diminished Palestinian access to land. This lack of access has hindered an important element of the Palestinian economy.³¹²

The Palestinian Authority estimates that about 85% of all land is owned informally. Under the World Bank's Palestine Development Plan, the government has pledged to strengthen land management and surveying. The implementation of such regulations could be a heavy burden for average Palestinians. The costs associated with the surveying, legal research, and collection of back taxes could be onerous. The lack of proper property registration has led land disputes. Palestinians traditionally settle such disputes using a variety of informal, quasi-formal, and hybrid methods, including the *sulh* process in which family and clan leaders help resolve the issue.^{313, 314}

Exchange 22: Do you own this land?

Official:	Do you own this land?	inteh btumlik haay il-aRD?
Local:	Yes.	aa

³¹¹ The World Bank, *West Bank and Gaza: The Economic Effects of Restricted Access to Land in the West Bank* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2008), <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWESTBANKGAZA/Resources/EconomicEffectsofRestrictedAccessToLandintheWestBankOct.20.08.pdf>

³¹² The World Bank, *West Bank and Gaza: The Economic Effects of Restricted Access to Land in the West Bank* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2008), <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWESTBANKGAZA/Resources/EconomicEffectsofRestrictedAccessToLandintheWestBankOct.20.08.pdf>

³¹³ Ministry of Planning, Palestinian National Authority, *National Land Policy Framework: Palestinian National Authority—Land Administration Project* (Ramallah, West Bank: Palestinian National Authority, 2008), 1, http://www.mop.gov.ps/web_files/projects_file/NLPE_Final%20Draft_25%203%2008_English.pdf

³¹⁴ Dima al-Khalidi et al., *Informal Justice: Rule of Law and Dispute Resolution in Palestine: National Report on Field Research Results* (Birzeit, West Bank: Institute of Law, Birzeit University, 2006).

Under penalty of death, Palestinians are prohibited from selling land to any Israeli entity, whether private individual, corporations, or government agency. This policy is aimed at restricting the development and expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank.^{315, 316}

Rural Economy

Agriculture was once the backbone of the Palestinian economy, but today it accounts for only about 4% of gross domestic product (GDP). Roughly 16% of the workforce in the West Bank and 5% in the Gaza Strip are engaged in agricultural pursuits.³¹⁷ About 17% of the land in the West Bank and 29% of the land in the Gaza Strip are suited to growing crops. Major agricultural products include beef, dairy, flowers, fruit, olives, and vegetables. Agricultural exports are primarily flowers, fruit, olives, and vegetables, most of which are sold in the Israeli market.^{318, 319}



© delayed gratification / flickr.com
Shepherds in West Bank

Exchange 23: What crops do you grow?

Official:	What crops do you grow?	eysh ibtizRa' feehaa?
Local:	I grow olives and wheat.	bazRa' zeytoon oo-qamiH

But Palestinians' ability to sell their produce in the more lucrative Israeli market has been blocked by security barriers separating the Palestinian Territories and Israel. In many cases, these security barriers cut directly through agricultural land, preventing Palestinian farmers from accessing their properties; as a result, those lands are removed from production.³²⁰

³¹⁵ Haaretz, "PA Court: Sale of Palestinian Land to Israelis is Punishable by Death," 20 September 2010, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/pa-court-sale-of-palestinian-land-to-israelis-is-punishable-by-death-1.314735>

³¹⁶ Khaled Abu Toameh, "PA Affirms Death Penalty for Land Sales to Israelis," *Jerusalem Post*, 20 September 2010, <http://www.jpost.com/MiddleEast/Article.aspx?id=188604>

³¹⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, "West Bank: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

³¹⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, "Gaza Strip: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

³¹⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, "West Bank: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

³²⁰ Jane's, "Gaza and the West Bank: Economy," *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment—Eastern Mediterranean*, 24 June 2011, https://www.intelink.gov/Reference/janes/display.html?type=S&nav=C_12&sn=emedsu&ed=emedsu31&docid=ddf4a6edaa3e7694fb12af919ef80576

Because of the inaccessibility of urban and Israeli markets, rural Palestinians increasingly depend upon subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry to meet their needs. Markets for excess production are now predominantly local.³²¹

Fishing was once the centerpiece of the Gazan economy; however, the Israeli blockade has essentially grounded the Palestinian fishing fleet—reducing the fishing catch by one-third in 2011 alone. Palestinians now import much of their fish from Egypt.³²²

The Palestinian Water Authority is seeking to increase the amount of fresh water available for agricultural use. The agency has proposed a project that would divert water from the Feshkha Springs along the shores of the Dead Sea to a desalinization facility and on to a reservoir.³²³

Rural Transportation

Numerous security checkpoints exist in the Palestinian Territories and along the borders with Israel. As a result, the movement of Palestinians is highly restricted. Although many would enjoy visits to the countryside to visit family, friends, and ancestral properties or to engage in outdoor activities, security measures hamper such visits.³²⁴



© IRIN Photos / flickr.com
Typical donkey cart in camps

Exchange 24: Is there a gas station nearby?

Visitor:	Is there a gas station nearby?	fee maHaTit banzeen qaReebah min hon?
Local:	Yes.	aa

The same security restrictions that impede personal travel also hinder business-related transportation. To reduce travel time and expenses, many Palestinian industries have relocated to areas where the resources for their businesses are available. Thus, stonecutting ventures have relocated to villages near rock quarries. Textile businesses and other industries have taken their factories or offices to the rural communities that supply the natural and labor resources for production.³²⁵

³²¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations, “Restrictions on the Movement of People and Goods within the West Bank,” November 2005, http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/OCHAoPt_FrictionAnls_Nov05.pdf

³²² World Food Programme, United Nations, “Fishing Catch,” *Food Security and Market Monitoring Report* 29 (July–October 2011), 1, <http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp244029.pdf>

³²³ Michael Schreuder, “Econ Visit to Feshkha Springs,” *Palestinian Economy*, 17 May 2010, <https://www.intelink.gov/cas/palecon/2010/05/17/econ-visit-to-feshkha-springs/>

³²⁴ ProQuest, “West Bank and Gaza,” *CultureGrams World Edition*, 2012, 6.

