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06



Unity Despite Separation?

The Impact of Territorial Separation on National Identity: Comparing Political and National Perceptions and Attitudes of Palestinian University Students in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank

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"A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle"
(Renan, 1995: 56)

DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation aims to study the potential impact of territorial separation on national identity, particularly in the absence of a nation state and under circumstances of limited opportunities of direct social interaction. For this purpose, an extract of the lived reality of Palestinian national identity should be presented. By utilizing primary data conducted through standardized questionnaires, the national consciousness of Palestinian university students in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza could be assessed. Thus, a comparison of the results could allow for insights into the current level of Palestinian national consciousness. Findings show that in the case of Palestine a high level of national consciousness exists, despite the territorial separation and the subsequent hindrance of social interaction. Regarding numerous defined elements of national identity, such as political behavioral patterns, attitudes towards the national present and future and national self-perceptions, students in Gaza, the West Bank and Israel answered similarly. However, at the same time specific discrepancies could be assessed, for instance relating to the role of religion in a future Palestinian state. On the one hand, those discrepancies lead to the assumption, that territorial separation and subsequent differing social, political, economic and administrative environments do cause the creation of sub-identities. However, on the other hand those identities are not mutually exclusive and hence do not seem to have a weakening affect on collective Palestinian sentiments. Finally, a shared sense of suffering, combined with a common desire for a better future, as well as a strong sense of collective memory, were identified as factors, which fuel the maintenance and even a strengthening of national identity.

1. Introduction

Just this month, at the sixty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, once again the Middle East was one of the central themes on the agenda. One year after his bid for full membership, Mahmud Abbas, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and President of the Palestinian Authority (PA), in his speech announced that he would seek for a status upgrade to a 'non-member state'. Up to now, Palestine is classified as an 'observer entity'.

But what kind of entity is Palestine and whom does it include? The late Baruch Kimmerling, in one of his last books, *Politicide*, anxiously warned that the current Israeli policies would lead to the 'total erasure of the Palestinian people's existence as a legitimate social, political and economic entity' (2003: 3-4). Amira Hass, a famous Israeli journalist, expressed a similar fear more explicitly. In an article published by the Israeli daily newspaper *Haaretz* in 2012, Hass states that Israel is trying everything to prevent a Palestinian unity, by separating Gaza from the West Bank (Hass 2012).

Indeed, concepts such as 'Palestinian entity' or 'Palestinian unity', as expressed by Kimmerling and Hass, seem far-fetched when considering the current geographical reality of the Palestinian people. Carved up into numerous separated and sometimes even isolated territories, Palestinians are exposed to differing political, social, economical and administrative conditions. For instance, almost 1,8 million Palestinians, of whom a large majority are refugees, live in the besieged Gaza strip under Hamas rule, while about 1,6 million Palestinians live in the West Bank under the rule of the Palestinian Authority. Moreover, there are almost 2 Million Palestinian citizens of Israel, the descendants of the fewer than 200,000 who remained in 1948 and who today constitute more than 20 percent of the Israeli population. Naturally, this separation comes along with a divided educational system, with Palestinians in Israel studying Hebrew literature and Jewish history, while their fellow-Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza learn Arabic literature and Palestinian history. In addition, while the former carry Israeli passports and are entitled to vote in Israeli elections, the latter carry a 'bewildering array of travel documents or none at all, plus a new Palestinian passport' whose value is more than

debatable (Khalidi 1997: 207). Over and above, the territorial separation of the Palestinians is of unique nature, since it is not caused by personal preferences. Instead, in many cases Palestinians are not able to physically meet, since a siege, a wall, checkpoints or legal regulations deprive them of doing so. Thus, what impact does this state of separation and its above-mentioned implications have for Palestinian self-conceptions and for a unified Palestinian national identity?

