Hello, and welcome to our September issue. Congratulations to all who quelled their appetites for Ramadan. We hope you will have a chance to reward yourselves during Eid al-Fitr.

Now that the challenging month of August has run to a close, life can return to a semblance of normality. We may resume our normal social and working habits with a little more appreciation of the simple pleasures.

This month, while the long summer nights draw on, the seasons are changing. It is a good time to question what we ourselves can change. On a personal level, we can always exercise more, have a better lifestyle, or spend more time with rarely seen relatives.

The trouble with resolutions is that they are hard to make permanent. You may stop eating sweets but that will not save you from the temptation of a lip-smackingly delicious baklawa that appears at a party. You may quit smoking and then find your resolve challenged at a stressful moment.

This month, Palestinian representatives will aim to secure a resolution that will be permanent. Should they achieve the goal of recognition of a Palestinian state from the UN General Assembly it will be a game-changer in the history of this conflict, not least because the added legitimacy will change neutral perceptions of our struggle.

Yes, the embattled President Obama will inevitably veto any Security Council resolution, but do not believe that this will negate any impact. If that were the case, would the Israeli PR machine be making such extraordinary attempts to sabotage the recognition bid?

It is the subtleties of message and communication that underpin this issue. It is a broad theme that spans the devices of marketing, the rise of social networks, and an exploration of how to best present the Palestinian struggle to international observers.

Communication has been the number one field for technological advancement over the past 50 years and has had a tremendous impact on how we all live our lives. With this issue we examine how individuals and organisations can make their voices heard. The great stories over the following pages explore the use of words themselves and prove that everyone must learn to master and manipulate them.

Enjoy!

From the TWIP Collective

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The views presented in the articles do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher. Maps herein have been prepared solely for the convenience of the reader; the designations and presentation of material do not imply any expression of opinion of This Week in Palestine, its publisher, editor, or its advisory board as to the legal status of any country, territory, city, or area, or the authorities thereof, or as to the delimitation of boundaries or national affiliation.
The National Campaign

The decision of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, to seek membership for the State of Palestine in the United Nations constitutes the beginning of an important phase in the contemporary national struggle to end the occupation and achieve Palestine’s independence. As such, the energies, supportive efforts, and contribution of the Palestinian people to this effort are vital to its success as is the support of peoples worldwide.

Like other peoples, Palestinians aspire to a future of freedom, dignity, and prosperity. This goal, which Palestinians have long struggled to realise, is also deeply rooted in the universal values of human rights. The Palestinian people have a natural, historical, and legal right to self-determination and the establishment of a state. It is also a right guaranteed by all international laws and covenants, including the United Nations Charter and resolutions, at the forefront of which is UN General Assembly resolution 181 (II). In addition, this step is in line with the rules of international law, the principles of the peace process, and related international resolutions.

As such, Palestine’s membership at the United Nations is an important step towards freedom. An internationally recognised State of Palestine brings Palestinians closer to their goal: ending the occupation, exercising their inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination and the establishment of a democratic state on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and the return of refugees on the basis of UN resolution 194.

With that in mind, we took the initiative to launch a national campaign to support the Palestinian campaign to join the United Nations. We chose the banner “Palestine: State No. 194,” given that there are now 193 member states at the United Nations. This campaign was born out of a series of popular meetings of a wide array of sectors in Palestinian society, including unions, political groups, and independent figures. These consultations concluded with the establishment of a coordination office for the campaign, in charge of following up, coordinating, and organising activities and events across the Palestinian homeland and in cooperation with the various supportive initiatives and actions in Arab and international capitals.

The National Campaign “Palestine: State No. 194” is a national and peaceful campaign that aims to achieve the widest possible popular participation of the Palestinian people, wherever they may be around the world, as well as friends of Palestine worldwide. We aim to organise activities and events starting at the beginning of September, peaking at the beginning of the United Nation’s 66th General Assembly Session on 21 September, and lasting until the achievement of our goal to become United Nations’ Member State 194.

www.palestinestate194.ps
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A Call to Action

Since its inception, the Palestinian cause for freedom and independence was adopted by peoples around the world, thus transcending geographic and national definitions. Anchored in the universal values of freedom and human rights, international peace activists, human rights defenders, and peoples of all walks of life, professional backgrounds, and orientations adopted the plight for Palestine’s freedom as their own. Their dedication, energies, and sacrifices have greatly advanced the Palestinian cause.

At this critical juncture of Palestinian history, international solidarity is of crucial significance. As we, the Palestinians, approach the homestretch on the journey toward our freedom, international support represents our lifeline of hope; our assurance that the world stands united with Palestinians in defense of peace and justice.

This is why the National Campaign, “Palestine: State No. 194,” calls on you to stand, as you have done in the past, by the Palestinian people. We call on you to lend Palestine your voice in campaigning for the overdue recognition of the State of Palestine and support its bid for membership in the United Nations. Help us secure an effective and positive collective action by the international community that would bring the Middle East closer to a just and lasting peace.

We call on the trade unions, civil society organisations, foundations, universities, and citizens around the world to support the Palestinian people’s campaign for international recognition and UN admission. As citizens and representatives of civil society, you have the power to lobby your elected representatives, parliaments, and governments for Palestine’s just cause. The National Campaign looks to you for support, cooperation, and coordination. We urge you to join hands with us in campaigning, demonstrating, and marching for Palestine’s freedom. Help us by campaigning in your communities and through social networks. You can count on us for any support you may need.

Palestinians have been empowered and encouraged by actions and initiatives already launched around the world. The principled support of parliaments and international figures, petitions, and media and awareness efforts are an invaluable contribution to Palestine’s campaign for recognition and UN admission.

Our campaign will launch a series of activities, which will peak on 21 September, the opening date of the general debate in the UN General Assembly. We ask for your help in transforming this date into an international day of action for Palestine’s overdue recognition.

Palestine is forever grateful for your long-standing principled support. We are proud to be part of such an impressive coalition of human rights and freedom champions.

The Palestinian people draw strength and encouragement from international solidarity. Your support has always empowered Palestinians to persevere in seeking a life of dignity, freedom, and prosperity and in rejecting an imposed regime of occupation, humiliation, and exclusion. We are confident that just as international activism and solidarity helped dismantle injustice in apartheid South Africa, it can and will dismantle occupation in Palestine.

The National Campaign: “Palestine: State No. 194”

Frequently Asked Questions

The right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, like that of all peoples, is an inalienable right that is not up for negotiation.

The establishment of a sovereign and viable Palestinian state is a debt owed by the international community to the Palestinian people that is long overdue. This right has awaited implementation for nearly seven decades.

Palestinians are asking for international recognition of their State on the 1967 borders, including East Jerusalem, as stipulated in international resolutions. They also seek admission to the United Nations as a full member.

In UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 181 II – the resolution that provided the legal basis for Israel’s admission to the UN – the General Assembly instructed that “sympathetic consideration” be given to our application for membership in the UN. Thus, international recognition of the State of Palestine and its admission to the UN as a full member is consistent with and supports a resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.
Why are Palestinians asking for recognition and UN admission?

This is a natural, historical, and legal right for the Palestinian people. Statehood and its declaration is also a sovereign right of all nations, as stipulated in international law. In addition, the Palestinian right to self-determination has been repeatedly asserted by the UN. This includes UNGA resolutions 3236, 2649, and 65/455, which declared this right to be “inalienable” and affirmed that the Palestinian people have a right to a “sovereign and independent” state. UNGA Resolution 2672 declared that respecting Palestinians’ inalienable rights is an indispensable element in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Moreover, in its 2004 Advisory Opinion, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) made clear that it is illegal to impede the Palestinian people’s exercise of its right to self-determination.

Why should the international community support Palestine’s bid?

Recognition of the State of Palestine on the 1967 borders is a sovereign decision of each state. To date, 122 countries, including 9 of the 10 most populous countries in the world recognise Palestine. Combined, these countries’ populations represent 75 percent of the world’s population. In addition, recognition of the State of Palestine and support for its admission to the UN makes clear that Israel has no valid claim to any parts of the territory it occupied in 1967 and reaffirms that Israel’s colonisation of Palestinian land is illegal. This is in line with UN Security Council Resolution 242, which affirmed the inadmissibility of acquisition of territory by force. Recognition of Palestine is a nonviolent action that supports the enforcement of international law, one that reaffirms the international community’s commitment to the two-state solution. It is an investment in peace.

The Palestinian people’s right to self-determination is a jus cogens norm that must be respected by states. The ICJ also recognised this right as a right erga omnes, which makes its realisation and protection the concern of all states. This was affirmed in subsequent UNGA resolutions. Moreover, the UN has repeatedly recognised that Palestinians enjoy the human rights outlined by relevant covenants and declarations, which make up the body of International Human Rights Law. This includes the opportunity to “freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development” as provided by Common Article 1 of the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic and Social Rights.

Do Palestinians plan to declare a state?

Palestinians have already declared independence. On 15 November 1988, the Palestine Liberation Organization’s National Council, the highest representative body of the organisation, declared Palestinian independence. This declaration was historic because it signalled the PLO’s endorsement of the two-state-solution formula for the conflict, including relevant UN resolutions. Subsequently, the UN acknowledged the 1988 declaration, and approximately 100 countries recognised Palestine.

What will happen in September?

The United Nations General Assembly’s sixty-sixth session will begin in September. As such, September will mark the beginning of a process for Palestine’s admission as a full member of the UN. However, there is no time limit on the membership application process. In some cases, admission of members has taken a matter of days. In others, this process lasted much longer.

Does Palestine fulfil the prerequisites for statehood?

The State of Palestine has met all prerequisites for statehood listed in the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the rights and duties of states. The permanent population of our land is the Palestinian people; its right to self-determination has been repeatedly recognised by the UN and by the International Court of Justice in 2004. Our territory is recognised as the lands framed by the 1967 borders, though it is occupied by Israel. We have the capacity to enter into relations with other states and have embassies and missions in more than 100 countries.

The State of Palestine also fulfils the UN membership requirements of being a peace-loving nation and committing to the principles of the United Nations Charter as well as being able and willing to carry out these obligations.

Is Palestine ready for statehood?

Definitely. Two years ago, the Palestinian government announced a two-year state-building plan, which the international community endorsed and supported. This plan is now successfully completed. In April 2011, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the European Union, and the UN attested that Palestinian institutions are ready for statehood and agreed that the continued Israeli occupation is the sole remaining obstacle to Palestinian statehood. The IMF declared that Palestinians are able to perform as a “well-functioning state.” At the time, Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad likened this recognition to a “birth certificate” for the Palestinian State.

Will this step end the Israeli occupation?

While UN admission and recognition will not physically remove Israeli forces from Occupied Palestinian Territory, Palestinians believe that this is a crucial step that will contribute to the inevitable end of occupation and the realisation of Palestinian rights. It will reignite the political process and discourse with international law and lay to rest any questions on the issue of Palestinian statehood.

Is this merely a symbolic step?

No. International recognition and UN membership bring Palestinians closer to freedom by consecrating the two-state solution, which is the internationally agreed formula for peace in the region. They strengthen the possibility of reaching a just and lasting peace based on the internationally endorsed terms of reference for resolving the conflict. They affirm respect for relevant UN resolutions, including 242. This step is also consistent with the Arab Peace Initiative, which was also endorsed by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. The initiative promises recognition of Israel and normalised relations upon ending the occupation of Arab territories that began in 1967 and reaching an agreed-upon solution to the issue of the right of return. By recognising Palestine, the international community would be formalising these terms of reference and protecting the two-state solution.

Does this step violate previous signed agreements?

No. Recognising the State of Palestine is consistent with the basis of the Declaration of Principles, including the principle of the two-state solution and relevant UN resolutions such as 242 and 338. These terms of reference have been consistently undermined by Israel’s unilateral actions, including the continued illegal construction and expansion of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.
Is this a unilateral step?
On the contrary, going to the United Nations, which represents the voice of the world, is the ultimate expression of multilateralism. Palestine is asking the world to act collectively in the interest of peace.

In contrast, Israel has sought to change both the de jure and de facto status of the Occupied Palestinian Territory through illegal and unilateral actions, including the continued expansion of Israeli settlements and construction of the Wall. In fact, since the Oslo Accords, the Israeli settler population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory has increased twofold: from 236,000 in 1993 to over 500,000 today. Israel’s annexation of occupied East Jerusalem and No Man’s Land, and the closure of the Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea are also unilateral measures that the international community considers illegal impediments to peace.

Does recognition of Palestine delegitimise Israel?
No. Many countries that have already recognised the State of Palestine, such as the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China, maintain solid relations with Israel. In addition, Palestinians recognised Israel in 1993. Regrettably, Israel has yet to reciprocate this recognition.

In contrast, there is international consensus that Israel’s belligerent policies of occupation are illegitimate. Palestinians also believe that Israel’s policies and practices are turning the 44-year-old occupation into annexation, which is also illegal.

Do Palestinians reject returning to negotiations?
Palestinians believe that ending the conflict still requires the parties to reach a negotiated comprehensive peace agreement on all outstanding issues, including refugees, security, water, and others once there is a willing Israeli peace partner.

Negotiation is not a goal per se. It is, however, the peaceful means that civilised nations, including Palestine, employ to settle conflicts and disputes. Palestine has a principled commitment to reaching a final resolution of the conflict through peaceful means.

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Palestine
The 194th State versus Legal Warfare

By Hiba Husseini

Palestine calls it “legal warfare”; Palestine calls it “state” number 194; the theatre is the United Nations. Israelis deem the Palestinian decision to apply for full membership as an act of aggression and warfare against Israeli interests; Palestinians deem it “istihanq”: a warranted and long-awaited entitlement.

Surely these two diverging positions underscore a disconnect. A disconnect between two parties living on the same land with two different visions and two different interests. Palestinians want a place to call home and unify all Palestinians worldwide; Israelis want to maintain their stronghold on their home as a Jewish state to the exclusion of others. Both see each other posing existential threats to the other’s interests. Seeking United Nations admission has simply brought these issues to bear.

Neither side could find a common denominator to resume negotiations. Palestinians ask for clarity and definite timelines; Israelis ask the Palestinians to recognise Israel as a Jewish state before returning to the negotiating table. Israel rejects a re-launch of the negotiations on the basis of the 1967 borders, the right of return of Palestinian refugees, and Jerusalem, a capital of two states. It does not heed calls for stopping settlement activity. Negotiations have no chance with such high stakes.

Although both sides recognise that living together and co-existing side by side in two states is the ultimate and right outcome to end the conflict, neither side is able to make the compromises as they are perceived as too costly and the risks too high. This has left limited options. Israel has accepted to contend with the status quo, but for the Palestinians the status quo is not tenable. Rather, they have opted for the most reasonable option by resorting to the international multilateral system – the United Nations. This act, for the Palestinians, is one of multilateralism contrary to Israel’s duping it a unilateral act. We seek to legitimise Palestine not to delegitimise Israel, yet Israel forever chooses to be the rejectionist and now labels the act “legal warfare.”

Israel was in a state of war with all its neighbours when it applied for UN membership. Today, by stark contrast, Palestine is in a state of peace with Israel and all its neighbours. It has signed interim peace agreements with Israel calling for a two-state solution. Palestine enjoys recognition by 122 countries, and the list is growing. What is lacking is the formal step before the UN, so what underlies Israel’s outrage?

The answer is simple, Israelis are used to unilateralism. They feel that it’s their due and cannot conceive it from others, and it is often this unilateral entitlement that drives their militaristic behaviour. They also cannot conceive of how to practically negotiate the end of conflict because an independent and sovereign state next door is not familiar and is thus uncomfortable. Israel, since its inception, has lived in a state of war, and the military paradigm has shaped its relations with Palestinians and its Arab neighbours. Releasing its grip on the land and people to an equal sovereign topples the equation.

Palestinians are taking charge – a first for Israel. Absent a final settlement, Israel will stay in control until the two sides negotiate face-to-face and sign the end-of-conflict and end-of-claims agreement. The Palestinian step at the UN is Israel’s to grab and open the unconditional door to negotiations. The 194th state is a peace offering not an act of warfare.

Dr. Hiba Husseini is a senior legal expert who manages a major corporate and business law firm in Palestine known as Husseini & Husseini. She has been serving as legal adviser to the Palestinian Negotiations Team since 1994 and is the Head of the Legal Committee to the Final Status Negotiations. Dr. Husseini also serves on the boards of various non-profit organisations and has written and published worldwide.
An Arena of Our Own Making

By Diana Buttu

September 2011 is finally upon us, and with it, we will learn of the PLO/PA's latest moves to attain membership as a state in the United Nations. Whether the moves involve declaring statehood, applying to the UN for full membership as a state, or simply seeking an upgrade in the PLO's status before the UN, the moves have attracted and will undoubtedly continue to attract a great deal of international attention. Already, legal pundits, political analysts, and former diplomats have stepped forth to speak about the benefits and pitfalls of these measures, with their impact on the future and the so-called “peace process.” But despite the attention created, the real question remains whether these moves will serve to change reality for millions of Palestinians. The UN admission quest also calls into question whether the true picture of Palestinian life – whether under military occupation or living as second-class citizens or relegated to refugee camps or living in the diaspora – is adequately imparted to ourselves and to the rest of the world.