³²⁵ Office of the United Nations Special Co-Ordinator, *Economic Fragmentation and Adaptation in the Rural West Bank* (Jerusalem: United Nations, 2005), 31, <http://www.unsco.org/Documents/Special/FINAL%20FE%20text%20for%20printing.pdf>

Because of the poor infrastructure and limited availability of public transportation in rural areas, Palestinians must take taxis to connect with bus lines in urban centers or to travel between communities. This can be expensive.³²⁶

Rural Healthcare and Education

The security situation in the West Bank increases the difficulty of providing healthcare for rural residents. Healthcare in the Gaza Strip is even worse, because the Israeli blockade has cut off access to medical supplies.³²⁷



© Zorah / flickr.com
Lacking medicine in Gaza

Exchange 25: Is there a medical clinic nearby?

Official:	Is there a medical clinic nearby?	fee 'eeyaadeh Tibeeyeh qaReebah min hon?
Local:	Yes, over there.	aa, hunaak

The construction of the security walls surrounding the Palestinian Territories has significantly reduced the availability of healthcare in Palestinian villages.³²⁸ To help fill gaps in coverage, nongovernment organizations operate mobile clinics in West Bank villages.³²⁹

Though some progress has been made in the treatment of communicable diseases, the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Health points to the continued threat of “meningococcal meningitis, brucellosis, HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, tuberculosis, diarrhea, and pneumonia.”³³⁰

Although schooling is available in the rural areas of the Palestinian Territories, such schools lack the resources of urban schools and may require children to travel long distances to attend. This appears to have a detrimental



© rafakid / flickr.com
UN school in Gaza

³²⁶ Transport and Energy Unit, Middle East and North Africa Region, T. Work for Women and Men: *Challenges and Opportunities in the Middle from Case Studies* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2011), viii, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTTTSR/Resources/463715-1322323559362/Gender-Transport-MENA.pdf>

³²⁷ World Health Organization, “The Occupied Palestinian Territory: Providing Health Care Despite the Lack of a Stable Environment,” *Monthly Highlights*, February 2011, <http://www.who.int/hac/crises/international/wbgs/highlights/february2011/en/index.html>

³²⁸ Doctors of the World (Médecins du Monde), *The Ultimate Barrier: Impact of the Wall on the Palestinian Health Care System* (Paris, France: Médecins du Monde, 2005), 2, <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/56B9DE2A2B25397EC1256FA90038487A-mdm-opt-14feb.pdf>

³²⁹ Linda Gradstein, “Health Care Breaking Down on West Bank,” *National Public Radio*, 17 January 2007, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=6881338>

³³⁰ Ministry of Health, Palestinian National Authority, *Health Annual Report: Palestine 2010* (Ramallah: Palestinian Health Information Center, 2011), 25, <http://www.moh.ps/attach/297.pdf>

effect on female enrollment in schools offering science and technology tracks. Rural schools tend to be coeducational, rather than gender-segregated like those in the urban areas.³³¹

Exchange 26: Is there a school nearby?

Official:	Is there a school nearby?	fee madRaseh qaReebah min hon?
Local:	Yes.	aa

Border Crossings and Checkpoints

Several Israeli-controlled crossings are built into the barrier wall separating the West Bank from Israel. These checkpoints manage the flow of goods, labor, and travel between the two areas. Without the proper Israeli-issued permits, Palestinians are unable to travel beyond the barrier.³³²



© Chris Yunker
West Bank Checkpoint

The following are the current crossings/checkpoints: Bazaq Crossing, near Mehola; Gilboa-Jalame Crossing, north of Jenin; Reiham Crossing, west of Jenin and near Barta'a; Ephraim gate Crossing, near Turkarm; Eyal Crossing, west of Kalkilya; Ni'lin Crossing, near the village of the same name; Maccabim Crossing, near Maccabim-Reut; Beitunia Crossing, near the southeastern quadrant of Ramallah; Atarot Crossing, near the village of Kalandia; Shuafat Crossing, near the refugee camp of the same name; Olive Crossing, near the Mount of Olives; Rachel Crossing, north of Bethlehem; Tarqumiyah Crossing, east of the city of the same name; and Meitar Crossing, near the settlement of same name.³³³

Exchange 27: Where is the nearest checkpoint?

Official:	Where is the nearest checkpoint?	weyn aqRab nuqTit taftesh?
Local:	Two kilometers from here.	shee itneyn keelomiteR min hon

The King Hussein Bridge (also known as the Allenby Bridge) is the only direct crossing between the West Bank and Jordan. There are limited hours of operation, and visas are

³³¹ Human Development Group, Middle East and North Africa Region, The World Bank, *West Bank and Gaza: Education Sector Analysis* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2006), 10, <http://unispa1.un.org/pdfs/ESASept06.pdf>

³³² *Al-Jazeera*, "Palestinian Border Crossings Study," 14 October 2009, <http://transparency.aljazeera.net/files/4878.PDF>

³³³ Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories, Israeli Defense Forces, Government of Israel, "Info & Forms: Crossing," n.d., <http://www.cogat.idf.il/1039-en/Cogat.aspx>

required for the crossing.³³⁴ The crossing is jointly operated by the Palestinian Authority, Jordan, and Israel.³³⁵

In the Gaza Strip, there are only three official crossings—two between Gaza and Israel and one between Gaza and Egypt. Although access to all the crossings has been restricted, the crossings between Gaza and Israel (e.g., the Erez Crossing on the northern border and the Kerem Shalom Crossing near the Israeli kibbutz of the same name) are frequently closed.³³⁶

After Israel's 2005 disengagement policy toward Gaza, the European Union Border Assistance Mission Rafah assumed control over the Rafah Crossing, the only official crossing between Gaza and Egypt.³³⁷ Although the crossing has been periodically closed, Hamas hopes the Egyptian government will use the route to supply fuel for their sole electricity power plant.^{338, 339, 340}

Exchange 28: Are you carrying any guns?

Guard:	Are you carrying any guns?	ma'ak aay musadasaat?
Driver:	No.	laa

Landmines

As of August 2010, at least 15 minefields are believed to exist in a “small and confined contamination area” along the West Bank’s border with Jordan. Additionally, UN authorities believe anti-vehicle and anti-personnel mines litter the Israeli-controlled security zone. The situation in the Gaza Strip is less clear.³⁴¹

³³⁴ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, “Helpful Facts: Getting to Jordan,” n.d., <http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/facts2.html>

³³⁵ Israel Airports Authority, Government of Israel, “Allenby: About the Allenby Border Terminal: Message from the General Manager,” n.d., <http://www.iaa.gov.il/Rashat/en-US/Borders/Alenbi/AbouttheTerminal/ManagersWords/>

³³⁶ Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories, Israeli Defense Forces, Government of Israel, “Info & Forms: Crossing,” n.d., <http://www.cogat.idf.il/1039-en/Cogat.aspx>

³³⁷ European Union Border Assistance Mission Rafah, “About Us,” 2010, <http://www.eubam-rafah.eu/node/2296>

³³⁸ Nina Rastogi, “Gaza: The Basics,” *Slate*, 25 January 2008, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/explainer/2008/01/gaza_the_basics.html

³³⁹ Adel Zaanoun, “Egypt Reopens Rafah Border with Gaza,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 May 2011, <http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-world/egypt-reopens-rafah-border-with-gaza-20110528-1f9h6.html>

³⁴⁰ Chen Zhi, “Hamas Buys Fuel from Egypt to Restart Gaza Power Plant,” *Xinhua*, 14 March 2012, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-03/14/c_131467517.htm

³⁴¹ International Campaign to Ban Landmines, “Palestine: Mine Action,” *Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor*, 21 September 2011, http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php/cp/display/region_profiles/theme/1267

Exchange 29: Do you know this area very well?

Official:	Do you know this area very well?	bti'Rif haay il-manTiqa mneeH?
Local:	Yes, I grew up here, this is my country.	aa, aana tRabeyt hon, aana ibin il-balad

In the opening phase of Israel's Operation Cast Lead, which began in December 2008, the IDF employed phosphorus shells to clear implanted landmines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) deployed by the Hamas regime.³⁴²

Exchange 30: Is this area mined?

Visitor:	Is this area mined?	il-manTiqa haay feehee alghaam?
Local:	Yes.	aa

The Palestinian Territories also contain large amounts of unexploded ordnance and explosive remnants of war—a side effect of the ongoing violence between Palestinians and Israelis.³⁴³ Palestinian terrorist groups also have used modified landmines in suicide bombings.³⁴⁴ Neither Israel nor the Palestinian Territories is a signatory to anti-landmine agreements.³⁴⁵

³⁴² Jane's, "World Armies: Israel," *Jane's World Armies*, 24 February 2012.

³⁴³ United Nations Mine Action Service, "Occupied Palestinian Territories," *Electronic Mine Information Network*, 2010, <http://www.mineaction.org/country.asp?c=138>

³⁴⁴ Samuel Katz, *The Hunt for the Engineer: How Israeli Agents Tracked the Hamas Master Bomber* (Guilford, CT: Lyons Press, 2002), 147.

³⁴⁵ Aharon Etengoff and Gerald Steinberg, "Israeli Landmine Policy and Related Regional Activity," *Journal of Mine Action*, 22 January 2010, http://maic.jmu.edu/journal/5.3/focus/etengoff_steinberg_israel/etengoff_steinberg.htm

Chapter 5 Assessment

1. Bedouin tribal confederations (saffs) are a significant social division in Palestinian society.

True

These groups are more commonly found in rural areas. The Bedouins, who were once nomadic herdsman originating in the harsh climate of the Negev, were forced into a sedentary lifestyle through resettlement at the hands of the Israel Defense Forces in the 1950s and 1960s.

2. Palestinians have limited access to much of the rural lands of the West Bank.

True

Under the terms of the 1995 Oslo interim agreement, Israel retained control over much of the rural areas. The Palestinian government was to gradually gain greater control over the rural areas, but its difficulties managing the security and administration of the urban areas have convinced Israel the Palestinians cannot control more territory.

3. Israeli-constructed security barriers stifle traffic but have had little impact on Palestinian agriculture.

False

The barriers have diminished Palestinian farmers' ability to sell their produce in the more lucrative Israeli market. In many instances the barriers cut directly through agricultural land. Thus, Palestinian farmers are unable to access their properties.

4. Palestinian agriculturists frequently operate large-scale commercial farms.

False

Rural Palestinians increasingly depend upon subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry to meet their needs. Markets for excess production are now predominantly local because of the inaccessibility of urban and Israeli markets.

5. Communicable diseases remain a challenge for the Palestinian healthcare system.

True

Though some progress has been made in the treatment of communicable diseases, the PA Ministry of Health points to the continued threat of "meningococcal meningitis, brucellosis, HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, tuberculosis, diarrhea, and pneumonia."