The past few months remind me of the fall of 1988, when the PLO was contemplating its declaration of independence. At the time, it was similarly believed that declaring independence would open a wide array of additional avenues for redress and would better serve to tell the Palestinian “story” and prompt international action. For me, however, the real “story-telling,” as it were, came almost a year earlier with the start of the first Intifada. Naïve, unaware, and residing comfortably in Canada, I had very little understanding about the ordeal that my parents had lived through, that my relatives continued to live through, and that my Palestinian brothers and sisters around the world continued to endure. The images of the Intifada shook me into awareness and into action. The images were powerful and told their own story: Palestinians demanding freedom shot by rubber-coated metal bullets; stone-throwers grabbed and clubbed by soldiers (operating pursuant to orders by individuals later hailed as “peacemakers”) until their bones shattered from the repeated blows; women standing defiantly in the face of Israeli jeeps that were determined to run them over for defying curfew – all of these scenes were much more informative than any New York Times article attempting to explain the latest political manoeuvres or trying to describe the Palestinian plight for freedom and equality. A simple glimpse at a refugee camp in Lebanon stood in stark contrast with lush Israeli towns standing on the ruins of Palestinian villages. These contrasting images sufficiently told the story of our displacement and erasure.

Thinking back to the days of the first Intifada and the declaration of independence, the issue being debated on campuses was not whether Palestinians were entitled to their freedom, or the nature of the “state” and the rights of refugees. Rather, the debate for activists in those days was whether Palestinians actually existed; whether Palestinians were interlopers, nomads from across the Arab world imported as part of a pseudo anti-Semitic plot to prevent Israel from living in peace in the empty lands to which the Jews fled following the Second World War. Palestinians in those days were labelled Jordanians, Arabs, Lebanese, Syrians, and...
most irritatingly “Israeli Arabs” – everything but Palestinians. Major US newspapers frequently ran op-eds and articles lauding Israel’s military rule and whitewashing Israeli atrocities and war crimes, including the establishment of new Israeli settlements while later calling for “restraint” in dealing with the “demographic threat.” The challenge then for Palestinian activists was simply (and most arduously) to tell our story; to speak of our dispossession and inform of our displacement.

But as powerful as the images were and remain, the images did not and likely will not translate into any real change for us, for the world is moved by power and not often by justice. Unfortunately, our power is too diffuse to be effective.

This is not to say that there is little understanding of the Palestinian plight – to the contrary, there is a great deal of understanding today, more so than at any other time in history. Through the efforts of the Palestinian vanguard – Edward Said, Mahmoud Darwish, Faisal Husseini, Naji al-Ali, to name but a few – we are now on the map, albeit on an aspirational (for some) 22 percent of that map. Palestinians continue to tell their stories through poetry, art, film, and song, as well as in academic writings and local newspapers across the globe. And with the continued excellent reporting by a number of organisations on the monumental criminal obstacles imposed by Israel, it cannot be said that there is a paucity of information about our plight.

Our challenge today is how to translate that information and those stories into action that will eventually change our situation. While the UN may be a platform for raising awareness, our situation demands much more than that. Becoming a member state of the UN in any capacity is simply not going to change the day-to-day reality of Palestinians. Endless negotiations in European capitals will similarly not change that reality. We are well past the days where what is needed is a new resolution demanding an end to Israeli aggression. Rather, we are at a place where decisive action is needed to put an end to Israel’s illegal practices. Unfortunately, irrespective of what happens at the end of this month, there will be nothing decisive.

To date, the focus of some of the dominant political leadership has been to try to “change America” and, term after term, we see Palestinian optimism that the new US president will “do something.” This line of thinking misses that it is far beyond our power to directly change America or American thinking regarding Palestine. The US is not moved by the “justness” of our cause, rather, its own interests guide it. Unfortunately, we are not part of that equation. So, rather than continue to embrace the “change America” strategy, it is time for a new one. As the late Faisal Husseini once remarked, “You can’t beat a world-class boxer in the boxing ring; you have to find a new arena.”

We have a new arena and have had one for decades. Instead, now is the time for political leadership to finally embrace and link up with the excellent work of people across the globe struggling for Palestine and particularly those struggling from within. Arts, culture, sports, activism, and philanthropy are not and cannot be disconnected from our political struggle. Sadly, however, today they are. While we often hear of the obvious similarities between apartheid and Israel’s practices, we frequently ignore the gross disparities between liberation movements around the world and the Palestinian liberation movement. For example, while the African National Congress embraced and promoted boycotts and the isolation of apartheid South Africa from sports, arts, and academia, in the case of Palestine, it has been civil society, and not the political leadership, that has embraced such strategies. In some cases, the leaders have hindered such calls. Similarly, Cuba and Iran invest heavily in the arts as a means to promote their positions while Palestinian artists struggle to obtain funding. Namibia, for example, launched several legal battles aimed at challenging apartheid whereas our hallmark legal victory (the 2004 Wall case before the International Court of Justice) remains woefully unexploited. And, in struggles around the world – whether for labour rights, women’s rights, or freedom – the political leadership has been to try to “change America” and, term after term, we see Palestinian optimism that the new US president will “do something.” This line of thinking misses that it is far beyond our power to directly change America or American thinking regarding Palestine. The US is not moved by the “justness” of our cause, rather, its own interests guide it. Unfortunately, we are not part of that equation. So, rather than continue to embrace the “change America” strategy, it is time for a new one. As the late Faisal Husseini once remarked, “You can’t beat a world-class boxer in the boxing ring; you have to find a new arena.”

While it may be easier to seek symbolic gestures or to continue to emptyly threaten the death of the “two-state solution” or the death of the peace process, these rhetorical and symbolic tools are as useful as using a butter knife to tear down a settlement. Rather, the integration of politics with the arts, culture, media, activism, business, and sports may be enough to change our reality. Why? Because as great as some of our standalone actions are, they do not capture the media’s attention in the same way as a symbolic bid at the UN does. Years of weekly protests garner less attention – politically and in the media – than a simple statement by an “official” or “spokesperson.”

This is not to say that the political leadership should hijack or lead all these initiatives, for they are coming late to the game. Rather, our political leadership should reflect the strength of our people and use this strength to promote our cause and represent us.

Our politicians need to start relying on their greatest asset: us. And when they do, our struggle to promote our struggle will become that much easier. In the absence of such a political change, our political horizon may look bleak to some, but not to me. Today, with our continued focus on the arts, culture, activism, and media, and with the availability of new means of dissemination, we make it more difficult for others to continue to support Israel’s practices. While we are much more powerful than we think, our strength will only come fully to bear when we abandon the Israeli-American boxing arena and start fighting our battle in an arena of our own making.

Diana Buttu is a Canadian-Palestinian human rights attorney based in Ramallah.
The Semiology of the Palestinian Face
The Dichotomy of Private versus Public Space

By Dr. Ali Qleibo

Each culture is an empire of verbal and nonverbal signs that structure subjective individual consciousness. According to anthropologist Ray Birdwhistell, nonverbal communication, paralanguage, constitutes almost seventy percent of human interaction. Whereas verbal communication may be transcribed in writing, nonverbal communication, such as posture, gesture, stance and movement, facial expression, and eye movement, present a greater challenge. To study nonverbal communication, pioneering visual anthropologists such as Edward T. Hall and Ray Birdwhistell provided conceptual means of analysis. Although the concept of proxemics delineates its field of research through the study of personal and social space, kinesics, on the other hand, has as its object the study of posture, gesture, and body movement. This stimulated anthropologists to develop alternative methodological tools of research under the title of visual anthropology, which was extended in visual anthropology and photography were developed to supplement traditional literary monographs.

Abu Basem and Um Basem moved closer to each other on the sofa as they prepared their body posture for a photograph. Their children and grandchildren stood watching beyond the camera range to allow the middle-aged couple a moment of filmic privacy. Abu Basem adjusted his sitting position, moved closer towards his wife, and shyly extended his arm over her shoulder. Involuntarily, out of modesty, Um Basem recoiled. Physical proximity between wife and husband and public display of tenderness is a silently observed taboo in Palestinian society. The couple faced each other. Momentarily, for the camera, they looked affectionately at each other. The children giggled when they were alone or the full suit and tie with which he received visitors. I never saw his thighs or arms and never knew whether he had a hairy or smooth chest. To us he did not present the public jovial friendly face, neither jokes nor idle chatter were allowed. It was believed that the stern face preserved the proper distance and maintained the fear and respect expected in the father/child relationship. As children matured into adulthood the father’s face would change to that of a brother in accordance with the common Palestinian adage, “Once your son matures, become his brother.”

Palestinian idioms reinforce the crucial role that the “social face” plays by projecting the degree of respectability that individuals command by virtue of their relative position in their social network. A key normative saying in Arabic is keeping a “white face” (بيا الوجه) and avoiding “blackening the face” (سود الوجه), i.e., sullying the face. The social face is a mask that a respectable, credible, self-restrained, and emotionally balanced person is socialised to wear in order to project the positive social values he/she assumes.

Signs, verbal and nonverbal, bombard the individual and constitutively constitute his/her respective identity and structure consciousness as recipients and emissaries in a dynamic dialectic. Our faces, eye movements, gaze, or averted look, the body posture, the hand movements, the crossed leg, the distance or proximity to others, the layout of the house and use of space, the distribution and function of the rooms, the choice and hanging of the pictures in various areas and at varying heights; our entire personal space is governed by strict protocol and ritual through myriad signs. The “face” represents one’s own sense of identity.

The social face is a distancing mechanism. Indeed there is no “natural face” lurking underneath the “social face.” At the axis of the verbal and nonverbal signs one’s subjective consciousness emerges in the form of the “object” personal face that singles out one’s sense of individual identity. In either private or

Photo by Basil Maqousi.
public domains, irrespective of whether the facial expression is stern, jovial, friendly, hostile, aggressive, or elusive, the signs are culture specific. In fact, few individuals are allowed to view the face in its moments of vulnerability, weakness, desire, love, jealousy, or disappointment. These few are restricted mainly to parents, grandparents, and eventually the spouse.

Within the traditional family network, the social position of the daughter-in-law is ambivalent and illustrates another dimension of the private/public dichotomy. On the one hand she is the legal mother of the children and is much respected, but as an outsider she belongs to the distant social sphere and is treated as such. Paradoxically her offspring are considered “insiders,” while she is perceived as an “outsider.” She is invariably looked upon by the in-laws as the “stranger,” el-ghareeb (غریبه). The grandmother would chatter casually with her children and grandchildren. Once the daughter-in-law enters the room the mood modulates from a private scene to a public scene. Irrespective of whether it may be a casual exchange of jokes, gossip, or serious family business, everyone would hush. Instantly they would adjust their sitting positions and body postures as they put on the formal mask reserved for outsiders: the public face. With time and hard work the daughter-in-law may earn trust and merit entry into the inner circle, which is an exceptional honour that adds to her personal prestige. Yet when she dies, the wife would not be buried with her husband’s family; rather, an outsider, she returns to her family and is buried in her family cemetery.

Cemeteries and Moslem burial practices reinforce on another level the antimony between private and public space. In Islam the daughter is always buried with her mother and female relatives from her mother’s line. If the husband is alive, he pays back to her family al mu’akhar (المؤخر), the contractually agreed sum of money should a divorce occur. The problem of burial is a source of family squabbles within Jerusalem’s old families. For years there were constant arguments between my grandmother and her sisters since she wanted her daughters to be buried with her. Should that happen, they contested, then each daughter married to outsiders would have the right to be buried with her respective mother which would, in turn, allow their daughters to join. That would ruin their burial privacy. The wrangles ended when my grandmother decided to be buried alone so that her daughters would be buried with her.

Nonverbal communication represents a language with its own vocabulary and grammar and underlies the production of unconscious collective categories that provide the blueprint for individual social behaviour. Whereas the public space, al-harah (حاره) refers to the world of disorder and connotes impurity, the house – in sharp contrast – is constituted as the domain of “order”; it is perceived as “pure” and “sacred.” The house has its sanctity (حرمة البيت). It is the sanctuary that underlies the deep sense of belonging fostered by the sacrosanct notion of family and shelters the individual from the disorder outside. “This is a house not a public space” (هذا بيت مش حاره) is an idiomatic form of chastising the children for making too much noise, for raising the volume of the radio or TV, for messing up the house. A single man, divorced or a widowed, is the object of horror and pity; his life alone is compared to that of a lonely dog (عشت الكلاب). In the Palestinian psyche the home is synonymous with family life.

The perception of the outside as the disorderly, impure space explains the shocking dirt and piles of trash lying outside in the street. In contrast, the interior of the house is orderly and scrupulously clean. Within the house each room assumes a ritually designated, socially defined function. Consequently the house is treated with great reverence; a feeling and attitude that are extended to encompass all the blood and in-law
relations that form an integral aspect of that hidden nonverbal social dimension. In contrast the external world, public space, is not defined and is thus impure and chaotic. It is “void” of meaning and as such is unconsciously categorised and perceived as “invisible” space. By extension all the people out there, if they are not “family,” are the “anonymous others” and are equally “invisible.” By the same token, the individual seeking employment or in need of bureaucratic services must resort to nepotism or clientelism, i.e., family relations or party membership, to become visible; qualifications in our society do not stand as objective criteria by which the individual merits recognition.

It is not uncommon to see things casually tossed into the street from the open windows of a car: cigarette boxes, chocolate wrappers, soda bottles … The pushing and shoving in the streets while walking in the marketplace is concomitant with the unconscious categories informing the dichotomy of private versus public space and the visible versus the invisible. The others simply do not exist. Suddenly, among the crowds, you are struck by the formidable scene of a middle-aged man reverentially kissing the hand of a young man and becoming engrossed in highly ritualised courtesies, “obviously” his young uncle. From this perspective the scene of the madding crowds emerges as a structured choreography to a polyphonic melody that the natives intuitively sense and by whose rhythm they sway.

The power that the hidden nonverbal dimension exerts on urban traffic assumes major proportions when driving in an Arab city. In Cairo, Amman, Beirut, or Damascus the road is culturally perceived as public space where others are categorised as invisible and the open road as the domain of disorder. Traffic is invariably chaotic and confused. Drivers unexpectedly cut into other lanes, jump lanes, zigzag incessantly into any open space, forge new lanes, push, shove, and shift arbitrarily from the extreme right lane to make a left turn, without the use of blinkers....

I do not navigate my way as a semeiologist.

In Amman I never drive. I need clear signs.

Dr. Ali Qleibo is an anthropologist, author, and artist. A specialist in the social history of Jerusalem and Palestinian peasant culture, he is the author of Before the Mountains Disappear, Jerusalem in the Heart, and the recently published Surviving the Wall, an ethnographic chronicle of contemporary Palestinians and their roots in ancient Semitic civilisations. His filmic documentary about French cultural identity, Le Regard de L’Autre was shown at the Jerusalem International Film Festival. Dr. Qleibo lectures at Al-Quds University. He can be reached at aqleibo@yahoo.com.
New Matadors

By Tarik Hamdan

Where shall the word be found, where will the word
Resound? Not here, there is not enough silence
Not on the sea or on the islands, not
On the mainland, in the desert or the rain land…
T. S. Eliot, “Ash Wednesday”

Five decades ago the American poet T.S. Eliot wondered, “Where shall the word be found?” We look at the poet from an electric box plugged into the power jack and say, “The word is in ‘space,’ which is the country of thoughts and words in the modern age.”

The word is in space now, Mr. Eliot, not on the sea or land. It is in the high wind, and the political, religious, and social authorities have great difficulty reining it in.

Here in the Arab region that is struck with all kinds of anathemas and that slouches between the hammer and the anvil – the hammer of retrograde dictatorial regimes and the anvil of occupation and colonialism – it seems that the Internet has come as a magical prescription. Here in the Arab world where there is no communication of ideas or information as the media are hideously controlled by the authorities and businesses, intellectual communication itself has lost its value. Likewise, physical communication has disappeared since borders and checkpoints restrain free movement.

In a country where freedom of speech and expression is condemned and where the human being is marginalised, the Internet becomes the only haven for the “wretched of the earth.” Social interaction websites and links have become effective tools in the hands of individuals who look forward to freedom and dignified living.

The Arab revolts have surprised all peoples. No one expected such dramatic consequences in this short period of time. The revolution in Tunisia deposed Ben Ali and that in Egypt put an end to three decades of dictatorship. Revolutions also broke out in other Arab countries and are still going on even at this very moment. I was one of those who followed and traced the movements of young people on the social interaction websites such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. Incidentally, I was in Egypt on 25 January 2011, the day the revolution broke out. The revolution was preceded by considerable activity on the Internet by activists who sought to topple the Egyptian regime. In addition, my residence was close to Midan Al-Tahrir (Liberation Square), the arena that witnessed most of the events.

On the first day it was clear to me that the gathering of young protestors holding their video cameras and computers was not a fleeting phenomenon that would disappear shortly. I realised at that moment that the whole Arab region was on the threshold of a new era that was initiated through the Internet. The official and commercial media become deformed and pale before the alternative and real media of the young generation, and the dictatorial regimes have become raging bulls crushed by new matadors.