CHAPTER 6: FAMILY LIFE

Introduction

Like most Arab cultures, Palestinian society is patriarchal. The eldest man in a family makes familial decisions. Because of the importance of extended families, tribes, and clans, Palestinian families frequently live together. Even when living in nuclear family arrangements, close ties remain to the larger familial units. The nuclear family typically continues to live in proximity to their kin.^{346, 347}



© megahamama / flickr.com
Extended family in Hebron

Exchange 31: How many people live in this house?

Official:	How many people live in this house?	kam shaKhS 'aayish fee haada il-beyt?
Local:	Six.	siteh

Palestinian families are often quite large, although the number of family members has declined in recent years. Today, the average number of children per family is three in the West Bank and nearly five in the Gaza Strip.^{348, 349} Adult children typically provide the care for their elderly parents.³⁵⁰

Exchange 32: Are these people part of your family?

Official:	Are these people part of your family?	hadol in-naas min 'eyltak?
Local:	Yes.	aa

Palestinians place a high value on maintaining the honor of one's family. Therefore, single children, especially women, continue to live with their parents because living alone

³⁴⁶ Robert H. Griffin, "Palestine, West Bank, and Gaza Strip," in *Countries and Their Cultures: Volume 3: Laos to Rwanda*, eds. Melvin Ember and Carol R. Ember (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2001), 1716.

³⁴⁷ ProQuest, "West Bank and Gaza," CultureGrams World Edition, 2012, 4.

³⁴⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, "West Bank: People and Society: Total Fertility Rate," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>

³⁴⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, "Gaza Strip: People and Society: Total Fertility Rate," in *The World Factbook*, 8 February 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>

³⁵⁰ Robert H. Griffin, "Palestine, West Bank, and Gaza Strip," in *Countries and Their Cultures: Volume 3: Laos to Rwanda*, eds. Melvin Ember and Carol R. Ember (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2001), 1716.

is considered peculiar. If a woman divorces or is widowed, she is expected to return to her parents' household.³⁵¹

Male and Female Interactions Within the Family

Sibling relationships are important in Palestinian families. If the father dies or becomes unemployed, brothers often assume the responsibility for providing for their sisters' basic needs and education. They also bear responsibility for safeguarding their sisters' reputations, frequently serving as chaperones when their sisters socialize. Similarly, adult sons are expected to look after their widowed mothers.^{352, 353}



© Ben Piven
Father and sons

Palestinian parents raise their sons to maintain a strict sense of masculinity, shaming them for perceived acts of femininity or childishness. Thus, many Palestinian boys become men with a low estimation of females. In many ways, this attitude contributes to the second-class status of women in Palestinian society.³⁵⁴

Conversely, parents typically raise their daughters to be demure. A woman is expected to submit to the will of her father and brothers and, once married, to her husband and sons. Many men refuse to allow their wives to work outside the household, because it would insinuate that the man cannot adequately provide for his family. There is also the concern that a woman working outside the home will have social interactions with men outside the family, risking that she might bring shame upon the family through social errors or indiscretion.^{355, 356}

Status of Elders, Adolescents, and Children

As is common in a family-centric and clan-centric culture, elders (especially males) are afforded a great deal of respect. Traditionally, important familial social events are celebrated at the home of the family's eldest patriarch.^{357, 358, 359}

³⁵¹ ProQuest, "West Bank and Gaza," CultureGrams World Edition, 2012, 4.

³⁵² Daniel Monterescu, "Chapter 7: Masculinity as a Rational Mode: Palestinian Gender Ideologies and Working-Class Boundaries in an Ethnically Mixed Town," in *Reapproaching Borders: New Perspectives on the Study of Israel-Palestine*, eds. Sandy Sufian and Mark Levine (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007), 184.

³⁵³ ProQuest, "West Bank and Gaza," CultureGrams World Edition, 2012, 4.

³⁵⁴ Mohammad M. Haj-Yahia, "On the Characteristics of Patriarchal Societies, Gender Inequality, and Wife Abuse: The Case of Palestinian Society," *Adalah's Newsletter* 20 (2005), 2.
<http://www.adalah.org/newsletter/eng/nov05/fet.pdf>

³⁵⁵ Arthur Neslen, *In Your Eyes a Sandstorm: Ways of Being Palestinian* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 213.

³⁵⁶ Robert H. Griffin, "Palestine, West Bank, and Gaza Strip," in *Countries and Their Cultures: Volume 3: Laos to Rwanda*, eds. Melvin Ember and Carol R. Ember (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2001), 1716.

³⁵⁷ ProQuest, "West Bank and Gaza," CultureGrams World Edition, 2012, 4.

A study found that the older generations passed down a reconstructed oral narrative of life before the Arab–Israeli War of 1948. After the war the majority of Palestinians became refugees in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and neighboring countries. This has given Palestinian youths a romanticized picture of Palestinian identity and cultivated an outsider status that encourages them to take up resistance, armed or peaceful, against the Israeli state. Thus, they are viewed as the vanguard of Palestinians’ continued struggle to reclaim the country they believe to be theirs. This perspective might increase the likelihood of Palestinian children being recruited for the various peaceful or armed Palestinian factions and terrorist groups.^{360, 361}



© Almonroth / Wikimedia.org
Girls crossing street

Palestinians greatly value the proper rearing and education of children. The extended family, including those in the diaspora, is expected to help. Assistance ranges from looking after one another’s children to providing remittances from abroad to help pay educational expenses.^{362, 363}

Dating is highly uncommon, especially in more conservative families. Most couples are either introduced by family and friends or meet at work or school. They are allowed to socialize a little, typically chaperoned by a male relative of the young woman.³⁶⁴

Family Social Events

Birth of a Child

Palestinians celebrate all births, but because they are a patriarchal society, a son is received with extra jubilation. After the circumcision of a newborn son, families celebrate with an animal sacrifice, known as *aqiqah*, on the seventh day after his birth. Though most of the meat from the sacrifice is given to the needy,



© David Ortmann
Baby in West Bank

³⁵⁸ Faida Nimir Abu-Ghazaleh, “Palestinians in Diaspora: An Ethnographic Study of Ethnic Identity among Palestinian Families in Maryland” (PhD dissertation, University of Maryland, 2008), 181.

³⁵⁹ Timothy L. Gall, *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life, Volume 4: Asia and Oceania* (Farmington Hills, MI: Gale, 2009), 781.

³⁶⁰ Dawn Chatty, “Disseminating Findings from Research with Palestinian Children and Adolescents,” *Forced Migration Review* 15 (October 2002): 40–43, <http://www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR15/fmr15.16.pdf>

³⁶¹ Seth J. Schwartz, Curtis S. Dunkel, and Alan S. Waterman, “Terrorism: An Identity Theory Perspective,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 32, no. 6 (2009): 537–559, <http://sethschwartz.info/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/Identity-and-Terrorism1.pdf>

³⁶² Helena Lindholm Schulz and Juliane Hammer, *The Palestinian Diaspora: Formation of Identities and Politics of Homeland* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 58.

³⁶³ Milton J. Esman, “Diasporas in the Contemporary World,” *International Sociology* 27, no. 2 (March 2012): 240–243.

³⁶⁴ ProQuest, “West Bank and Gaza,” *CultureGrams World Edition*, 2012, 4–5.

a ritual meal (*walimah*) is prepared from a portion. As part of the ritual celebration, the parents shave the child's head and name him.^{365, 366}

Engagement

The engagement and marriage of Palestinian couples have features common to cultures that practice arranged or semi-arranged marriage. The family of a young man will seek a potential bride through familial and social contacts, to ensure that she is virtuous and from a quality family. Once a prospective match is found, his family will meet with her family, generally at the girl's home. The families discuss the nature, reputation, disposition, education, and related aspects of the would-be couple. If this meeting concludes positively, a subsequent meeting will include the family elders, who will formally ask the girl's family for her hand on behalf of the prospective groom.^{367, 368}

The subsequent engagement party is attended by extended family and friends. Here, the man presents his fiancée with the *mahr* (dowry), which may comprise gold jewelry, cash, land, and other valuables. These are then the woman's property.³⁶⁹

Wedding

Western-style formal wear has largely replaced traditional wedding clothing among urban Palestinians. Some women in rural areas and the more conservative Gaza Strip wear a *thob*, a long robe-like dress with an elaborately embroidered bodice.³⁷⁰



© afps14 / flickr.com
Western style wedding

The ceremony frequently takes place in a rented hall. Family and friends help the couple decorate. Prior to the ceremony, a religious leader speaks with the groom about the sanctity of marriage. While the couple sits together on a raised platform at the front of the hall, their male relations shower them with gifts, usually gold jewelry and money. The groom presents his bride with gifts of gold. Additionally, the wedding guests present the couple with *nukut* (gifts of cash). With the blessing of the religious leader, the couple is married. The couple joins their family, friends, and guests in dancing and singing.^{371, 372, 373}

³⁶⁵ Gordon D. Newby, *A Concise Encyclopedia of Islam* (Oxford, UK: Oneworld, 2002), 31.

³⁶⁶ ProQuest, "West Bank and Gaza," CultureGrams World Edition, 2012, 5.

³⁶⁷ Rebecca L. Torstrick, *Culture and Customs of Israel* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004), 129–130.

³⁶⁸ ProQuest, "West Bank and Gaza," CultureGrams World Edition, 2012, 5.

³⁶⁹ Cheryl A. Rubenberg, *Palestinian Women: Patriarchy and Resistance in the West Bank* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 86.

³⁷⁰ George Monger, *Marriage Customs of the World: From Henna to Honeymoons* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2004), 210.

³⁷¹ Dima Abdulrahim, "Chapter 10: Islamic Law, Gender and the Policies of Exile: The Palestinians in West Berlin: A Case Study," in *Islamic Family Law*, eds. Chibli Mallat and Jane Connors (Norwell, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1990), 190.

Exchange 33: Congratulations on your wedding!

Visitor:	Congratulations on your wedding!	mabRook zawaajak!
Local:	We are honored to have you here.	alaah yibaaRak feek! shookRan la-HuDooRak

Funerary Rituals

It is traditional for Muslims to bury their deceased within a day of death. Muslim dead are ritually washed, wrapped in a white shroud, and buried with the head facing toward Mecca. A funeral consists of a short service at the mosque, a trip to the cemetery for burial, then a trip back to the mosque for more prayers and a meal. Relatives and close friends wear black clothing. It is appropriate and respectful to send flowers and cards to the family. When participating in such a funeral procession, suitable behavior is to be silent; however, family members are likely to wail loudly and weep openly. Afterward, an acceptable expression of condolence is “God is great.” It is unacceptable to laugh or make jokes, and it is improper to talk about the deceased or about the life of the deceased.³⁷⁴



But Palestinian funerals have often been loud and boisterous, and have catalyzed protest and violence associated with the political unrest in the Palestinian Territories and refugee camps.³⁷⁵ The deaths of those killed while fighting Israeli forces are frequently memorialized in “martyrdom posters,” which extol the virtues of the fallen and the cause of resistance. These are displayed not only at the funeral but in public spaces. This tradition has expanded to media such as t-shirts and key chains.^{376, 377}

Married Life and Divorce*Marriage*

The minimum legal age for marriage is 18 in the Palestinian Territories. Yet this law is frequently ignored in favor of shari’a law, which permits marriage at a younger age. It is

³⁷² George Monger, *Marriage Customs of the World: From Henna to Honeymoons* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2004), 209.