In Palestine, where the Israeli military occupation dismembers the territories and restricts the free movement of the indigenous population, and which is burdened with weak political leaders robbed of their will, the Internet seems to be the only outlet for Palestinians in occupied Palestine and the diaspora to communicate, work, and continue their struggle against the Israeli occupation. During the past ten years, a Palestinian community of a very special nature has been formed on the Internet. Facebook, Twitter, and other social networking websites have provided Palestinians in occupied Palestine and the diaspora with space for interaction and connection. As a result, national movements and active communities have emerged whose primary task is to resist the
occupation and demand justice and liberty for the Palestinian people. These movements and communities are still inefficacious; however, compared to the revolutions that other neighbouring Arab countries have witnessed. But the Palestinian movements can be more effective and have stronger impact. The memory of young Palestinians trying peacefully and non-violently to enter occupied Palestine from Majdal Shams and Maroon Al-Ras in the north is still fresh in our minds. That was the first time that the Israeli entity has been penetrated peacefully by young Palestinians, even though it was only temporary and resulted in the martyrdom of several Palestinians. But it was a symbolic entry that meant a lot to all Palestinians. It was a glorious event that proved the proximity of Palestine to Palestinians and that the national will knows no limits.

It is worth mentioning that the role of social interaction websites is not limited to communication and to the Arab revolts. I think, rather, that they have created a strong impact on the social level in general, and it is the kind of impact that will creep into politics, literature, and the arts, and influence relations between parents and children, teachers and students, and citizens and authorities. It is the kind of impact that will trigger change in the social structure. Unquestionably, the Internet has inaugurated a new stage in the history of people in the Middle East.

Is there a new revival in the Arab world? Will the revolutions succeed and culminate in the achievement of freedom and democracy, human dignity, intellectual boom, and economic prosperity? The coming events and the near future will determine this. Do we have a good reason to become optimistic? As a young Palestinian I have always been hopeful, but the consequences have been discouraging and unsatisfactory. I think twice before using the word optimistic or hopeful. At the same time, I believe that the current events in the Arab world have the momentum to incur change and open new horizons created by young people. A new awareness is looming and a strong will is eager to declare itself. A new space has been created where those who have been deprived of meeting on land can meet and work toward change and the creation of a new reality.

The words and ideas are in space, Mr. Eliot. Has this ever occurred to you?

Born in 1982, Tarik Hamdan is a Palestinian poet and musician. His first book of poetry is titled Once When I Was a Sperm, published in 2010. His poetry has been translated into English, Spanish, and Korean. Hamdan is the editor of Filistin Ashabab, a monthly magazine of art and literature for young Palestinian artists and writers. Hamdan is also active in diverse media and art projects in Palestine and elsewhere in the Arab world.
Re-enforcing the Narrative

By Kieron Monks

On 25 June 2006, the liberal British newspaper The Observer ran a single-paragraph story detailing an Israeli incursion into the Gaza Strip. It reported that commandos had "detained" two alleged Hamas members during an "arrest raid."

The following day, armed Palestinians tunneled under the fence surrounding Gaza and attacked an Israeli army post named Kerem Shalom. They captured Gilad Shalit, a young French-Israeli corporal.

It was to become one of the most high-profile and long-running stories of the conflict. As soon as the news broke, the BBC's Gaza correspondent, Alan Johnston, described the capture as "a major escalation in cross-border tensions."

While Palestinians had been "arrested" the previous night, Shalit had been "kidnapped," and there was a broad consensus in Western media that he was to be considered a "hostage." Although the two raids carried striking similarities – incursions into enemy territory that resulted in the seizure of combatants – they were not reported in comparable terms. While the 7,000 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails are rarely deemed worthy of media coverage, Shalit has been a cause célèbre, the subject of thousands of newspaper stories and television specials.

His case is an example of the contextual framework typically applied to the conflict by Western reporters. Johnston's description of the Palestinian raid as an "escalation" fit the narrative of aggressor/defender that is so commonly used to allow different standards for Palestinian and Israeli violence.

Even in extreme cases, it seems difficult for Western media to escape the default interpretation that Israel's role in violence is defensive, a response to Palestinian threats and aggression. When navy commandos attacked the Gaza flotilla last May, killing nine activists in a night-raid, reports were filled with the accounts of traumatised Israeli soldiers. The BBC carried MK Benny Begin's account of soldiers "arriving almost barefoot," while Prime Minister Netanyahu explained the nine deaths, including those caused by multiple shots to the head, as "acts of self-defence." This became the widely accepted starting point for analysis.

The Israeli narrative can be given precedence in more subtle ways. A recent investigation by University of New York professor Anthony Alessandrini found that the New York Times, so often held as the gold standard for journalism, typically use vague attribution and sourcing to mislead readers.

Analysing a report of the recent fly-in, in which activists arriving at Ben Gurion Airport declared their intentions to visit Palestine, Alessandrini showed that pieces of seemingly neutral commentary contained bias. In the report we are told, "There were persistent reports that the foreign visitors would try to create chaos and paralyze the airport," before introducing the activist's perspective. Without attribution, the "persistent reports" are given credibility in the report, while their anonymity allows them to avoid the suspicion that would fall on any interested party.

The activist's perspective is positioned in response to the "persistent reports," in the form of "strenuous denials," and their intentions are summarised and anonymously quoted as to "go to Palestine." Those three words, without citation, are made weaker by the speech marks. While the "persistent reports" are presented as a body of evidence, the intention to "go to Palestine" is reduced to a claim.

In the same vein, the Times' coverage of Cast Lead incorporates an Israeli perspective into its commentary. We are told that a "phosphorus smoke bomb," which was "intended to mask troop movements," has killed five members of a family. The seemingly interest-free phrasing actually absolves the IDF of responsibility by providing a reasonable, unattributed explanation for the bomb. Perhaps deliberately, the report uses the tragedy of civilian death to make the wider point that Israeli use of phosphorus is legitimate, rather than the war crime human rights groups have alleged.

By contrast, claims from the fly-in activists were felt to require a challenging introduction, while last year's Freedom Flotilla became the "so-called Freedom Flotilla."
The choice of sources in news reporting often reveals imbalance. If Americans Knew, a US research institute for Middle East study, found that Palestinian human rights abuses receive 19 times more space in the Times than Israeli offences. Their policy seems to be the rule rather than the exception. The BBC’s Web bulletins about Cast Lead carried 421.5 lines on Israeli explanations of the attack compared to 10.5 lines on the blockade. The network’s Panorama documentary Death in the Med attracted criticism for interviewing a number of navy sources yet none of the ships’ passengers.

It is not hard to understand why Western media allow this imbalance, even where it conflicts with basic journalistic standards of fairness. As one senior BBC producer puts it: “We all fear the phone call from the Israeli embassy.”

Israel’s public relations department are in constant contact with bureau chiefs for all the mainstream channels and newspapers, always prepared with their version of events and ready to leap on any perceived criticism. When Sky News refused one of their suggested stories in 2009, the Foreign Ministry demanded that their correspondent be banned from Israel on the ubiquitous and feared charge of anti-Semitism.

Sky News is half-owned by Rupert Murdoch, a renowned supporter of Israel, who told an Anti-Defamation League conference in 2010 that “the Israeli people are fighting the same enemy we are: cold-blooded killers who reject peace ... who reject freedom ... and who rule by the suicide vest.” If his network can be “anti-Semitic,” then no reporter is safe.

But that optimism should be tempered by awareness that Israel still holds a special status for the mainstream English-language newspapers and networks. The Jewish state has been uniquely difficult to criticise since its creation, and whether through interests or cowardice, much of the Western media has been complicit in its protection.

Kieron Monks is content manager of This Week in Palestine.
Talk to Me Like a Teenager!
“Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned.”

By Rania Filfil

Dear caretaker,

How can I deny that you take good care of me? You love me without limits. You tell me about your experience. You tell me that I am your treasure and yet you want to plan my life for me. Did you ever think of trying to see things my way? Well, please just listen for now since I am denying you the right to speak.

In school, you lock me in a uniform to look like everyone else, and yet you say I am special. You tell me to behave but you don’t say how: Should it be the way I feel I should behave or the way you want me to feel I should behave? You teach me many things but nothing about being myself, for I believe that you want me to be what you think I should be. You never explain the rules I have to apply or why they should apply. You confiscate my mobile phone because it has a picture of my favourite singer; you tell me to do a group project at home but you do not ask me who I want to work with. You teach me subjects I never know how to apply in my life. You ground me for telling jokes while I expect you to laugh. You tell me to rephrase what others say to make sure I understand what they mean; why don’t I hear your rephrasing of what I say?

I apologise if I prefer to use i-technology rather than your cherished pens and paper. My art project is a graphic design, not a painting of Van Gogh’s shoes. I’d rather go on a fun trip than pray in a church or a mosque. Even though my science project does not yet exist and will probably not be functional, it is a genuine idea I came up with.

At home, I have to set an example for my younger siblings and respect my older ones; how can I exist on my own? You tell me to be happy but you do not allow me to have what I believe makes me happy.

Oh yes, I want to enjoy the pool and dance the way I want. I want to eat this and I don’t want to eat that. I want to be me and not the image you want me to be. I want to develop my brain and use it as much as I can. How do I say it in your world? Do you remember when you were in my world? How many of your rights were negated by adults only because they said they care? How many times did you want to stay up late but were told to go to bed? How many times did you want to eat chocolates but were told to finish your veggies? How many times did you want to read a love story but were told to do math? How did you feel? I bet you felt that your parents had come from another planet!

Housework can wait, but the sun will set; my room is filthy, but I can always clean it tomorrow, for today I am busy with my friends, and I don’t mind if you’re also busy with your friends. Go have coffee with your friends rather than believe that you are obliged to babysit me.

For this is the age of the revolution even against long-standing Arab regimes; and I will become free with or without your consent. If I do not get the real me in the real world, I will create it on Facebook, on Twitter, in a blog, or in any other virtual way. And by the way, virtual comes from consent. If I do not get the real me in the real world, I will become free with or without your consent. If I do not get the real me in the real world, I will create it on Facebook, on Twitter, in a blog, or in any other virtual way. And by the way, virtual comes from virtue, but I am going to sin for I am not taking your way.

Just understand: I cannot be you; for then I would not admire you as much as you admire me. I will see you with your eyes, the eyes that love me more than they love you. I want to be able to see with my own eyes, and I want to love you with my own heart, and I want to share my life with you in the same way that you share with me even the breath you take. I want you to act like a teenager again and come to swim with me; I want you to wear your jeans and come dance to the music of those singers whose names are a puzzle to you. I am sorry I do not listen to Umm Kulthum, but my songs are still worth listening to. I apologise for preferring to swim rather than staying home and making manakeesh. Please forgive me because I want to dabkeh and dance with all the girls and guys I know rather than watch the news with you. I just want to be me, not you. I don’t want to have to lie by accepting your rules and orders; I want to be able to say no or negotiate. I want to be able to decide. I want to be free, for only then will I be me and make you proud.

So just set me free. Let me live my dream, my hobby, and make my life; for only then will every beat of my heart choose to come back to you. And my mind will say: he was my teacher and I liked him; he is my father and I am fond of him; he is my caretaker and now that he needs me when he is a senior, I want to take care of him. Let’s walk the path together even if each of us has his or her own way. Isn’t this what communication is about?

Rania Filfil is a formerly happy teenager and the current mother of a teenager who is rendering her life difficult; yet nothing is worth more to her than this experience. For exchange of teenage experiences, she can be reached at rania.filfil@gmail.com.
Speak Palestinian, Feel Palestinian
Bridging the Diaspora Divide

By Paola Handal-Michael

As a Palestinian raised abroad, I was the product of my family’s less-than-successful transmission of Arabic despite being successful in their commitment to cultural maintenance. I can only speak for myself and my family, as each family’s experience of growing up abroad is different. Our family was commonly described as “being caught between cultures,” “negotiating between two worlds,” or “walking a tightrope.” Some of us felt as though we were living in two separate worlds: at home where Palestine was alive and in the outside world. We developed two sets of behaviours to deal with the two situations.

This resulted in high stress levels in those of us who have an ever-shifting sense of self. We faced pressure, cultural conflict, and parental pressure to maintain our cultural values and family bonds and, at times, control became difficult as we assimilated to the new country since we were dealing with a new system and new people on a regular basis. My cousins and I struggled to maintain the structure of our family language and the cultural components that go with the way our Palestinian ancestors communicated. Unfortunately, the language eventually got lost.

At the age of 28, I came to live in Palestine with my husband. I was elated to be Palestinian and finally live in Palestine. However, I knew that no matter how knowledgeable I was about my ancestral culture and how patriotic I felt, I would never feel a complete sense of belonging because my Arabic was nonexistent. The lack of communication and expression was the true obstacle to my feeling that I fully belong here even if my parents were triumphant in transmitting the cultural values to me. So during my time in Palestine, I felt I had to learn the language as best as I could, adopt a set of behaviours that were customary, and try to fit in as well as possible. So with the eyes and ears of an observer I began my journey.

My first introductions to social events were awkward, and I was self-conscious not knowing exactly how to act or what to say, as I understood very little. Adding to my discomfort was my anxiety at being viewed as a foreigner, someone out of place. I sometimes wondered if these people viewed me as an oddity or as Palestinian like themselves, even though I wasn’t raised in Palestine. I was a cautious observer in the beginning and in time gradually found my way.

Time taught me to express myself and adopt some expressions of my own. I learned to greet people they way they do here, for proper greetings were important as a sign of respect. It didn’t matter if I knew the person well or whether they happened to know my father-in-law (who knew practically the whole town). I had to learn that storytelling in Arabic requires a different, louder tone of voice. As an observer who doesn’t understand Arabic well, I sometimes thought that the person was angry or emotional when, in fact, the story was about something quite insignificant. I learned not to panic at funerals where I saw exaggerated grief or sadness because where I was raised people hide their grief or sorrow. I learned that people like to socialise and communicate in circles while at home; we roamed around at parties going from one room to another. I learned to greet people with hearty hugs and familial kisses on the cheek and warm salutations as I didn’t want to seem “cold.” I learned to nod and smile when people asked me personal questions even if I barely knew them. I learned to accept hospitality because here one is always greeted as family and encouraged to feel comfortable. Finally, I learned enough conversation to get by, even if I still have a long way to go.

So my quest to speak “Palestinian” continued, but I can’t say that it has been easy. While many people embraced our undeniable Palestinian origins, many resisted. The prime example of that was in my classroom. I was given the task to teach Arab-American literature, and I was excited to show my students here that there is a community abroad that shares their love and passion for Palestine. I entered the class in my perfect English, confident that I would spark interest with the few Arabic expressions I had learned. While a few found it fascinating, I was taken aback by some of the sceptical attitudes about how people of Palestinian descent (myself included) could claim allegiance to Palestine when they weren’t born here, though they have a Palestinian ID and live here now. And what’s more, how can they be Palestinian if they write and speak a language other than Arabic? Dazed by the comments, I remember thinking; Why were they so harsh toward me and why did they feel the need to lump all Palestinians together under the same heading?

It’s obvious that I speak and write in Western languages better than in the language of my ancestors, but I was never completely part of the societies of my adopted countries. And now I find that I am not completely accepted as a full member of the society of my origins. Common sense dictates that I should be able to claim both allegiances, but people’s attitudes, particularly in Palestine in my case, haven’t allowed me to accept my composite identity tranquilly, and I blame this largely on the fact that I don’t speak Arabic. I was told that from birth, a person’s life, opinions, and language are shaped by what he or she comes into contact with, and some may believe that if the native language gets lost, then eventually...
so does the connection to the culture. I don't think I fully agree with that. Do we need language to fully belong to a culture? Do we need the stronger tone of voice to be Palestinian? Do speech, gestures, expressions, and language allow people to belong? Do we need Arabic as a mother tongue to shape our Palestinian identity?

I feel Haitian. I may speak fluent Spanish and not feel Dominican. Yet I speak little Arabic and feel very Palestinian. Therefore, in general, I think we tend to gravitate towards the identity and culture we were raised in; we see ourselves in that land and those people. Transmitting culture is important, and language is definitely a bonus – and certainly more enriching – but not a must.

I would like to think that my life is a chameleon-like experience and not seen as dysfunctional, but rather as something which has kept me grounded.

Now in Canada, I try not to dwell on the fact that I am unwelcome or unaccepted. It's important that I do the best I can and accept that some barriers will not be crossed or breached, at least not at this time, but perhaps in the future.

Paola Handal-Michael, originally from Bethlehem, is an educator who was raised in the Caribbean and is currently living in Canada.
Making Connections

By Rania Jaber

Are you a fan of ads? Do you roll your eyes and say Wow! for a great ad but No! for an offer? How many times have you been puzzled and mesmerised by a certain ad that affected your choice of a certain product? Do you enjoy the style of the ad or its content? What is it that captures your heart when you encounter an ad?

Advertising can be a simultaneous blessing and curse. On the one hand, advertising can empower our creativity, imagination, and innovation, and shape the way we behave. On the other hand, it can mislead us. Advertising has a code of ethics that must guide our choices in a wise manner. This article will address the issue of how advertising works in our Palestinian context. In my opinion, a key element in the success of advertising is to understand what we see. When we as humans make connections and link ideas, we seek to understand and revise snapshots in our lives to take a step forward and create our own thoughts and vision that will allow us to make a choice.

Do our consumers understand what we want them to understand? What if people misunderstand or misinterpret certain ads? What if our ads backfire?

According to the American Advertising Federation Board, a key principle in any ad is the truth. Advertising shall tell the truth and shall reveal significant facts, the omission of which would mislead the public. A second principle is comparison. Advertising shall refrain from making false, misleading, or unsubstantiated statements or claims about a competitor or his/her products or services. Finally, a third principle is taste and decency. Advertising shall be free of statements, illustrations, or implications that are offensive to good taste or to the public.