³⁷³ ProQuest, “West Bank and Gaza,” CultureGrams World Edition, 2012, 5.

³⁷⁴ Gordon D. Newby, *A Concise Encyclopedia of Islam* (Oxford, UK: Oneworld, 2002), 63–64.

³⁷⁵ Daniel Byman, *The High Price: The Triumphs and Failures of Israeli Counterterrorism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 127.

³⁷⁶ Kevin Toolis, “Where Suicide is a Cult,” *Observer* (UK), 15 December 2001, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2001/dec/16/israel>

³⁷⁷ Kristofer J. Petersen-Overtton, “Inventing the Martyr: Martyrdom as Palestinian National Signifier” (draft paper, City University of New York Graduate Center, 2010), 21, http://gc-cuny.academia.edu/kpetersenovertton/Papers/253796/Inventing_the_Martyr_Martyrdom_as_Palestinian_National_Signifier

estimated that 10% of Palestinian girls between ages 15 and 19 are married. Often, these brides begin to have children while young, with 10% having a child every year from ages 15 to 19. These early pregnancies create hazards to these girls' physical and mental health that may prevent them from fully contributing to a functional married life. Pregnancies at a young age result in women having lower levels of education, higher maternal and infant mortality, and higher household poverty.³⁷⁸

Many newlyweds, especially young newlyweds, first live with the groom's family. If there is enough room after the couple has children, this might continue. The couple may opt for their own home, but the shortage of available housing or land has increasingly made this option too costly.^{379, 380, 381}



© Lisa Nesson
Young mother and son

In traditional Palestinian homes, the marriage is not egalitarian. The man is the head of the household, and the wife is expected to obey him. While society demands that the man provide for his family, the woman is to remain home and tend to domestic affairs and childrearing.³⁸²

Divorce

Palestinians consider divorce a serious social problem. Beyond the estrangement of a married couple, divorce ends a social contract between families and clans. The breaking of this agreement can lead to conflict and bloodshed. Because of the potential consequences, a couple may be pressured to preserve a facade of an amicable marriage.³⁸³

Divorced women return to live with their parents, but may be considered at fault, regardless of the facts of the case. In conservative families and communities, this could lead to a great degree of prejudice and abuse. The woman retains custody of children until about the time they reach puberty, when the father can claim custody. He is

³⁷⁸ Doctors of the World, *Early Marriage in Palestine* (Paris: Doctors of the World, 2011), 2–3, <http://www.medecinsdumonde.org.uk/lib/docs/105935-earlymarriage-report10march2011.pdf>

³⁷⁹ Jon Pedersen, Sara Randall, and Marwan Khawaja, eds., *Growing Fast: The Palestinian Population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip* (Oslo, Norway: Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science, 2001), 66, <http://www.faf.no/pub/rapp/353/353.pdf>

³⁸⁰ Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "OPT: New Projects to Ease Gaza Housing Crisis," 25 October 2011, <http://www.irinnews.org/Report/94063/OPT-New-projects-to-ease-Gaza-housing-crisis>

³⁸¹ Rawabi Home Newsletter, "Preserving the Best of Palestine," Summer 2010, 4, http://www.rawabi.ps/newsletter_2/data/newsletter_e.pdf

³⁸² Cheryl A. Rubenberg, *Palestinian Women: Patriarchy and Resistance in the West Bank* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 53.

³⁸³ Mohammed Abu el-Khair, et al., *Reasons Leading to Divorce in Gaza Strip* (Gaza City: The Palestinian Center for Democracy & Conflict Resolution, 2003), <http://pcdcr.org/eng/esdar/book/1223201134.pdf>

expected to provide alimony and child support, and bears some social stigma for the failure of the marriage.³⁸⁴

Naming Conventions

The typical Palestinian name follows the conventions in other Arab countries. A name comprises elements including *kunya* (honorific), *ism* (personal name), *laqab* (occupational name or nickname), *nasab* (patronymic name), and *nisba* (geographic or tribal/clan name).³⁸⁵

As in other Arab-speaking countries, it is customary among Palestinians to publicly refer to one another by the name of the firstborn son. They use a *kunya* (honorific), with “Abu” meaning “father of X” and “Um” meaning “mother of X.” Thus, Abu Mazen, better known as Palestinian Authority President Mahmud Abbas, is the father of Mazen. The same convention is used by Palestinian terrorists to create their pseudonym. Thus Fatah founder Abu Nidal, whose real name was Sabri Khalil al-Banna, fashioned a pseudonym meaning “father of the struggle.”^{386, 387}

The *ism*, or personal name, is seldom used alone to refer to a Palestinian, unless the speaker is of much higher social standing.³⁸⁸ It is more common to refer to an individual by his *kunya* combined with his *ism*. Many Palestinian parents select religious names or names of those associated with the liberation effort.³⁸⁹

The *laqab* is often substituted for the *ism* in third-person discussions of the individual. The name often originated with a person’s occupation or a familial history related to a trade; nicknames may have had a more innocuous origin.^{390, 391}

³⁸⁴ ProQuest, “West Bank and Gaza,” CultureGrams World Edition, 2012, 5.

³⁸⁵ James Richards, “Know Your Customer—Naming Conventions for Arabic, Russian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Western African, & Hispanic Cultures: American Taxpayer Identification Numbers: Middle Eastern Naming Conventions,” Bankers Online, 14 January 2002, <http://www.bankersonline.com/tools/namingconventions.pdf>

³⁸⁶ Nafez Y. Nazzal and Laila A. Nazzal, *Historical Dictionary of Palestine* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1997), xi–xii.