Given the above-mentioned code of ethics, I wonder to what extent our Palestinian companies abide by or at least consider the two most important principles: truth, and taste and decency.

Let me tell you a story. While I was discussing billboard advertising with my fourth-year college students, an example was raised about a campaign by one of the leading companies in Palestine that used a certain billboard that attracted people with its sharp, striking, and luminous images and colours. When I raised a shooting question about the content that lies beneath the beauty of these rainbow colours, I was shocked to notice that there were conflicting opinions concerning the meaning of the message. The discussion deviated into different corners. The message that any simple person should have been able to comprehend was ambiguous. My students, who are specialised in business and marketing, were divided into pros and cons and were unable to get to a clear and simple conclusion. They were misled. They were all wondering what the real message was. And the company lost the game.

Dear readers: Please do not blame or underestimate our consumers on the streets. According to David Ogilvy, “What really decides consumers to buy or not to buy is the content of your advertising, not its form.” Therefore, we need to be aware that when structuring our ads, attention should be focused on the thematic link “content” of the ad, as it is the spark that will grasp the consumer’s heart and mind. Our consumers are the kings and queens; we can’t mess around with them.

I truly believe that the secret lies in the psychology of behaviour, and our companies need to understand this psychology with regard to their target audience. I recall what Cavett Robert once said: “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care – about them and their problems.” Our consumers need to trust us because customer loyalty begins with an experience. Be aware of the fact that statistics indicate that the average person interacts repeatedly with approximately 250 other people, including neighbours, family members, and co-workers. Consequently, both understanding and truthfulness must co-exist and embrace all ads to captivate the hearts and minds of our consumers.

Our consumers have the power to either motivate or de-motivate any campaign. That is, good and positive word-of-mouth can spread fast. “Word-of-mouth is the business world’s equivalent of gossip, which may explain why it is so likely to be repeated when it is negative.” (Chip Walker)
Ads will succeed, in my opinion, if they correspond with our values and traditions. It is necessary to emphasise good behaviour in our ads. The context of our ads must correspond with our Palestinian values, spirit, and culture. It is unwise to alienate our customers from their own setting and cultures with your advertising and then claim that this is creativity. Let us focus on what we have around us because what we have is precious and it is the only path to a better, even blessed, future. My advice is to cultivate what is good in our culture. Again, a good story can be told once, whereas a horror story about goods and services can last forever. People love to cut and paste and tell horror stories. Do not mislead your consumers.

Make connections; please do. But do not forget the "KISS Principle": keep it short and simple. Our Palestinian companies have taken a step forward in the world of marketing and advertising. That I respect. Yet be aware that our customers are mature enough to classify and distinguish ads. I hate it when people whisper and say: Ah? This is not true, do not believe what they say. There must be a trick behind it. It is all deception.

Dear companies, work on the content in tandem with the structure. Make it simple. Make it memorable. Make it inviting to look at. Make it fun to read. Focus on one real, practical message that will reach out unambiguously to many people. Put an end to any questions, and leave no space for interpretations.

Make an ad worth planting beside a green tree in the streets of Ramallah.

Rania Jaber is a dean assistant and lecturer for master’s degree and undergraduate students at the Faculty of Commerce and Economics at Birzeit University. She was head of the Business and Marketing Department for the last four years. In addition, she works as a consultant for many Palestinian institutions and business firms. She has published both locally and internationally.
In Jerusalem
Rights Violated by Those Who Are Obligated to Protect

By Eman Sharabati

For many Palestinians in Jerusalem, visiting the “Israeli” Ministry of the Interior is like going to the investigation office. “I was totally afraid of going there alone without taking my mother with me just to make sure I don’t make a mistake and give information that may harm my attempt to get family unification for my husband,” Fida says. By “mistake,” she means giving any number, address, or information that could be construed as proof that she doesn’t deserve family unification. The decision is at the discretion of the clerk who asks her many questions, some of which could be considered entirely unrelated to her reason for visiting.

Where do you live now? Where does your father live? Where did you live before? Where is your sister living now? Where have you travelled and for how long? All these questions have to be answered in the right way. Hiding any information that may reveal that you have a house or address in the West Bank is the best way to do it, and memorising all important dates, addresses, and family history is a must in this situation.

At the end, you might get an answer you never expected. “We need you to send the application and all the requested papers again!” is just one unwelcome possibility.

We at Al-Maqdese for Society Development (MSD) have established a legal clinic to offer support and advice to Palestinians who face this ordeal. Our lawyers communicate with Israeli institutions, including the National Insurance Institution and the Ministry of the Interior, on behalf of beneficiaries who have become confused and frustrated by the impossibility of a useful dialogue with them.

Our work at the clinic factors the typical delays experienced when submitting requests to various institutions. Some services are more neglected than others by the Israeli administration, and communicating with them in order to make changes can be considered almost hopeless given the length of time it takes for requests to be dealt with.

Asking for public services from the municipality, such as roads, public lighting, or sewerage treatment, is a case in point. “It might take years to receive the first answer in these cases,” says Ala Adileh from the clinic.

One beneficiary has been waiting 6 months to be reimbursed for an NIS 87,000 tax debt. He had been charged taxes for the property prior to its construction in 2002. He was able to prove the construction date of the property but has not received a cancellation of the debt. The applicant is still waiting for a response and is forced to pay regular taxes and service the debt despite his request.

At the National Insurance Institution, things are not much different. No application is opened or read any sooner than 30 days after it has been received, and a long list of requirements has to be attached to the application when applying for any service. “In many cases this means cancelling the whole claim by the applicant,” Adileh says.

Another obstacle is asking the applicants for official inheritance documentation, detailing properties passed on from relatives. This leads to further complications; many Palestinians in Jerusalem have properties in the West Bank but they try to avoid mentioning them since it may lead to problems with the Ministry of the Interior. This is as a result of the new standard of “center of life,” which was created as a condition for the Jerusalemites to keep their permanent residency.

Where they can live is directly controlled by the occupation; this leaves them at risk of having their residency revoked and being forcibly transferred from the city. The Minister of the Interior has the authority to revoke the permanent residency of Jerusalemites living outside of Jerusalem, either in other parts of the West Bank or in a foreign state.* As a result, owning a house or having an address outside the municipal borders could be used against you.

On the other hand, for cases of family unification and residency permits, the applications at the Ministry of the Interior take eight months of study, after which they will begin to ask for more papers. An example of this is the story of Mrs. H. from Silwan who has waited for the last 11 months to get her three children registered with the Ministry of the Interior. Despite her regular attempts and visits she can’t even recall the number of times she has been asked to submit additional documentation. The protracted process is complicated, tiring, and frustrating for applicants.

After citizens visit any of these institutions, the second step in communication is through mail, phone calls, or returning for another personal visit.

It is worth mentioning here that the Israeli postal authority does not provide an adequate number of postal boxes in East Jerusalem and consequently the Palestinians in Jerusalem suffer from not receiving regular post. Another problem is the lack of post offices to provide services. There is only one central post office, located on Salah-Al-Din Street, and three other unofficial post offices in other areas. As a result, official letters issued by governmental offices are not delivered officially to the Palestinians. The Palestinians of East Jerusalem are seriously affected by this denial of adequate services. As a result of not receiving the documents,
debts accumulate and lawsuits are filed without the knowledge of the individual concerned.

This kind of treatment is connected simply to the fact that the authorities of the Israeli occupation are not willing to give Palestinians a normal, comfortable life in their city. The city itself is under threat of being totally “cleansed” of its Palestinian population as a result of the desire to Judaize the city. Palestinian rights are routinely violated and their lives made increasingly difficult. The Palestinian population pay taxes to the municipality and carry out their day-to-day lives subject to Israeli regulations, but they are just surviving as best they can until such time as they are reunited with the rest of Palestine.

Currently the Israeli government implements policies of routine house demolitions, land appropriation, settlement expansion, wall construction, ID withdrawals, child arrests, restricted freedom of movement, and the imposition of heavy fines as punishment for “building without permits.” All these actions, and many others, are aimed at altering the demographic situation in the city of Jerusalem to ensure that control is maintained by the Jewish population and to keep what they call a “United Jerusalem” by displacing Palestinians from the city. Accordingly, these actions increase the Palestinians’ daily suffering and result in the further degradation of their political, economic, and social conditions. Palestinians have been denied many of their rights due to lack of knowledge of Israeli laws, policies, and practices; lack of knowledge of international laws and conventions; and lack of legal guidance and representation.

This lack of knowledge of legal provisions and procedures paired with the inability to understand Hebrew results in the ongoing daily exploitation of the rights of Jerusalemites, especially if we look at the way power is wielded by the various institutions of the occupation as a way of controlling Palestinians and their way of engaging with their city. The message that is portrayed to the Palestinian population is very direct and arrogant: you should follow what we say since we own the power, the methods, the law, the language, and even your life.

Since 1 January 2008, MSD, through its legal clinic, is doing its best to combat the systematic violation of Palestinians’ basic human rights in Occupied East Jerusalem. MSD’s legal clinic has proven its efficiency and effectiveness throughout the last four years by providing Palestinians in East Jerusalem and abroad with thousands of services and providing support and assistance for Palestinians whose rights have been violated by the Israeli authorities.

More efforts to deal effectively with this situation are needed in the city – efforts on the part of everyone concerned. Now more than ever, Palestinians must take a deeper look at our resilience methods, find better ways of cooperation with all sides, and take a more effective political stand.

Eman Sharabati is media and publication officer at MSD.

* The Israeli Supreme Court Decision 282/88, Mubarak Awid vs. the prime minister and the interior minister in Israel. See the work of lawyer Usama Halabi, “The Israeli Law and Judiciary as Tools for Achieving Political Objective,” pp. 10–11.
Communication for People Who Can’t Speak, Hear, See, or Move

By TWIP

Many disabilities, besides the physical impairment, bring with them isolation. If you are confined to a chair or have lost control of your body, it becomes a huge challenge to have a social life and interact with your friends and family. Fortunately, communication aids have progressed tremendously since 1825, when Louis Braille first created an alphabet using raised lettering for the blind. We have explored some of the communication forms available today, although we should say that they are not all easily available.

Sign language
The use of hand signals is the most basic and common form of communication for people who are hearing-impaired. Hundreds of oral languages have given rise to signed counterparts, including many variations of Arabic. Sign languages do not mimic oral speech, and linguistically they are every bit as difficult to learn. Nuances are created by variables including hand-shape, direction, and emphasis.

Sign languages have been with us for over 25 centuries and have been popularised around the world. There are few reliable statistics on how many people use sign language, but a 2006 study from the Gallaudet Research Institute claimed a figure of up to 15 million in the United States, or 5 percent of the population.

Deaf-blind communicator
In 2009, an American company produced a handheld device to facilitate conversations for people who are deaf and blind. Integrating a mobile phone with a Braille keyboard, the device allows a user to speak or write a message to a friend through an interface. The friend types a message in response, which is then translated to the Braille keyboard.

In addition to face-to-face conversations, the device enables its user to make phone calls, send e-mails, go online, or use a digital book reader. Although at this point the devices remain prohibitively expensive, similar technologies are now being developed for the hundreds of thousands who are suffering from deafblindness, and its debilitating impact on quality of life.

Partner-assisted scanning
This device is used in cases of paralysis, loss of speech, or loss of motor skills (learned movements). The subject can give messages to a partner who provides them with a “menu” of letters, words, or other options. The subject then indicates his or her choice from a list. This method is slow and hard work but effective in the absence of technology.

This technique was most famously used by French journalist Jean-Dominique Bauby. After a stroke left him almost completely paralysed, Bauby was able to write a book about his condition. He selected letters from a list by blinking his left eye; the book took around 200,000 blinks to complete over a ten-month period.

Speech synthesis
Patients with some ability to move but not to speak often use synthesisers to create a voice. Since 1985 celebrity physicist Stephen Hawking has employed one, known for its distinctive American accent, as a result of his amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. While relatively able-bodied people can operate a synthesiser by typing a message that is read out, any movement can be harnessed. Hawking uses only his cheek.

Research has developed the technology to provide natural, versatile voices that can be set to different languages, speeds, and accents. The same mechanism can be reversed as a voice-recognition function for able-bodied computer users.

Eye-gaze tracking
An exciting and ultra-modern innovation. The idea is that physically impaired subjects can command a computer by simply looking at what they want to press. Their eyes replace the mouse.

There are variations, but the typical formula is of a computer attached to a camera and two infrared lights, which are directed at the user’s face. The camera sees the lights in the user’s eyes and is able to work out where they are directed, prompting a “click” on that position of the screen.

The technology makes detailed conversations quick and easy for people suffering with some of the most debilitating conditions that do not allow them to move or speak. The focus of research now is to make the system affordable enough to be widely available. Presently they retail for around $15,000.
Doublespeak
Rewriting the Map

By Shrouq Jaradat

What’s in a name? Shakespeare’s Romeo said of his beloved Juliet; “A rose by any other name would smell as sweet,” yet the romantic’s romantic would surely have thought otherwise had he lived in modern Palestine.

Faced with the all-consuming ideology of Zionism, with its need for a single narrative at the expense of all others, language is all-important.

Changing the geography of Palestine is happening by changing the map and changing the names of places. It was not enough for Zionist militants to kill or expel Palestinians from their homes in 1948, nor to destroy the villages and to build settlements on their ashes; they also changed the names of villages, seeking to conquer their very identity. These names hold the history of Palestine, tell the stories of its people, and express their culture. Changing them is yet another “fact on the ground.”

In 1951, Israel established the “Government Names Committee,” which was responsible for furthering this creeping form of Judaisation. The GNC has made steady progress and, in 2004, published an “Atlas of Settlement in Israel,” which was able to all but deny Palestinian presence in the Holy Land.

The atlas names settlements and places in occupied Palestine according to the Hebrew alphabet, with six maps of settled areas, charts, statistics, and a complete topographical map of “Israel.” Each new name carries a detailed explanation of its provenance. In addition to conferring legitimacy on settlements, the atlas gives fresh names to roads, historical sites, and the geographical features of Palestine, such as the rivers and the springs.

The trend was to continue in 2009 with Israeli Transportation Minister Yisrael Katz’s initiative to Hebraise all road signs in Israel. Since then all Arabic and English names have been transliterated from Hebrew, so that Jerusalem becomes “Yerushalayim” in English, and “يروشاليم” in Arabic instead of “القدس”.

Focusing on the archaeologists’ sites in the naming process was critical in making the Zionist story match the “reality.” As was planned years ago, the goal is to make the coming generations feel that they are connected and related to the land. If they feel that they are bound to the land, they will cling to Palestine.

The names that they chose are not ordinary names, and that was the essence of their crime. According to the “Columbus syndrome and the exploration of Palestine,” they chose names that fit into at least one of the following categories: historical names; personal names from Jewish sources; names mentioned in the Torah; names to immortalise Zionist figures, committees, or features that relate to the history of Zionism; names to immortalise “martyrs,” sites, and special missions of Israel’s wars; symbolic names related to the security of each settlement; names of farms, plants, and animals; geographical names; names that have a Hebrew tone, shape, or meaning.

Examples of Arabic names that have been Hebraised include Bisan (now rendered Bet Shean), Yafa (Yafo), and Hittin (Kfar Hittim).

The naming battle is one of the most important battles in the struggle over the Holy Land. Because the names identify Palestinian heritage and culture, without them we would feel like strangers in our own country. This means that real action against name-changing must be taken by people throughout Palestine and the Arab world. Raising awareness in the community about this battle will be the start of a plan of defence and should extend to everyone, not simply the elders or the educated people.

By the time Palestinian children graduate from school they should have learned the Arabic names of holy sites and areas of cultural importance. Memorising the names in the books will not be enough, however, since our books are stolen as readily as our land. Names should be written on Palestinian hearts before anything else, so that we can refer to our land and its treasures by their proper titles.

New maps should be created to remind us of the identity of historic Palestine and to recover the whitewashed and inconvenient past.
122 Member States of the United Nations recognise the State of Palestine.

Nine out of the ten most populous countries recognise Palestine. The combined populations of these 122 countries represent 75 percent of the world’s population.
Internal Twinning Project
Seeds of National Unity

A project in Bethlehem that works to twin schools throughout the occupied Palestinian territory is beginning to pay dividends for the future

By Khulud Darras

Oftentimes we hear about “twinning initiatives” between Palestinian organisations (or even cities) and counterparts from abroad. These projects aim to strengthen intercultural dialogue and relations while also providing a platform to exchange knowledge and best practices. They do so by crossing the boundaries that divide people and emphasising those things that we have in common, regardless of race, colour, or creed.

What we do not hear of very often are attempts to do the same thing here at home, where the differences that exist between local communities are as dramatic as those between countries. A new project in Bethlehem is doing just that, and the results thus far have been a source of inspiration.

Internal twinning is an initiative that pairs Palestinian schools for one year (renewable) with the aim of strengthening links between students, teachers, and school principals through jointly conducted curricular and extra-curricular activities. Together with the Department of Public Relations in the Directorate of Education of Bethlehem, the partner schools develop plans for joint social and cultural activities, reciprocal visits, and a number of other initiatives.

This project grew out of a creative idea that aimed to strengthen the ties between schools to foster a better exchange of information and best practices. A pilot project was launched last year involving the Dar Al-Kalima private schools and Al-Awda public schools. Today, several more schools have been twinned, including Terra Sancta Girls School and Beit Sahour Secondary School for Girls; the Nazareth Primary Girls’ School and Dar Al-Kalima School; and Al Ta’amra Secondary School for Girls and Al-Sawahra Secondary School for Girls.

It is my hope that, after the significant early efforts of school faculty, the public sector, and civil society, this initiative will continue to grow on its own accord. Why? Because while the idea underlying the project is simple, the real-world results are as dramatic as they are vital to our national development goals.

In the early stages of the project, schools began to design joint curricular and extracurricular learning activities, events that revolve around national days of celebration or remembrance. Some examples include our art exhibition during the commemoration of the Nakba event, as well as a number of peer-learning initiatives involving songs, games, plays, art workshops, and competitions.

In addition to the activities themselves, it is important to look at the benefits that they produce for students, faculty, and Palestinian society as a whole. For students, there is an opportunity to visit different learning environments, to learn about similarities and differences they share with their peers, to become engaged in the national story that they will one day author, and to become more self-aware, confident, and respectful. In addition, our initial pilot project has shown how these opportunities have translated into improved academic performance.

For teachers there is an opportunity to learn from and exchange ideas with their peers and access materials and resources, such as laboratories, facilities, and even playgrounds. Palestine as a whole benefits from a heightened sense of national unity and belonging, as well as a greater sense cohesiveness and coexistence among its young people (our future), regardless of the differences in religion, class, or refugee/non-refugee status.

In short, this project enhances learning opportunities, strengthens educational leadership, and builds mutual respect and friendship within the occupied Palestinian territory. I will never forget the look in the eyes of students once they have conquered their shyness and begun to work with each other, seemingly blind to the religious or political differences that divide them and our society as a whole. I am now more confident that the coming generation of Palestinian leaders will be able to accomplish what we adults have failed to achieve. This project has shown me their desire to forge a path toward true Palestinian unity and reconciliation that will one day pave the way to our independence and freedom.

I am very proud of the students from the partner schools who have added a new dimension to the educational process and validated the time and effort we all put into this initiative. My goal is to inspire other Palestinian schools to take part in this unique programme by expanding participation and bridging the gaps between Palestinian schools and youth. This has already created better learning opportunities and I hope that the relationships built between our twinned schools will continue for many years to come, both inside and outside the classroom.

In order to move forward, I recommend setting joint targets among the twinning partners and an enhanced level of public, private, and civil-society cooperation in order to help them overcome any challenges they may face. The result will be a more unified and tolerant Palestinian society based on openness and mutual respect. For the sake of our future and our people, young and old alike, let us strive to continue and to expand this worthy initiative.
Young Filmmakers
Hopes and Aspirations

By Nida’ Rishmawi

As media increasingly moves towards being an essential tool for global communications and as the Internet becomes more easily accessible and technology allows new voices to be heard, it is essential to teach youngsters various methods of communication. Modern communication tools allow young people to celebrate their achievements, talk about their hopes and ambitions, and express the things that really matter to them.

Young people make up a significant portion of the community, and it is vital that their voices be heard. Exposing them to innovative methods of self-expression and giving them the skills and confidence to make films will serve to unlock their hidden potential to make a contribution to society and encourage them to express themselves, expand their horizons, and guide them towards further education and training. In addition, films created by young people and uploaded to the Internet can be used as tools for education, cultural exchange, and creative interaction.

The initiative to teach youngsters to express themselves through using available technology and tools to make films that reflect their lives and dreams was started by the World Film Collective (WFC) team three years ago. Workshops facilitated by WFC teach about the filmmaking process from beginning to end and enable participants to produce content that can be shared with a global audience. With the supervision and direction of local teams, WFC works in various countries, including Palestine, Russia, the United Kingdom, and South Africa.

New technology is dramatically changing the world; poor countries are engaging in creative film activities that, despite the lack of expensive infrastructure, can be done simply using phones and cameras. The film directors of the future aren’t going to come from film schools and advertising agencies, they are going to come from YouTube and from people who are using their mobile phones and their digital cameras in order to do their own creative things. This is a development of unknown potential that has only just begun. It’s up to the youth of the world to take advantage of it.

Since its inception in 2008, WFC has offered six workshops to young people in Palestine. Over the course of the workshops, the young filmmakers produced an impressive library of both fiction and documentary films that accurately capture the unique reality of their lives. Leila’s Story is the saga of a young romance that is derailed by the pressures of financial obligation and parental intervention. Escaping from Schools provides a rare glimpse into the practice of truancy among Palestinian teens. The film finds out why young people want to leave school and what they do behind the school walls. To date, these films have been viewed by thousands of people from around the world via WFC’s online and mobile networks, and have screened at several prestigious international film festivals, including the Palestinian-British Short Film Week 2011.

Youngsters who participated in the workshops produced films that reflect universally common themes that link all young people together, themes such as love, friendship, parents, freedom, and plans for the future. Upon the completion of the workshops participants expressed their great appreciation for the experience that they have gained and the new opportunities that this experience has introduced to them to. Ibrahim, from Beit Jala, confirmed that in addition to learning the proper techniques of capturing videos and editing them into a short film, making new friends with whom he can share his new hobby was as exciting as the learning experience itself.

Maram, a girl from Nelin, expressed that she used to spend her time watching television during the summer holidays before being introduced to filmmaking. She rarely read books. But after the workshop she realised that she enjoys making films, and she is developing her talent through documenting her daily life and that of the people surrounding her. She notes that she might consider filmmaking as a future career for herself.

A group of fourteen-year-olds from Balata Refugee Camp near Nablus enthusiastically explained that, after understanding the process of making a documentary, they were able to distribute the various roles of directing, editing, filming, and interviewing new friendships.

Being proud of its work and the results of the workshops offered in Palestine and around the world, WFC continues to expand its workshop programme, creating an international forum for positive cross-cultural exchange. By sharing their experiences with one another, with their communities, and with audiences around the world, today’s young people can increase understanding and make real progress towards a fair and peaceful global society.

Nida’ Rishmawi is a project coordinator at World Film Collective/Palestine. Nida can be reached at nida@worldfilmcollective.com.

World Film Collective (WFC) is a charity that teaches young people to make films using cell phones and Internet applications. Engaging young people through the technologies they understand helps to ensure the accessibility and sustainability of the programmes. WFC works in Palestine, Brazil, South Africa, Russia, and the United Kingdom, targeting marginalised youth and using a comprehensive education programme to draw out talent and bring fresh voices to the new media stage.

For more information about World Film Collective or to watch our films, visit www.worldfilmcollective.com.

Article photos courtesy of World Film Collective.
Diana Buttu

Since her first visit to Palestine during the first Intifada, when she was only 16, Diana Buttu always felt something was quintessentially wrong in the Palestinian-Israeli equation. Whether they are the people of her native Nazareth or the Palestinians of Gaza, the Arabs of Palestine were constantly being undermined and oppressed by the Israelis in one way or another. It was partly out of this early awareness of the injustice that had victimised the Palestinian people that led Diana to study law.

Armed with a master’s degree in judicial science from the prestigious Stanford University in California, Diana began her work on the international stage when she became a legal adviser and communications director for the Palestine Liberation Organization’s Negotiations Affairs Department in 2000.

Leaving behind her family in Toronto, she chose to make her mark in the quagmire of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations by becoming one of the most eloquent and hard-hitting spokespeople the Palestinians had known to date. Appearing on television screens across the world, on university campuses across the globe, and in international conferences, Diana Buttu became the new face of Palestine.

Her ability to defend the Palestinian position on a legal basis gave her credibility. Her flawless English skills substantiated her professionalism and her charming, often funny demeanour gave the Palestinians a new image – they may be downtrodden but they knew how to be self-deprecating and make a joke.

Along with Michael Tarazi, another lawyer and Ivy League graduate from the Palestinian community in North America, Buttu also took the Palestinian cause into the living rooms of many Israelis. For over a year the Buttu-Tarazi team organised and led discussions with groups of Israelis from all walks of life – explaining to them the benefits of seeking a two-state solution based on the 1967 borders.

While Buttu championed the rights of Palestinians under occupation, her pet cause remained the right of return for the millions of Palestinian refugees who were still barred from returning. Although she was part of the diaspora community, she asserted her right to return by accepting Israeli citizenship and she resides for part of every year in Nazareth and Haifa.

She lectured frequently and wrote tirelessly in publications as varied as the New York Times, the Journal of Palestine Studies and various law journals – emphasising the legal right of return and pressing for moral outrage at the lack of implementation of international law and conventions which state that the right of return is an inalienable right.

In a landmark opinion piece published in the New York Times under the name of the Palestinian president and iconic historical leader Yasser Arafat, Buttu assisted in formulating The Palestinian Vision of Peace, which became a public reference on what the Palestinian leadership saw as a pre-requisite for achieving peace with the Israelis.

After the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, Buttu became a legal and media adviser to President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad. During her tenure she drafted and wrote official position articles and opinion pieces on their behalf in major international publications such as the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post.

Since 2009 she has been a member of the legal advisory board of the Norwegian Refugee Council and a legal consultant to the UNDP/PAPP. She currently holds a fellowship at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in Boston.

Fast Times in Palestine

By Pamela Olson
Mason Hill Press, May 2011, 382 pages, $14.95

A rare piece of literature about Palestine that places its main emphasis on pleasure of reading. Its author, Pamela Olson, arrived in the country at age 22 and fell in love with its people, culture, and struggle.

This hymn to her adopted land is an engaging mix of travel diary, novel, and political journalism. We follow an enraptured Olson as she makes her way in Palestine; through cultural experiences, the development of her career in media, and most of all her relationships with Palestinian people.

In her words: “What makes Palestine (for foreign visitors) is the Palestinian people. Their warmth and strength and sense of humour and their total belonging to this land...Palestinians have this incredible capacity to make strangers feel like they belong. And once you feel you belong, it becomes your struggle, too. Like them, you are forced to struggle not only with the occupation but also with yourself. How can I be most effective without turning into what I hate?”

Her story contains numerous accounts of the everyday hardships inflicted by the Israeli occupation. Told in stark yet human terms, Olson makes them plainly accessible to the casual, uninform ed foreign reader who remains to be persuaded.

The author has professed that her main intention was to raise awareness within this demographic. “My hope is that it will galvanise ordinary people to act, or at least continue to learn more,” she told us.

A powerful method to this end is rooting her narrative in human experience. She draws on a number of personal friendships that illustrate the charm and variety of Palestinian culture that so many abroad are unfamiliar with. Tales of gathering the olive harvest, New Year’s Eve in Jericho, and an ever-so-sweet romance succeed in removing the politics from the population, through engaging and well-nuanced characterisation that any reader can engage with.

As a personal story it carries shades of beat literature, with its laidback sense of morality and its tone of narration. The author is the central character but is positioned as the eager listener, the blank canvas; she is coloured in by the events and people.

Yet her affable and quintessentially liberal voice is the most receptive of prisms through which an American reader can see the injustice lost in media representations. There is an element of entrapment in the way Olson’s innocent, honeyed tones casually shatter accepted ideas about the conflict. Her observations are as radical and uncompromising as any of Israel’s harshest critics.

No wonder, then, that her book has been so well received in the United States. The worlds of media, academia, and activism have combined to shower Fast Times with praise, while Jewish and Palestinian organisations have joined the chorus.

Essential reading for the casually interested, valuable insight for devotees, and a damn good story for everyone else.
Which Soldiers Do You Like?

By Maria C. Khoury, Ed. D.

Ahmad Abu Baker is all you would imagine a performing artist to be – ranging from handsome, sleek, cool, and captivating to most thoughtful and kind on-stage and off-stage. I thought it was rap that I was listening to, but he says it’s more than rap. His new album this year features trance and hip-hop. I loved him so much following his performance in Taybeh last year that I knew that the Old City Soldiers Hip-Hop Team would be included in Taybeh Oktoberfest 2011 as part of our commitment to give venue to well-known artists and introduce new musicians to the community – even though Ahmad demands extra space in the programme to include their specific subtitle “Entertainment Life Style.”

The Old City Soldiers Team started in 2003, and they are the first to admit that without their fans they wouldn’t be where they are today. In Ahmad’s words: “…we thank everyone who supported us and was there for us … we love the music; we have faith in ourselves and in our people.” He truly believes that the group can change something – keep it original but include a new taste. “People love change and change is our name. Old City Soldiers will give you what you want to hear. We just want to present our music to people.” These words of his convinced me to extend an Oktoberfest invitation, not to mention the fact that Ahmad has worked on his unique style with four of the best DJs in the world. He is very positive and explains that the hard times that they had previously faced have turned into great times. He has a very optimistic point of view not just towards music but towards life in general. This optimism brought him to perform in Ramallah last July and as far away as Sweden in August. Since 2006 he has performed in many places in Palestine and has travelled two to three times a year for live performances abroad.

Ahmad is 24 years old and lives in the Old City of Jerusalem. He is a half-breed, the product of an Egyptian mother and an African father. His musical talent finds its roots in his father, who was a jazz artist. His family includes five brothers and one sister. Recently he announced his engagement.

The Old City Soldiers Hip Hop Team also includes Raed Bassam, Mohammed Aglone, and DJ Mr. Fantastic. The best way to describe O-C Soldiers music is that although it includes rap, it’s not just any rap. Everything that they do is taken from the streets and from people’s lifestyles; from school, work, governmental laws, and almost everything and anything that happens in their daily lives.

Ahmad’s motto is pretty much what I try to advise my own children to follow “Don’t worry, be happy, that’s our life example.” In 2006, O-C Soldiers released the single called “Ethabset al Nafes”(Imprisoned Soul). In 2007, it was “Mish Mouhtaref” (Not a Professional). In 2010 their single was called “Kilamet al Haq” (Word of Truth), and the biggest single yet was just released in 2011 with DJ Marwan Asaad and is entitled “Hareekah” (Fire), which Ahmad considers his number one track. He continues to look for the right support for this new album.

You can listen to O-C Soldiers on YouTube and Facebook; also visit www.reverbnation.com/ocsoldiers and www.myspace.com/ocsoldiersteam.

Since the first Oktoberfest in Palestine (2005), I have personally tried very hard to create a festival schedule that would include traditional music, dance, modern music, and children’s programmes during the day with bands at night. There’s usually a different group on stage every hour on the hour to celebrate cultural heritage. The most interesting characteristic about Oktoberfest is trying to share our local traditions with others while at the same time having great fun in welcoming bands on stage from Brazil, Germany, Greece, and England, as well as dancers from Japan and Sri Lanka. Performing both nights this year we even have an American Palestinian comedian, Amer Zahr, from Washington, D.C. I pray for peace so that the joke will not be on me. Furthermore, some Oktoberfest favourites such as Cultureshoc, DAM, Toot Ard, Mina Band, and Al-Rowwad Culture and Theater Society will be in Taybeh for this year’s celebration, not to mention the new band Eurasica. Designer Aiman Salaymeh will also exhibit his handcrafted jewellery in the old city of Taybeh.

The Taybeh Beer campaign promoting “Taste the Revolution” finds that O-C Soldiers reflect the concept of doing great things in their field to be successful in showing a different face of Palestine. Not all revolutions are fought with guns and lethal weapons. Taste the Revolution in Taybeh means making great beer and great music in celebrating life and wanting to be normal people with normal activities that reflect our basic human rights. Ahmad Abu Baker sees the celebration of Taybeh Oktoberfest as a big chance for him and his team. Come join us in the highest mountain region of Palestine and support our local products – Taste the Revolution!

Dr. Maria C. Khoury is organising the Seventh Annual Taybeh Oktoberfest in Taybeh, Palestine, on 1 and 2 October 2011. She has served as a community volunteer since 2000 and is the author of Christina Goes to the Holy Land. volunteer since 2000 and is the author of Christina Goes to the Holy Land.
"Exposing life under occupation" – this subtitle summarises the scope of work of The Palestine Monitor website which was established shortly after the eruption of the second Intifada. The site is available in English only and is based on eyewitness stories in line with social media, especially after the new version was launched a few months ago.

Palestine Monitor uses a two-column layout centred under a header that spans the horizontal real estate.

The header consists of two dark stripes squeezing the site title and a typical image from the field. The top stripe has a link to the old site (The Old PalMon) next to a welcome note that links to the homepage of the current site (both seem to be in the wrong place).

The lower stripe has the main menu and links to social media. PalMon is a drop-down menu with four sections: About explains the history, identity, philosophy, and objectives. Intern has information for candidates seeking internship work with Palestine Monitor, including available areas of work, qualifications, and how to apply. Potential content contributors can find submission criteria and how to send articles under the Submit submenu, and Archive directs visitors to the existing articles on the old site.

The next main menu item is Factsheets, which contains brief articles on major relevant issues such as settlements, detainees, torture, checkpoints, refugees, water, and poverty. Maps and statistics are used where applicable.

Next is Features – an archive of featured contributed articles with a summary and link to full articles in reverse chronological order.

Multimedia is also divided into two submenus: Videos is a collection of video stories collected from the field, and Photo Stories tell their own accounts with still images, although there are some videos there as well. The last menu item, News, contains a selection of news articles.

Next, there are three social artefacts aligned to the top right corner of the content area: RSS feeds, link to PalMon on Twitter, and link to Facebook.