³⁸⁷ B. Keith Murphy, “Abu Nidal,” in *The Encyclopedia of the Arab–Israeli Conflict: A Political, Social, and Military History, Volume 1: A–H*, ed. Spencer C. Tucker (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2008), 27–28.

³⁸⁸ A.F.L. Beeston, *Arabic Nomenclature: A Summary for Beginners* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1971), <http://www.islamicmanuscripts.info/reference/books/Beeston-1971-Nomenclature.pdf>

³⁸⁹ A.F.L. Beeston, *Arabic Nomenclature: A Summary for Beginners* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1971), <http://www.islamicmanuscripts.info/reference/books/Beeston-1971-Nomenclature.pdf>

³⁹⁰ James Richards, “Know Your Customer—Naming Conventions for Arabic, Russian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Western African, & Hispanic Cultures: American Taxpayer Identification Numbers: Middle Eastern Naming Conventions,” Bankers Online, 14 January 2002, <http://www.bankersonline.com/tools/namingconventions.pdf>

³⁹¹ A.F.L. Beeston, *Arabic Nomenclature: A Summary for Beginners* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1971), <http://www.islamicmanuscripts.info/reference/books/Beeston-1971-Nomenclature.pdf>

Next, the *nasab* illustrates patrilineal lineage by identifying one as the son of one's father, who is the son of one's grandfather. These names could conceivably continue until reaching the clan's progenitor.³⁹²

Finally, the *nisba* reflects the geographic origin or clan affiliation of one's family.³⁹³

Thus, the pattern can provide a great deal of information about an individual. For example:

Abu Mazen	Mohammad	al-Hakim	ibn Abdallah ibn Idris	al-Jayyusi
<i>kunya</i>	<i>ism</i>	<i>laqab</i>	<i>nasab</i>	<i>nisba</i>

would be the name of Mohammad, the doctor, father of Mazen, son of Abdallah, grandson of Idris, of the Jayyusi clan.

³⁹² A.F.L. Beeston, *Arabic Nomenclature: A Summary for Beginners* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1971), <http://www.islamicmanuscripts.info/reference/books/Beeston-1971-Nomenclature.pdf>

³⁹³ James Richards, "Know Your Customer—Naming Conventions for Arabic, Russian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Western African, & Hispanic Cultures: American Taxpayer Identification Numbers: Middle Eastern Naming Conventions," Bankers Online, 14 January 2002, <http://www.bankersonline.com/tools/namingconventions.pdf>

Chapter 6 Assessment

1. Unlike many Arab cultures, Palestinian society is matriarchal.

False

Like most Arab cultures, Palestinian society is patriarchal. The eldest man in a family makes familial decisions.

2. Sibling relationships between brothers and sisters are distant, reflecting the society's segregation of the genders.

False

Sibling relationships are important in Palestinian families. If the father dies or becomes unemployed, brothers often provide for their sisters' basic needs and education. They also bear responsibility for safeguarding their sisters' reputation.

3. Palestinian youths grow up barely aware of the wars that led to their people's plight.

False

The older generations have passed down a reconstructed oral narrative of life before the Arab–Israeli War of 1948, after which the majority of Palestinians became refugees. This has given youths a romanticized picture of Palestinian identity and history.

4. Palestinian families play a major role in arranging their children's marriages.

True

The family of a young man will seek a potential bride through familial and social contacts, to ensure that she is virtuous and from a quality family. Once a prospective match is found, the two families will meet to discuss the would-be co.

5. Palestinian funerals often serve as catalysts for political protest and violence.

True

Palestinian funerals are often loud and boisterous, serving as catalysts for protest and violence associated with the political unrest in the Palestinian Territories and refugee camps.

FINAL ASSESSMENT

1. Palestinian Authority President Mahmud Abbas applied for full membership in the United Nations, which would be tantamount to the recognition of an independent Palestinian state.
TRUE
In 2011, President Abbas made a formal request for full membership of the Palestinian Territories in the United Nations. Had this succeeded, the Palestinian Territories would have become a *de facto* independent state. But the U.S. effectively blocked the request.
2. The president and legislature of the Palestinian Authority are directly elected.
TRUE
Palestinians directly elect their president and the members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC). But presidential elections have not been held since 2005. The PLC has not met since 2007.
3. Only state-owned media outlets operate under the Palestinian Authority.
FALSE
The Palestinian Authority operates a television station and a radio station. Additionally, dozens of privately owned television and radio stations and three daily newspapers operate in the West Bank. Jordanian stations and satellite TV are accessible as well.
4. The Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip has had minimal effect on the Gazan economy.
FALSE
While smuggling under the border between Gaza and Egypt has assured a somewhat steady stream of the basic necessities, the Gazan economy has been severely affected by the Israeli blockade.
5. The Israel Defense Forces have forcibly removed Israeli Jewish settlers from the settlements in the West Bank.
FALSE
While the IDF forcibly removed Jewish settlers from settlements in the Gaza Strip, Jewish settlers continue to build in the West Bank, where they make up 17% of the population.
6. Jewish settlers are a small but significant minority in the West Bank.
TRUE
Jewish settlers make up 17% of the population of the West Bank. Certain segments of the settler communities have resorted to violence against Muslims and Christians.
7. *Iftar* is the meal that follows a day of fasting during Ramadan.
TRUE
Throughout Ramadan, Muslims fast during daylight hours. The fast is broken at sunset by a prayer and a meal called *iftar*, which is shared with the family. Ramadan

is a time to visit family and friends as well as a time for prayer and reflective thinking.

8. The Hamas charter allows women to serve as jihadists without the consent of male relatives.

TRUE

Some women have participated in suicide bombings and terrorist attacks. The Hamas charter allows women to serve as jihadists, even without the support of their father or husband. This is in contrast to long-standing gender roles.