The first column of the content area features a graphic rotation of the major articles followed by a recent selection from the main sections of Palestine Monitor: features, news, and photo and video stories.

The second column starts with a selected video from YouTube with four tabs that paint underneath: latest, featured, comments, and tags.

The next section seems to be related to Facebook: create an account, some articles, and a social plugin.

Next is a search box followed by a flash-powered tag cloud and a list of most-read articles. The copyright tagline seems to work with Internet Explorer but not with Firefox.

Palestine Monitor fills an obvious gap and covers part of the failure of official media. The site could benefit from adding Arabic and a few foreign languages (French and Hebrew, for example) plus content update and interactivity.

Abed A. Khooli is a SharePoint and Web development specialist. He can be reached at akhooli@arabic2000.com.

Review date: 18 August 2011
Exhibition of the Month

Framed-Unframed
The Changing Representation of Women in Palestinian Visual Arts

Hosted and produced by The Ethnographic and Art Museum in partnership with the Institute of Women’s Studies at Birzeit University, Framed-Unframed is the first critical exploration of the transformation in the representations of women in Palestinian visual arts within a changing political context. The time frame is from the 1970s to today.

Palestinian artists, whether living under occupation or in the diaspora – artists such as Ismail Shammout, Nabil Anani, and Sliman Mansour – took the lead in the 1960s and 1970s in using the Palestinian female form in their classically rendered paintings. Until today, and despite the changing times, the same iconic depictions of Palestine as the peasant woman in an embroidered traditional costume is used over and over in posters and other mediums, for collective political mobilisation for Palestinian resistance.

The post-1967 iconic or foundational works, mostly by male artists, are represented in this exhibition by Sliman Mansour, Nabil Anani, Kamel Moghanni, Naji al-Ali, and Burhan Karkutli (a Syrian artist who devoted his art to Palestine). These artists have expressed through the female figure the complex meanings of nation, rootedness, resistance, fecundity, and Palestine itself. Salma (1978) by Sliman Mansour, is solidly “framed” within such political notions; she represents a monumental Palestinian woman wearing a peasant dress and holding the fruit of the land in her labourer hands.

While these foundation themes of representation of the female figure continued into the early 1980s, they arguably exhausted themselves by the beginning of the Oslo period.

The earlier trends were also juxtaposed in the 1980s by the emergence of a new dynamic in Palestinian art and more contemporary representations of the female body, continuing with vigour today. Across various geographies and “unframed” by conventional media, Palestinian women artists employed the female body in a surge of challenging works as a reflection of the self, as a critique of feminist discourse, and as a strong conceptual comment on social, political, religious, or environmental issues. The highly charged political works of Mona Hatoum in the 1980s heralded the creative engagement of artists with contemporary modes of expression and the use of technology, video art, photography, installation art, and performance, among others, to convey provocative thoughts and reflective observations. Challenged by these contemporary and versatile expressive modes, many Palestinian women artists started to use the female body, often their own, to express strong, individualised, and critically engaging views, thus taking Palestinian visual arts into universal realms of critical debate and conceptual engagement.

Framed-Unframed, which is curated by Vera Tamari and Inass Yassin, will open at the Ethnographic and Art Museum at Birzeit University on 19 September 2011, and will run until 29 October. It offers a selection of works dealing with the female figure by prominent Palestinian artists including those listed above as well as Laila Shawa, Mona Hatoum, Raeda Saadeh, Mary Tuma, Jumana Abboud, Amer Shomali, Vera Tamari, Inass Yassin, Samira Badran, Hani Zurob, and Rula Halawani, in addition to a film by Juliana Smith.

For more information, please contact bzumuseum@birzeit.edu.
Note: Please make sure to contact the venue to check for the latest updates.

**East Jerusalem (02)**

**Centre for Jerusalem Studies, tel: 628 7517**

**PLAYS**

Monday 5
18:30 Tempest Theatre, Spafford Centre

**TOURS**

Saturday 10
10:00 Jerusalem Libraries, Centre for Jerusalem Studies

Saturday 17
10:00 Ein Karem, Meeting point: Ambassador Hotel, Centre for Jerusalem Studies

Saturday 24
10:00 The Citadel Museum, Centre for Jerusalem Studies

**Bethlehem, Beit Sahour, and Beit Jala (02)**

**Dar Annadwa, tel: 276 4576; Jacir Palace, tel: 276 6777**

**ART**

Friday 9
16:00 Opening of an exhibition “The Land of Messages,” by the Palestinian photographer Tariq Salsa, Dar Annadwa

**FILMS**

Friday 16
19:00 Valley of Hope and Despair, Documentary film monitors pollution problem of irrigation to farmers in the Palestinian village of Wadi Fukin and work with the Israelis in projects to preserve the water supply and protect the local environment, threatened by the expansion of Israeli settlements non-legal separation and the wall, Dar Annadwa

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

Wednesday 7
16:00 Tempest Theatre, Al Rowwad

Thursday 8
19:00 The Trap, Within the project of protecting the children victims of armed conflicts, Dar Annadwa

**PLAYS**

Wednesday 14
18:00 Exhibition Valérie Jouve and Djamel Tatah, Sakakini Cultural Center

**FILMS**

Tuesday 20
18:00 Changing of address, in French with English subtitles, French German Cultural Center

**TOURS**

Sunday 18
9:00 A tour to the city of Nablus, PACE Office

**Nablus (09)**

**PLAYS**

Tuesday 27
19:00 jongle.doc, Al Kasaba Theater

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

Monday 26
15:00 Circus Show “Girouettes,” Al Amaari and Jalazone camps

**Jenin, Qalqilia and Tulkarem (09)**

**TOURS**

Sunday 4
9:00 A tour to the city of Qalqilia, PACE Office

Saturday 17
18:00 Loz Akhdar, youth literature forum organised by Jeel Publishing/Filistin Ashabab in cooperation with Khalil Al Sakakini Cultural Center, Khalil Al Sakakini Cultural Center

**Khalil Sakakini Cultural Centre, tel: 298 7374; French German Cultural Centre, tel: 298 1922; AlKasaba Theatre, tel: 296 5292**

**Wednesday 28**
18:00 The monthly French-Palestinian Café littéraire, French German Cultural Center

**PLAYS**

Tuesday 27
19:00 jongle.doc, Al Kasaba Theater

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

Monday 26
15:00 Circus Show “Girouettes,” Al Amaari and Jalazone camps
Baladna Cultural Center
Telfax: 295 8435

BirZeit Ethnographic and Art Museum
Tel. 298 2976, www.virtualgallery.birzeit.edu

British Council
Tel: 290 3293-6, Fax: 296 3297
information@ps.britishcouncil.org
www.britishcouncil.org/ps

Carmel Cultural Foundation
Tel: 298 7375, Fax: 298 7374

Chemonics International Inc. (Palestinian Justice Enhancement Program and Investment Climate Improvement Project)
Tel: 298 1274

El-Funoun Dance Troupe
Tel: 240 2853, Fax: 240 2851
info@el-funoun.org, www.el-funoun.org

Sareyyet Ramallah - First Ramallah Group (FRG)
Tel: 295 2690 - 295 2706, Fax: 298 0583
sareyyet@sareyyet.ps, www.sareyyet.ps

Franco-German Cultural Centre Ramallah
Tel: 298 1922 / 7727, Fax: 298 1923
info@ccf-goethe-ramallah.org

Greek Cultural Centre - “Macedonia”
Telefax: 298 1736/ 298 0546, makdonia@palnet.com

In’ash Al-Usra Society- Center for Heritage & Folklore Studies
Tel: 240 1123 / 240 2876, Telefax: 240 1544
usra@palnet.com, www.inash.org

Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center
Tel: 298 7374, Fax: 296 6820
sakakini@sakakini.org, www.sakakini.org

Manar Cultural Center
Tel: 295 7937, Fax: 298 7598

Mazra’a Qibliyeh Heritage and Tourism Centre
Telefax: 281 5825, mazraaheritage@yahoo.com
www.geocities.com/mazraaheritage/

Palestinian Association for Contemporary Art (PACA)
Tel: 298 7601, fax: 295 1849
paca@pal-paca.org, www.pal-paca.org

Palestinian Association for Cultural Exchange (PACE)
Tel: 240 7611, Telfax: 240 7610
pace@p-ol.com, www.pace.ps

Palestine Writing Workshop
www.palestineworkshop.org

Popular Art Center
Tel: 240 3981, Fax: 240 2851
info@popularartcentre.org, www.popularartcentre.org

Ramallah Center for Human Rights Studies (RCHRS)
Tel: 241 3002

Ramallah Cultural Palace
Tel: 298 4704 / 295 2105, Fax: 295 2107
rcevents@ramallah-city.org, www.ramallahculturalpalace.org

RIWAQ: Centre for Architectural Conservation
Tel: 240 6887, Fax: 240 6986
riwaq@palnet.com, www.riwaq.org

Sandouq Elajab Theatre
Tel: 296 5638, 295 3206, sandouqelajab@yahoo.com

Shashat
Tel: 297 3336, Fax: 297 3338
info@shashat.org, www.shashat.org

Sharek Youth Forum
Tel: 296 7741, Fax: 296 7742
info@sharek.ps, www.sharek.ps

Tamer Institute for Community Education
Tel: 298 6121/ 2, Fax: 298 8160
tamer@palnet.com, www.tamerinst.org

The Danish House in Palestine (DHIP)
TeleFax: 296 8457, info@dhip.ps, www.dhip.ps

The Edward Said National Conservatory of Music
Tel: 295 9070, Fax: 295 9071
info@ncm.birzeit.edu, www.birzeit.edu/music

The Palestinian Circus School
Tel: 0545 - 671 911, 0599 - 926 107
www.palcircus.ps, info@palcircus.ps

The Palestinian Network of Art Centres
Tel: 298 0036, 296 4348/9, Fax: 296 0326
iman_aoun@yahoo.com

The Spanish Cultural Center
Tel: 295 0893, cchp@panoramacenter.org

Young Artist Forum
Telefax: 296 7654, yaf@palnet.com

Gaza Strip (08):

Al-Qattan Centre for the Child
Tel: 283 9929, Fax: 283 9949
reem@qcc.gattanfoundation.org
www.qattanfoundation.org/qcc

Arts & Crafts Village
Telefax: 284 6405
artvlg@palnet.com, www.gazavillage.org

Ashtar for Culture & Arts
Telefax: 283 3555, atlas9@palnet.com

Fawanees Theatre Group
Telefax: 288 4403

Culture & Light Centre
Telefax: 286 5896, ifarah@palnet.com

French Cultural Centre
Tel: 286 7883, Fax: 282 8811
ccfgaza@consulfrance-jerusalem.org

Gaza Theatre
Tel: 282 4860, Fax: 282 4870

Global Production and Distribution
Telefax: 288 4399, art.global@yahoo.com

Dialogpunkt Deutsch Gaza (Goethe-Insitut)
Tel: 282 0203, Fax: 282 1602

Holst Cultural Centre
Tel: 281 0476, Fax: 280 8896, mcrpg@palnet.com

Theatre Day Productions
Telefax: 283 6766, tidpgaza@palnet.com

Windows from Gaza For Contemporary Art
Mob: 0599 781 227 - 0599 415 045, info@artwfg.ps
Mount of Olives Hotel (61 rooms; bf; mr; res)
Tel: 628 4877, Fax: 628 4427
info@mtolives.com, www.mtolives.com

Mount Scopus Hotel (65 rooms; bf; mr; res)
Tel: 582 8891, Fax: 582 8825, mtsacus@netvision.net.il

National Hotel (99 rooms; bf; cr; res; cf)
Tel: 627 8880, Fax: 627 7007
www.nationalhotel-jerusalem.com

New Imperial Hotel (45 rooms)
Tel: 627 2000, Fax: 627 1530

New Metropole Hotel (25 rooms; mr; res)
Tel: 628 3846, Fax: 627 7485

New Regent Hotel (24 rooms; bf; mr; res)
Tel: 628 4540, Fax: 626 4023, atictour@palnet.com

New Swedish Hostel
Tel: 627 9111, Fax: 627 1995
info@notredamecenter.org, www.notredamecenter.org

Palestine Workshop
Mob: 0597 651 408, http://palestineworkshop.org

Petra Hostel and Hotel
Tel: 628 6618

Pilgrims Inn Hotel (16 rooms; bf; mr; res)
Tel: 627 2416, info@goldenwalls.com

Ritz Hotel Jerusalem (104 rooms, bf, mr)
Tel: 628 9900, Fax: 628 9910
reservations@jerusalemitz.com
www.jerusalemitz.com

Rivoli Hotel
Tel: 628 4871, Fax: 627 4879

Savoy Hotel (17 rooms)
Tel: 628 3366, Fax: 628 8040

Seven Arches Hotel (197 rooms; bf; mr; res)
Tel: 628 7777, Fax: 627 1319, svnarch@trendline.co.il

St. Andrew’s Scottish Guesthouse
“The Scottie” (19 rooms + Self Catering Apartment)
Tel: 673 2401, Fax: 673 1711
stander@netvision.net.il, www.scotsguesthouse.com

St. George’s Pilgrim Guest House
(25 rooms; bf; res)
Tel: 628 3302, Fax: 628 2253, sghostel@bezeqint.net

Strand Hotel (88 rooms; mr; res)
Tel: 628 0279, Fax: 628 4826

Victoria Hotel (50 rooms; bf; res)
Tel: 627 4466, Fax: 627 4171

Bethlehem (02)
Alexander Hotel (42 rooms; bf; mr; res)
Tel: 277 0780, Fax: 277 0782
Al-Salam Hotel  (26 rooms; 6f; mr; cf; res) 
Tel: 276 4063/4, Fax: 277 0551, samhotel@p-ol.com

Beit Al-Baraka Youth Hostel  (19 rooms) 
Tel: 222 9288, Fax: 222 9288

Beit Ibrahim Guesthouse 
Tel: 274 2613, Fax: 274 4250 reception@luthchurch.com
www.abrahams-herberge.com

Bethlehem Hotel  (209 rooms; bf; cf; mr; res) 
Tel: 277 0702, Fax: 277 0706, bhotel@p-ol.com

Bethlehem Inn (36 rooms; bf; mr; res) 
Tel: 274 2424, Fax: 274 2423

Bethlehem Star Hotel  (72 rooms; bf; cf; mr; res) 
Tel: 274 3249 - 277 0285, Fax: 274 1494
htstar@palnet.com

Casanova Hospice  (60 rooms; mr; res) 
Tel: 274 3981, Fax: 274 3540

Casanova Palace Hotel  (25 rooms; bf; res) 
Tel: 274 2798, Fax: 274 1562

El-Biet Guest House  (beit sahour) (15 rooms) 
TeleFax: 277 5857, info@elbeit.org, www.elbeit.org

Everest Hotel  (19 rooms; bf; mr; res) 
Tel: 274 2604, Fax: 274 1278

Grand Hotel  (107 rooms; bf; mr; res) 
Tel: 274 1602 - 274 1440, Fax: 274 1604
info@grandhotelelbethlehem.com

Golden Park Resort & Hotel  (54 rooms; res, bar, pool) 
Tel: 277 4414

House of Hope Guesthouse 
Tel: 274 2325, Fax: 274 0928
Guesthouse@houseofhopenmd.org

House of Peace Hostel 
Tel: 276 4739, http://www.houseofpeace.hostel.com/

Inter-Continental Hotel  (Jaciir Palace)  
(250 rooms; su; cf; mr; res) 
Tel: 276 6777, Fax: 276 6770

Lutheran Guesthouse “Abu Gubran” 
Tel: 277 0047, Guestshouse@diyar.ps, www.diyar.ps

Murad Tourist Resort 
Tel: 2759880, Fax:2759881, www.murad.ps

Nativity BELLs Hotel  (65 rooms; bf; cf; mr; res) 
Tel: 274 8880, Fax: 274 8870
nativitobbells@palnet.com, www.nativitybellshotel.ps

Nativity Hotel  (89 rooms; bf; cf; mr; res) 
Tel: 277 0650, Fax: 274 4083
nativit@nativit-hotl.com, www.nativity-hotel.com

Paradise Hotel  (166 rooms; cf;bf;mr;res;su;pf) 
Tel: 274 4542/3 - 274 4544, paradise@p-ol.com

St. Antonio Hotel  (36 rooms; mr; cf;res;pf) 
Tel: 276 6221, Fax: 276 6220

Santa Maria Hotel  (83 rooms; mr; res) 
Tel: 276 7374/5/6, Fax: 276 7377, smaria@p-ol.com

Shepherd Hotel 
Tel: 276 0656, Fax: 274 4888
info@shepherdhotel.com, www.shepherdhotel.com

Shepherds’ House Hotel 
( Facilities: Restaurant and Bar, WiFi) 
Tel: 275 9690, Fax: 275 9693

St. Nicholas Hotel  (25 rooms; res; mr) 
Tel: 274 3040/1/2, Fax: 274 3043

Saint Vincent Guest House  (36 rooms) 
Tel: 276 0967/8, Fax: 276 0970
svincent@p-ol.com, www.saintvincentguesthouse.net

Talita Kumi Guest House  (22 rooms; res; mr; cf) 
Tel: 274 1247, Fax: 274 1847

Zaituna Tourist Village 
Tel: 275 0655

Jericho (02)

Al-Zaytouna Guest House  (7 rooms; bf; res; mr) 
Telefax: 274 2016 Deir Hijleh Monastery 
Tel: 994 3038, 0505 348 892

Hisham Palace Hotel 
Tel: 232 2414, Fax: 232 3109

Inter-Continental Jericho 
(181 rooms; su; bf; cf; mr; res; ter; tb) 
Tel: 231 1200, Fax: 231 1222

Jericho Resort Village 
(60 rooms; 46 studios; bf; cf; mr; res) 
Tel: 232 1255, Fax: 232 2189
reservation@jerichoresorts.com, www.jerichoresorts.com

Jerusalem Hotel 
Tel: 225 4240 / 222 9385, Fax: 222 6760

Telepherique & Sultan Tourist Center 
(55 rooms) 
Tel: 232 1590, Fax: 232 1598
info@jericho-cablecar.com

Hebron (02)

Hebron Hotel 
Tel: 225 4240 / 222 9385, Fax: 222 6760
hebron_hotel@hotmail.com

Nablus (09)

Al-Qaser Hotel  (48 rooms; 7 regular suites, 1 royal suite; bf; cf; mr; res) 
Tel: 2341 444, Fax: 2341 944
alqaser@alqaserhotel.com, www.alqaserhotel.com

Al-Yasmeen Hotel & Souq 
(30 rooms; cf; mr; res) 
Tel: 233 3555 Fax: 233 3666
yasmeen@palnet.com, www.alyasmeen.com

Asia Hotel 
(28 rooms, res) 
Telefax: 238 6220

Chrystal Motel  (12 rooms) 
Telefax: 233 3281

International Friends Guesthouse (Hostel) 
(mr; res; ter; cf; pf) 
Tel: 238 1064
ifriends.house@gmail.com, www.guesthouse.ps

Ramallah and Al-Bireh (02)

Al-A’in Hotel  (24 rooms and suites; mr; cf) 
Tel: 240 5925 - 240 4353 Fax: 240 7921
alainhotel@hotmail.com

Aladdin Hotel 
Tel: 240 7689, 240 7921, Fax: 240 7687
aladdinhotel1@gmail.com
Al-Bireh Tourist Hotel (50 rooms; cf; res)
Tel: 240 0803

Al-Hajal Hotel (22 rooms; bf)
Tel: 298 7858

Al Hambra Palace (Hotel Suites and Resort)
Tel: 296 6226 - 295 0031, Fax: 295 0032
www.alhambra-palace-hotel.com
alhambrapalace1@gmail.com

Reef Pension (Jifna village) (8 rooms; res)
Tel: 295 0881, www.reefhousepension.ps

Al-Wihdah Hotel
Tel: 298 0412

Ankars Suites and Hotel (30 suites)
Tel: 295 2602, Fax: 295 2603
info@ankarssuiteshotel.ps

Beauty Inn
Tel: 296 6477, Fax: 296 6479
beauty.inn@hotmail.com, www.beautyinn.ps

Best Eastern Hotel (91 rooms; cf; res)
Tel: 296 0450, Fax: 295 8452, besteastern@iol.com

Caesar Hotel (46 rooms & su, 2 mr, cr, res, cf)
Tel: 297 9400, Fax: 297 9401
info@jrscazar.com, www.caesar-hotel.ps

City Inn Palace Hotel (47 rooms; bf; cf)
Tel: 240 8080, Fax: 240 8091
cityinnpalace@gmail.com, www.cityinnpalace.com

Grand Park Hotel & Resorts
(84 rooms, 12 grand suites; bf; mr; res; sp; pf)
Tel: 296 6194, Fax: 296 6950, info@grandpark.com

Gemzo Suites
(90 executive suites; cs; mr; pf; gm; res)
Tel: 240 9729, Fax: 240 9532
gemzo@palnet.com, www.gemzosuites.net

Manarah Hotel
Tel: 295 2122, Telefax: 295 3274
manarah@hotmail.com, www.manarahhotel.com.ps

Merryland Hotel (25 rooms)
Tel: 298 7176, Telefax: 298 7074

Mövenpick Hotel Ramallah (171 rooms and Su; bf; mr; cr; res; ter; cf; gm; pf; sp)
Tel: 298 5888, Fax: 298 533
hotel.ramallah@moevenpick.com
hotel.ramallah.reservation@moevenpick.com
www.moevenpick-ramallah.com

Rocky Hotel (22 rooms; cf; res; ter)
Tel: 296 4470, Telefax: 296 1871

Ramallah Hotel (22 rooms; bf; mr; res)
Tel: 295 3544, Fax: 295 5029

Retno Hotel (33 rooms & su; res; mr; gm; sp)
Tel: 295 0022, Retno@retnochotel.com
www.retnohotel.com

Royal Court Suite Hotel (34 suites; res; mr; ter; cf; pf; i)
Tel: 296 4040, Fax: 296 4047

Star Mountain Guesthouse (10 rooms; wifi; pf)
Tel: 296 2705, Telefax: 296 2715
starmountaincenter@gmail.com

Gaza Strip (08)

Adam Hotel (76 rooms; bf; cf; mr; res)
Tel: 282 3521/19

Al-Deira (11 suites; cf; mr; res; ter)
Tel: 283 8100/200/300, Fax: 283 8400
ADEIRA@P-I-S.com

Al Mashtal Hotel
Tel: 283 2500, Fax: 283 2510
mashtal@arcmedhotels.com

Almat’haf Hotel
Tel: 285 6444, Fax: 285 6440
info@almathaf.ps, www.almathaf.ps

Al-Quds International Hotel
(44 rooms; 2 suites; bf; mr; res)
Tel: 282 5181 - 282 6223 - 286 3481 - 282 2269

Al-Waha Hotel
Tel: 287 0880, Fax: 287 0889

Beach Hotel (25 rooms; bf; mr; res)
Tel: 282 5492 - 284 8433

Cliff Hotel (24 rooms; bf; mr; res)
Tel: 282 3450, Fax: 282 0742

Commodore Gaza Hotel (120 rooms; su; bf)
Tel: 283 4400, Fax: 282 2623
hotel@commodorgaza.com

Gaza International Hotel
(30 rooms; cf; res; sp)
Tel: 283 0001/2/3/4, Fax: 283 0005

Grand Palace Hotel
(20 rooms; cr; mr; cf; res; Internet)
Tel: 284 9498/6468, Fax: 284 9497
grand_palace@p-i-s.com

Hotel Sea Breeze
Tel: 283 0277 - 284 2654, Fax: 282 4231

Marna House (17 rooms; bf; mr; res)
Tel: 282 2624, Fax: 282 3322

Palestine Hotel (54 rooms; cf; mr; res)
Tel: 282 3355, Fax: 286 0056

Jenin (04)

Cinema Jenin Guesthouse (7 rooms; 2 su)
Tel: 250 2455
guesthouse@cinemajenin.org, www.cinemajenin.org

Haddad Hotel & Resort
Tel: 241 7010/12, Fax: 241 7013
haddadbooking@gmail.com
www.haddadtourismvillage.com

Key: su = suites, bf = business facilities; mr = meeting rooms, cr = conference facilities; res = restaurant,
ter = terrace bar, tb = turkish bath, cf = coffee shop; gm = gym; pf = parking facilities, sp = swimming pool
East Jerusalem (02)

Al-Diwan (Ambassador Hotel)
Middle Eastern, French, and Italian Cuisine
Tel: 541 2213, Fax: 626 8202

Alhambra Palace Jerusalem
Restaurant & coffee shop
Conferences workshops and social activates, Theatre and Cinema
Tel: 626 3535, Fax: 6253737
info@alhambrapalacej.com

Al-Shuleh Grill
Shawarma and Barbecues
Tel: 627 3768

Amigo Emil
Middle Eastern, American, Indian, and Italian Cuisine
Tel: 628 8090, Fax: 626 1457

Antonio’s (Ambassador Hotel)
Middle Eastern, French, and Italian Cuisine
Tel: 541 2213

Arabesque, Poolside, and Patio Restaurants (American Colony Hotel)
Western and Middle Eastern Menu
Tel: 627 9777, Fax: 627 9779

Armenian Tavern
Armenian and Middle Eastern Food
Tel: 627 3854

Askidinya
Italian and French Cuisine
Tel: 532 4590

Az-Zahra
Oriental food and Pizza
Tel: 628 2447

Borderline Restaurant Café
Italian and Oriental Menu
Tel: 532 8342

Café Europe
Drinks and Fast Food
Tel: 628 4313

Cardo Restaurant
Continental Cuisine
Tel: 627 0827

Chinese Restaurant
Chinese Cuisine
Tel: 628 3465, Fax: 626 3471

Coffee Bean Café
Sandwiches and Sushi
Tel: 627 0920

Educational Bookshop
Books and Coffee
Books and Coffee
Tel: 627 5888

El Dorada Coffee Shop and Internet Café
Chocolates, Coffee, and Internet
Tel: 626 0993

Flavours Grill
International Cuisine with Mediterranean Flavour
Tel: 627 4626

Four Seasons Restaurants and Coffee Shop
Barbecues and Shawarma
Tel: 628 6061, Fax: 628 6097

Garden’s Restaurant
Tel: 581 6463

Goodies
Fast Food
Tel: 585 3223

Kan Zaman (Jerusalem Hotel)
Mediterranean Cuisine
Tel: 627 1356

Lotus and Olive Garden (Jerusalem Meridian Hotel)
Middle Eastern and Continental Cuisine
Tel: 628 5212

Nafoura
Middle Eastern Menu
Tel: 626 0034

Nakashian Gallery Café
Tel: 627 8077

La Rotisserie (Notre Dame Hotel)
Gourmet Restaurant, European and Mediterranean Menu
Tel: 627 9114, Fax: 627 1995

Dina Café
Coffee and Pastry
Tel: 628 3344

Panoramic Golden City
Barbecues
Tel: 628 4433, Fax: 627 5224

Pasha’s
Oriental Food
Tel: 582 5162, 532 8342

Patisserie Suisse
Fast Food and Breakfast
Tel: 628 4377

Petra Restaurant
Oriental Cuisine
Tel: 532 2626, Fax: 532 2636

Pizza House
Pizza and Oriental Pastry
Tel: 627 7799

RIO Grill and Subs
Italian and French Cuisine
Tel: 585 5480

Rossini’s Restaurant Bar
French and Italian Cuisine
Tel: 628 2964

Philadelphia Restaurant
Mediterranean Menu
Tel: 532 2626, Fax: 532 2836

Shalizar Restaurant
Middle Eastern, Mexican, and Italian Cuisine
Tel: 582 9061

The Gate Café
Fresh Juices, Coffee, and Tea
Tel: 627 4282

The Scots Bistro
Coffee and Pastry
Tel: 673 2401, Fax: 673 1711

The Safari (Jerusalem Hotel)
Oriental and European Menu
Tel: 628 2968, 628 4418

Versavee Bistro (Bar and Café)
Oriental and Western Food
Tel: 627 6160

Bethlehem (02)

1890 Restaurant (Beit-Jala)
Tel: 277 8779

Abu Eli Restaurant
Middle Eastern and Barbecues
Tel: 274 1897

Abu Shanab Restaurant
Barbecues
Tel: 274 2985

Al-Areeeshah Palace
Middle Eastern and Barbecues
Tel: 276 6777, Fax: 276 6154

Al-Hakura Restaurant
Middle Eastern and Fast Food
Tel: 276 6777, Fax: 276 6154

Al-Hakura Restaurant
Middle Eastern and Fast Food
Tel: 276 6777, Fax: 276 6154

Al-Khaymeh (Jacir Palace – InterContinental Bethlehem)
Middle Eastern and Barbecues
Tel: 276 6777, Fax: 276 6154

Akkawi Café
Western Menu
Tel: 274 8447

Al Makan Bar
Jacir Palace – InterContinental Bethlehem
Snack Bar
Tel: 276 6777, Fax: 276 6154

Balloons
Coffee Shop and Pizza
Tel: 275 0221, Fax: 277 7115

Beit Sahour Citadel
Mediterranean Cuisine
Tel: 277 7771

Bonjour Restaurant and Café
Coffee Shop and Continental Cuisine
Tel: 277 3335

Dar el-Balad
Continental Cuisine
Tel: 274 9073

Debawn (Jacir Palace – InterContinental Bethlehem)
Barbecues
Tel: 276 6777, Fax: 276 6154

Educational Bookshop
Books and Coffee
Tel: 627 0920

El Makan Bar
Jacir Palace – InterContinental Bethlehem
Snack Bar
Tel: 276 6777, Fax: 276 6154

Golden Roof
Continental Cuisine
Tel: 274 3224

The Gate Café
Fresh Juices, Coffee, and Tea
Tel: 627 4282
Il’iliyeh Restaurant
Continental Cuisine
Tel: 277 0047

La Terrasse
Middle Eastern and Continental Cuisine
Tel: 275 3678

Layal Lounge
Snack Bar
Tel: 275 0655

Mariachi (Grand Hotel)
Seafood and Mexican Cuisine
Tel: 274 1440, 274 1602/3
Fax: 274 1604

Palmeras Gastropub
Continental Cuisine
Telefax: 275 6622

Peace Restaurant & Bar
Pasta, Seafood, Steaks & Middle Eastern
Tel: 0595 187 622

Riwaq Courtyard
(Jacir Palace – InterContinental Bethlehem)
Coffee Shop and Sandwiches
Tel: 276 6777, Fax: 276 6754

Roots Lounge
(Beit Sahour)
Tel: 0598 333 665

The Tent Restaurant
(Shepherds’ Valley Village)
Barbecues
Tel: 277 3875, Fax: 277 3876

Sima café
Tel: 275 2058

St. George Restaurant
Oriental Cuisine and Barbecues
Tel: 274 3790, Fax: 274 1933

Tachi Chinese
Chinese Cuisine
Tel: 274 4382

Taboo – Restaurant and Bar
Oriental and Continental Cuisine
Tel: 274 0711, Fax: 274 1962

The Square Restaurant and Coffee Shop
Mediterranean Cuisine
Tel: 274 9844

Zaitounah (Jacir Palace – InterContinental Bethlehem)
Continental Cuisine
Tel: 276 6777, Fax: 276 6154

Jericho (02)

Al-Nafoura Restaurant
(Jericho Resort Village)
Arabic Cuisine and Barbecues
Tel: 232 1255, Fax: 232 2189

Al-Rawda
Barbecues
Telefax: 232 2555

Green Valley Park
Oriental Cuisine and Barbecues
Tel: 232 2349

Jabal Quruntul
Continental Cuisine (Open Buffet)
Tel: 232 2614, Fax: 232 2659

Seven Trees
Continental Cuisine
Tel: 232 2781

Salim Afandi
Barbecues and Oriental Cuisine
Tel: 237 1332

Qasr al-Jabi restaurant
Tel: 238 4180

Zeit Ou Zaatier (Al-Yasmeen Hotel)
Continental Cuisine and Pastries
Tel: 238 3164, Fax: 233 3666

Ramallah and Al-Bireh (02)

911 Café
Mexican, Italian, Oriental
Tel: 296 5911

Andareen Pub
Mob: 0599 258 435

Al Falaha
Maabah and Taboun
Tel: 290 5124

Akasha
Oriental
Tel: 295 9333

Allegro Italian Restaurant
Mövenpick Hotel Ramallah
Italian fine cuisine
Tel: 298 5888

Al-Riwaq All-day-dining restaurant
Mövenpick Hotel Ramallah
International, Swiss and Oriental cuisine
Tel: 298 5888

Atlantic Sea Food
Sea Food and Oriental
Tel: 296 9696

Awjan
Seafood, Breakfast, and Pizza,
Coffee Shop, Lebanese and Italian Cuisine
Tel: 297 1776

Andre’s Restaurant
French and Italian Cuisine
Tel: 296 6477/8

Angelo’s
Western Menu and Pizza
Tel: 295 6408, 298 1455

Azure Restaurant and Coffee Shop
Continental Cuisine
Telefax: 295 7850

Baladna Ice Cream
Ice Cream and Soft Drinks
Telefax: 295 6721

Bamboo Chinese Restaurant
Tel: 297 6657

Birth Café
Barbecues and Fast Food
Tel: 297 6614

Caesar’s (Grand Park Hotel)
Continental Cuisine
Tel: 298 6194

Café De La Paix
French Cuisine
Tel: 298 0880

Castillo Restaurant & Café
Oriental
Tel: 297 3844/55

Chinese House Restaurant
Chinese Cuisine
Tel: 296 4081

Crispy
Fried Chicken and Hamburgers
Tel: 295 6651

Darna
Continental Cuisine
Tel: 295 0590/1

Diwan Art Coffee Shop
Continental Cuisine
Tel: 296 6483

Do Re Mi Café (Royal Court)
Continental Cuisine
Tel: 296 4040

Elite Coffee House
Italian and Arabic Cuisine
Tel: 296 5169

European Coffee Shop
Coffee and Sweets
Tel: 295 1703, 296 6505

Express Pizza
American Pizza
Tel: 296 6566

Fawanees
Pastries and Fast Food
Tel: 296 7046

Gelato
Italian Cuisine - Cake and Ice Cream
Tel: 298 5376

Hoash Il’iliyeh Restaurant and Gallery
Traditional Palestinian Cuisine (Birzeit)
Mob: 0599 869 914