9. Muslim and Jewish militants in the Palestinian Territory have targeted Christian churches for attack.

TRUE

Muslim terrorists and Jewish militants have targeted Christian churches. Vandals have left graffiti death threats against the Christian community. Christian churches have also been the target of firebombings.

10. Muslim holidays fall on fixed dates of the Western calendar.

FALSE

The dates of these holidays are determined by the Islamic lunar calendar, which changes annually in accordance with the phases of the moon.

11. Although many Palestinians dress in traditional attire, it is not uncommon to see men and boys in Western clothing.

TRUE

While women and conservative men don traditional clothing, many Palestinian boys and men wear Western attire.

12. The Palestinian holiday Yaum al-Nakba commemorates Palestinian independence.

FALSE

Palestinians hold Yaum al-Nakba (Day of Catastrophe) on 15 May to commemorate the forced exodus of Palestinians that began after the creation of Israel. Palestinians celebrate their declaration of independence on Independence Day in November.

13. Today, clans control the smuggling tunnels between Gaza and Egypt.

FALSE

Although clans initially controlled the smuggling tunnels along the Egyptian border and collected fees for their use, Hamas has largely taken over the smuggling tunnels, acquiring the wealth generated from these operations.

14. *Mithaq al-sharaf* is the formal code of honor between Palestinian clan members.

TRUE

Mithaq al-sharaf binds together clan members. Although once an oral tradition, today it can be a lengthy prescribed legal document. Part of this social contract involves a pledge of loyalty to the clan and willingness to defend any clan member.

15. There has been an increase in honor killings in the Palestinian Territories.

TRUE

Honor killings, which are believed to be on the rise in the Palestinian Territories, occur when male family members murder female relatives thought to have dishonored the family. Although 33 cases were reported in 2004, the actual number may be much higher.

16. Child labor is common in Palestinian urban areas and refugee camps.

TRUE

Because their parents cannot provide sufficient income for their families, many Palestinian children are forced to work, often full-time, to supplement the family income.

17. Groups affiliated with terrorist and militant groups target students at Palestinian campuses.

TRUE

Student groups affiliated with Palestinian terrorist or militant groups often recruit students who attend the various universities, colleges, and technical schools within the Palestinian Territories.

18. The centerpiece of the Palestinian transportation infrastructure is the subway system.

FALSE

There is no subway system in the Palestinian Territories. Buses are standard transportation for most Palestinians. But automobile ownership has increased in recent years, contributing to an increase in traffic problems.

19. Travel by taxi can be slightly complicated in the Palestinian Territories.

TRUE

Taxis operating in the Palestinian Territories are licensed by either the Palestinian Authority or the Israeli government. There have been instances of Palestinians hurling projectiles at Israeli-licensed taxis.

20. Kidnapping is a major safety concern for foreigners in the Palestinian Territories.

TRUE

Kidnapping, though rarer than it once was, is a major concern, especially in the Gaza Strip. In April 2011, terrorists kidnapped and killed an Italian pro-Palestinian activist.

21. Although schools in urban areas are often segregated by gender, rural schools are generally coeducational.

TRUE

Most rural schools are coeducational. Rural schools lack the resources of urban schools and may require children to travel long distances to attend. This appears to have a detrimental effect on female enrollment in schools offering science and technology tracks.

22. Despite the construction of security barriers, a number of crossings connect the Palestinian Territories to Israel.
TRUE
 Several Israeli-controlled crossings are built into the barrier wall (*jidar al-fasl al-unsuri*) separating the West Bank from Israel. These checkpoints manage the flow of goods, labor, and travel between the two areas.
23. Because Israel and the Palestinian Authority are signatories to anti-landmine agreements, landmines are not a major issue for Palestinians.
FALSE
 The Palestinian Territories have significant numbers of landmines. Minefields lie along the West Bank's border with Jordan. The Israel Defense Force deploys mines in its security zone, as does Hamas in Gaza. Palestinian terrorists have previously used modified landmines in suicide bombings.
24. Palestinian clans are especially powerful in the West Bank but play little role in the Gaza Strip.
FALSE
 The powerful Palestinian clans, which were rivals for power against the colonial and central governments in the Palestinian Territories, remain politically active today. This is especially true in the Gaza Strip, because clans in the West Bank have largely aligned with the Fatah movement.
25. Land ownership in the Palestinian Territories is largely informal.
TRUE
 The Palestinian Authority estimates that around 85% of all land is owned informally. Under the auspices of the World Bank's Palestine Development Plan, the government has pledged to strengthen land management and surveying.
26. The marital relationship in Palestinian families is traditionally quite egalitarian.
FALSE
 In traditional families, marriage is not egalitarian. The man is the head of the household, and the wife is expected to obey him. While society demands that the man provide for his family, the woman is to remain home and tend to domestic affairs.
27. Divorce is both legal and socially acceptable in Palestinian society.
FALSE
 Divorce is legal, but Palestinians consider it a social problem and stigmatize a divorced couple. Beyond the estrangement of a married couple, divorce ends a social contract between families and clans.
28. Palestinians often refer to each other simply by their given first names.
FALSE
 The *ism*, or personal name, is seldom used alone to refer to a Palestinian, unless the speaker is of much higher social standing. It is more common to refer to an individual by his *kunya* (honorific) combined with his *ism*.

29. Palestinian families are generally quite large.

TRUE

The average number of children per family is three in the West Bank and nearly five in the Gaza Strip. Given their proclivity for joint family arrangements and the acceptability of polygamous marriage, this creates the potential for a very large family under a single roof.

30. Underage marriage is a social problem in Palestinian society.

TRUE

Despite a legal minimum age of 18, it is estimated that 10% of Palestinian girls between ages 15 and 19 are married. Often, these brides begin to have children while young, with 10% having a child every year from ages 15 to 19.

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