Jasmine Café
Tel: 295 0121

K5M - Caterers
Cake and Sweets
Tel: 295 6813

Khubz Bar
Oriental Cuisine
Tel: 296 8299

Karaz Restaurant
French and Italian dishes
Tel: 297 3451

La Vie Café
Cafe, Bistro & Bar
Tel: 296 4115

La Vista Café and Restaurant
Oriental and Western Cuisine
Tel: 296 3271
Cann Espresso
Arabic and Italian Cuisine
Tel: 297 2125

Mac Simon
Pizza and Fast Food
Tel: 297 2088

Mr. Donuts Café
Donuts and Coffee Shop
Tel: 240 7196

Mr. Fish
Seafood
Tel: 295 9555

Mr. Pizza
Pizza and Fast Food
Tel: 240 3016, 240 8182

Muntaza Restaurant and Garden
Barbecues and Sandwiches
Tel: 295 6835

Na3Na3 Café
Italian and Oriental Cuisine
Tel: 296 4606

Newz Bar
Lounge and “Le Gourmet” pastries’ corner
Mövenpick Hotel Ramallah
Tel: 298 5888

Osama’s Pizza
Pizza and Fast Food
Tel: 295 3270

Orjuwan Lounge
Palestinian-Italian Fusion
Tel: 297 6870

Pesto Café and Restaurant
Italian Cuisine
Tel: 297 0705, 297 0706

Pizza Inn
Pizza and Fast Food
Tel: 298 1181/2/3

Philadelphia Restaurant
Middle Eastern Menu
Tel: 295 1999

Plaza Jdoudna Restaurant and Park
Middle Eastern Menu
Tel: 296 5020, 296 4693

Pronto Resto-Café
Italian Cuisine
Tel: 298 7312

Roma Café
Italian Light Food
Tel: 298 4228

Rukab’s Ice Cream
Ice Cream and Soft Drinks
Tel: 295 3467

Saba Sandwiches
Falafel and Sandwiches
Tel: 296 0116

Samer
Middle Eastern Food
Tel: 240 5338 - 240 3088

Sangria’s
French, Italian, and Mexican Cuisine
Tel: 295 6808

Shukeireh Restaurant
Middle Eastern and Western Cuisine

Sinatra Cafe and Cheese Cake
Italian and American Cuisine
Tel: 297 1028

Sky Bar (Ankars Suites and Hotel)
Continental Cuisine
Tel: 295 2602

Sparkles Bar
Cigar bar
Mövenpick Hotel Ramallah
Tel: 298 5888

Stones
Continental Cuisine
Tel: 295 6038

Tabash (Jifna Village)
Barbecues
Tel: 281 0932

Tal El-Qamar Roof
Middle Eastern and Western Menu
Tel: 298 7905/6

TCHE TCHE
Tel: 296 4201

The Vine Restaurant
Continental Cuisine
Tel: 295 7727

THE Q GARDEN
Roof-top garden - International Cuisine
Tel: 295 7727

Tomasso’s
Pizza and Fast Food
Tel: 240 9991/2

Tropicana
Mexican Cuisine, Oriental Menu, and Zarb
Tel: 297 5661

UpTown (Ankars Suites and Hotel)
Continental Cuisine
Tel: 295 2602

Values Restaurant
International and Sea Food
Tel: 295 6997

Vatche’s Garden Restaurant
European Style
Tel: 295 5966, 296 5988

Zam’n Premium Coffee
Coffee Shop Style
Tel: 296 9630

Zari Taki
Sandwiches
Tel: 296 3643

Zam’n Premium Coffee
Masyoun
Coffee Shop Style
Tel: 298 1033

Zarour Bar BQ
Barbecues and Oriental Cuisine
Tel: 295 6767, 296 4480
Fax: 296 4357

Za’atar
Pastries and Snacks
Tel: 295 4455

Ziryab
Barbecues, Italian, and Oriental Cuisine
Tel: 295 9093

Gaza Strip (08):

Al-Andalus
Middle Eastern and Western Cuisine
Tel: 282 1272, 283 3769

Al-Deira
Continental Cuisine
Tel: 283 8100/200/300

Al-Marsa
Seafood and Desserts
Tel: 286 3599

Almathaf Restaurant
Tel: 285 6444, Fax: 285 8440
info@almathaf.ps, www.almathaf.ps

Al-Molouke
Shawerma and Barbecues
Tel: 286 8397

Al-Salam
Seafood
Tel: 282 2705, Telefax: 283 3188

Al-Sammak
Seafood
Tel: 286 4385

Al-Sammak Ghornata
Seafood
Tel: 284 0107

Avenue Restaurant and Café Shop
Middle Eastern and Western Menu
Tel: 286 2100 / 286 3100

La Mirage
Continental Cuisine and Seafood
Tel: 286 5128

Roots - The Club
Oriental Cuisine
Tel: 286 6666, 282 3999, 282 3777

Saleh Atya Al Shawa Restaurant - Al-Jala
Barbecues
Tel: 282 5062

Hebron (02):

Al Quds Restaurant
Tel: 229 7773
Fax: 229 7774
Persons (10 years and over) who have access to the Internet ...................................................18.4%
Availability of computers at home ...............................................................................................32.9%
Information & Communication Technology (2006)
No. of theaters (in operation) ..............................................................................................................9
Beds per 1000 population (Palestinian Built-up Land (2006) ................................................................................................6.6%
Nurses per 1000 population (No. of hospitals (Palestinian Territory) ..................................................................................76
Doctors per 1000 population (Health) ..............................................................................................................22.4%
No. of hospitals (Palestinian Territory (PT)) ..................................................................................76
Number of fixed phone subscribers (thousand) ........................................................................1,800
Students per class (schools) (2010/2011) ..................................................................................38.6%
No. of school students (2010/2011) ......................................................................................1,128,348
No. of schools (2010/2011) .........................................................................................................2,674
Fertility rate (2007) ............................................................................................................................4.6%
Average Household Size (1/12/2007) ...............................................................................................5.8%
Palestinian Territory ..........................................................................................................................5.5%
West Bank .......................................................................................................................................6.5%
Gaza Strip ...........................................................................................................................................6.5%
Land Use and Agriculture
Palestinian Territory (PT) Area (Km²) ..........................................................................................6,020
Area of PT by Type of Use (different reference periods)
• Agricultural Land (2008) .............................................................................................................25.1%
• Forest and Wooded Land (2007) ..................................................................................................1.6%
• Palestinian Built-up Land (2006) ..................................................................................................6.6%
Area of built-up land in Israeli Settlements of the total area of West Bank (2006) ..................3.3%
Cultivated Area (Km²) - 2007/2008 ....................................................................................................1,854.0
Education (2007/2008)
I1lIiteracy rate for persons 15 years and over (2010) ...........................................................................5.1%
I1lIiteracy rate for persons 15-29 years (2010) ..................................................................................0.8%
No. of schools (2010/2011) .............................................................................................................2,674
No. of school teachers (2010/2011) ...............................................................................................51,010
No. of school students (2010/2011) ............................................................................................1,128,348
Students per class (schools) (2010/2011) ....................................................................................38.6%
Drop-out rate (schools 2006/2007) .................................................................................................1.2%
Repetition rate (schools 2006/2007) .................................................................................................3.0%
ICT (2009)
Number of fixed phone subscribers .........................................................................................362,416
Number of mobile phone subscribers (thousand) ......................................................................1,800
Number of ADSL internet subscribers ......................................................................................92,482
Health
No. of hospitals (2010) ..................................................................................................................76
Doctors per 1000 population (2009) ...........................................................................................1.3
Nurses per 1000 population (2009) .............................................................................................1.6
Beds per 1000 population (2010) ...................................................................................................1.3
Culture (2006)
No. of mosques (in operation) .......................................................................................................2,228
No. of churches .............................................................................................................................160
No. of newspapers (in operation) ..................................................................................................13
No. of theaters (in operation) ..........................................................................................................9
No. of museums (in operation) .........................................................................................................8
No. of cultural centers (in operation) ............................................................................................161
Information & Communication Technology (2006)
Availability of TV sets ..............................................................................................................95.3%
Availability of satellite dish for households with TV sets ...........................................................80.4%
Availability of computers at home ...........................................................................................32.9%
Availability of Internet at home ..................................................................................................19.9%
Persons (10 years and over) who have access to the Internet ...................................................18.4%
Persons (10 years and over) who use computers ......................................................................50.9%
Percentage of households that have a mobile phone .................................................................81.0%
Percentage of households that have a telephone .....................................................................50.8%
Percentage of households that view Palestine TV .....................................................................29.9%
Living Standards and Humanitarian Aid (2009)
Percentage of Households below poverty line ......................................................................67.0%
Number of individuals below poverty line .............................................................................2,303,414
Percentage of households that lost more than half of their income during Al-Aqsa Intifada . .51.6%
Percentage of households that indicated their need for assistance (2005) .........................131.1
Average monthly per capita expenditure in the Palestinian Territory ...........................................

Labour Force (2nd quarter of 2011)
Labour force participation rate .......................................................................................................68.6%
Unemployment rate in Palestinian Territory (PT) .....................................................................16.4%
Unemployment rate in West Bank ............................................................................................23.3%
Unemployment rate in Gaza Strip ............................................................................................43.6%
Average net daily wage for employees working in PT (US$) .....................................................22.7%

Percentage of working children (10-17 years), (4th quarter of 2010) ......................................... 7.4 %.
Percentage of graduates of higher education and vocational training of persons aged 15 years and over (End 2005) ......................................................................................14.5%
Percentage of graduates of high education and vocational training who participated in labour force (End 2005) ........................................................................................................83.4%

Unemployment rate of graduates of high education and vocational training (End 2005) 25.4%

Economics
GDP (2010-million US$)-at constant prices (RWB and GS)** ...............................................5,728.0
GDP Per Capita (2010- US$)-at constant prices (RWB and GS)** ...........................................1,502.4
CPI and percent change in Palestinian Territory
in July 2011 Compare with June 2011 (base year 2004=100) 132.32 ....................................0.38%
GDP per capita for the 4th Quarter 2010 in US $ at constant price (WB & GS) ................383.2
Quaterly GDP at constant price in millions of US $ (RWB & GS) for the 4th Quarter 2010........1,477.1

Number of Establishments in Operation in Private Sector and Non Governmental Organization Sector by Economic Activity (2010)***
• Agriculture (farming of cattle and other animals) ....................................................................6,976
• Mining and Quarrying ............................................................................................................281
• Manufacturing ......................................................................................................................14,792
• Electricity and Water supply ..................................................................................................444
• Construction .........................................................................................................................479
• Wholesale and Retail and Repairs ........................................................................................59,110
• Transportation, storage and communication .......................................................................1,056
• Hotels and Restaurants .........................................................................................................4,628
• Financial Intermediation .......................................................................................................848
• Real Estate, Rental and Business Activities ...........................................................................4,151
• Education ...............................................................................................................................2,342
• Health and Social work ........................................................................................................4,206
• Other Community, Social and Personal Services ..................................................................8,933

Imports of Goods (2009 million US$) .............................................................................................3,600.8
Exports of Goods (2009 million US$) ............................................................................................518.4

Hotels (2011)
Room occupancy rate ..................................................................................................................24.8%
Bed occupancy rate ..................................................................................................................33.2%

Environment
Available qualities of water (2008 - mcm) ..................................................................................308.7

Connected households to wastewater network (2009) ................................................................52.1%

Housing Conditions (2009)
Average number of rooms in housing units ...............................................................................3.6
Average number of persons per room (housing density)............................................................1.6

(RWB and GS)=Remaining West Bank and Gaza Strip
* RWB and GS at constant prices: 1997 is the base year: revised version
** Primary Results
*** Revised Figures
As Palestine continues its struggle for independence, it has already begun to acquire sovereign cyberspace recognition. A difficult three-year international debate resulted in the “Occupied Palestinian Territory” being officially assigned the two-letter suffix, “.ps,” in line with other sovereign nations (ICANN), the international corporation that manages the country code Top-Level Domain (ccTLD) system on the Internet, on 22 March 2000, to assign Palestine its unique country identifier, “.ps,” in line with other sovereign nations such as .fr for France and .ca for Canada.

**Arts and Culture:** Al Rowwad Theatre Centre [www.alrowwad.virtualactivism.net], A.M. Qattan Foundation [www.qattanfoundation.org], Ashgar Theater [www.ashgar-theatre.org], Al Kasaba Theatre and Cinematheque [www.alkasaba.org], Al-Ma’mal Foundation for Contemporary Art [www.almaomalfoundation.org], Al Mathaf [www.almathaf.ps], ArtSchool Palestine [www.artschoolpalestine.com], Baha Boukhari [www.baha-cartoon.net], Educational Bookshop [www.educationalbookshop.com], Family Net [www.palestine-family.net], Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center (Ramallah) [www.sakakini.org], Paltel Virtual Gallery (Birzeit University) [www.virtualgallery.birzeit.edu], Rim Banna [www.rimbanna.com], RIWAQ: Centre for Architectural Conservation [www.rwac.org], Sumbula (fair trade/crafts) [www.sumbula.org], The Popular Arts Centre [www.popularartscentre.org], Sumud [www.sumud.net], Palestinian Pottery [www.palestinianpottery.com], The International Center of Bethlehem (Dar Annadwa) [www.annadwa.org], The Musical Intifada [www.docjazz.com], El-funoun [www.el-funoun.org], Sabreen Association for Artistic Development [www.sabreen.org], The Virtual Gallery [www.virtualgallery.birzeit.edu],


**Health and Mental Health:** Augusta Victoria Hospital [www.avh.org], Gaza Community Mental Health Programme [www.gcmhp.net], Ministry of Health [www.moh.gov.ps], Palestinian Counseling Center [www.pcc-jer.org], Red Crescent Society [www.palestinerescs.org], Spafford’s Children’s Clinic [www.spaffordjerusalem.org], UNFPA [www.unfpa.org], Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees [www.upmrc.org], Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation [www.basr.org], Palestine Medical Council [www.pmc.ps]

**Human Rights Organisations:** Al Haq [www.alhaq.org], Defence for Children International Palestine Section [www.dci-pal.org], Human Rights and Good Governance Secretariat in the oPt [www.humanrights.ps], LAW - The Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment [www.lawsociety.org], The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights [www.pchr.org], BADIL [www.badil.org], Women’s Affairs Technical Committee (WATC) [www.pal-watc.org], World’s Affairs Technical Committee (WATC) [www.watc.org],


**Tourism:** Ministry of Tourism [www.travelpalestine.ps], Arab Hotel Association [www.palestinehotels.com], Holy land Incoming Tour Operators Association [www.holylandoperators.com], Diyafa Hospitality Management Consultants Group [www.diyafa.ps], Visitpalestine [www.visitpalestine.ps],


**Universities:** Birzeit University [www.birzeit.edu], An-Najah University [www.najah.edu], Al-Quds University [www.alquds.edu], Al-Azhar University [Gaza] [www.alazar-gaza.edu], Arab American University [www.aau.edu], Bethlehem University [www.bethlehem.edu], Hebron University [www.hebron.edu], The Islamic University [Gaza] [www.iugaza.edu], Palestine Polytechnic [www.ppi.edu]
Have you ever noticed how we Palestinians just love to walk on the streets with no regard for or fear of traffic? Just come and watch us on Manara Square in Ramallah – anytime – and you will be sure to see scores of people walking quite leisurely between cars which, in turn, have no choice but to give the right of passage to pedestrians. Hey, we value time, which we’d rather not lose by walking around the square on pavements! Another traditional behaviour or attitude would be throwing litter from our cars or as we stroll along the pavements (or streets) or even from our homes. Well, we like to keep our cars and homes clean, and we like to travel light! So there!

If you’re fortunate enough to stop at a traffic light with a Palestinian car right behind you, chances are that the second the light turns orange, you’ll hear a honk! If you look back into your mirror to question the timing (or nerve of the culprit), the driver behind you will be looking anywhere but your direction and will probably be whistling too! In extreme cases, you’ll hear a honk when the light is still red! When Israeli checkpoints start causing road blockages, rest assured we make the situation tenfold worse by breaking every single traffic law, least of which is driving in the wrong direction. Hey, road courtesy is for normal societies and we’re occupied!

On a more serious note, though, we’ve been told that “we never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity!” We have cases of serious embezzlement; we have resorted to extreme violence for the sake of our cause; we have fought amongst ourselves, imprisoned and even killed each other. We have two governments, each with a set of ministries, but no country! Shall I go on? Shall I hang out all our dirty laundry? I have a feeling, though, that you already know it all. We’ve always been an open book, and thank God for that.

I’m glad that most people on this planet know that there is another side to Palestinians that is kind, humane, God-fearing, and, as one of our best diplomats – Afif Safieh – has said, “Palestinians have actually been unreasonably reasonable!” No wonder that so far 122 Member States of the United Nations recognise the State of Palestine; no wonder that nine of the ten most populous countries recognise Palestine, and still no wonder that the combined populations of these 122 countries represent 75 percent of the world’s population. Whether you’re for or against Palestine’s bid to seek membership in the United Nations; whether the United States will or will not veto and thwart Palestinian efforts to become part of the world community; come 23 September, all Palestinians will know that they’re not alone in this struggle for freedom, and they will realise the extent of international support for their cause. It has taken the international community way too long to wake up and take a stand; we’re fast approaching the date to witness such a stand, one that will also send a clear signal to Israel and its supporters that they’re on the wrong side of history. Long live Palestine!

Sani P. Meo
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