While the PLO from the early 70s onward played the role of a 'surrogate state' by serving as the 'symbol and agency that cemented the unity of the Palestinians, whether they were 'inside' or 'outside' of historic Palestine', the PA has superseded the PLO for all practical purposes, and the Palestinian society, as a consequence of the Oslo process, has been 'recentered' (Litvak 2009: 19; Khalidi 1997: 203; Hovsepian 1997). Moreover, particularly since 2006 Palestinian politics is dominated by the conflict between Hamas and Fatah, a conflict, which seems to have partly separated Palestinian society on the lines of their locality. In addition, the Palestinian citizens of Israel as well as the Palestinian refugees outside the occupied Palestinian Territories are completely excluded from any processes of democratic decision-making and can hence not exert any direct influence on the political future of Palestine (Litvak 2009: 19).

Thus, considering that the Palestinian people are stateless and deprived of a coherent territory, how will they relate to their fellow-Palestinians 'on the other side of the border'? Can we still talk about a 'Palestinian *habitus*', as Bourdieu would state? Do Palestinians still collectively share a national identity, which would imply 'a complex of similar conceptions and perceptual schemata, of similar emotional dispositions and attitudes, and of similar behavioral conventions'? (Wodak et al. 2011: 4) Or have the separation and the hindrance of cross-border-flows and social interaction rather led to the construction of strong (regional) subidentities, which weaken or even replace sentiments of a Palestinian collective?

1.1 The research question and its goals

This dissertation aims to examine Palestinian national identity beyond a mere theoretical approach, by illustrating its *lived reality*. The assessment of the impact of territorial separation on collective (national) identity will be carried out using a single case study design. For this purpose, features of Palestinian national identity will be identified, by comparing the national consciousness of Palestinian university students in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank by means of a standardized survey. In this context, questions include subjects of inter alia: common political conceptions, ideas of a distinctive national territory and notions of the ‘Palestinian others’. Those fields will serve as a proxy for examining the abstract concept ‘national identity’. Thus, the existence of a shared national identity beyond a coherent territory and a shared social, political, economical and administrative space and under conditions of limited social interaction can be examined. However, this dissertation does not claim to provide definite answers. Instead, it should encourage further empirical research on Palestinian lived reality and open up the academic discussion in the field of national identity studies, which keeps on holding great potential, as long as the world and with it its political and social formations keep on changing.

1.2. Relevance and Relations to Theoretical and Policy-Making fields

‘To even the most casual observer of world affairs’, as Bruner points out, ‘national identity remains a powerful political force’ as witnessed at the close of the twentieth century in the former territories of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union’ (Bruner 2002: xiii). Especially within Political Sciences, identity studies in the context of studies on nationalism have continuously gained relevance for scholars of fields ranging from primordialism-perennialism to radical modernism. According to Bechhofer et al., in particular the study of mechanisms whereby individuals come to construct national identity’ has begun to increasingly attract empirical interest, first and foremost in regard to ‘groups for whom national identity is problematic’ (Bechhofer et al. 1999: 517). Certainly, the concepts and ideas taken from the Palestinian case could serve as a tool to

approach further cases of national identity in the absence of a nation state and a coherent territory. Even though the Palestinian issue is often perceived as too unique to be compared, in fact, as Khalidi points out, there are striking similarities to other national peoples in the modern era, who have reached a high level of national consciousness, but have long or are still failing to achieve national independence. Regarding the Middle East, particularly the case of the Kurds or the Armenians should be considered (Khalidi 1997: 11). The findings of this thesis therefore could help to better grasp the nature of those and other national peoples, by rethinking traditional concepts of national identity, which are closely related to ideas of a national state or a clearly demarcated shared territory, and focusing on alternative factors, which might fuel a specific national consciousness. In the end, history has illustrated how nationalist movements can dramatically transform the political structure of many areas, which is why it becomes increasingly crucial for scholars and policy-makers to examine particularly ‘problematic’ identities. Though Stuart Hall’s argument that identity makes social interaction unified and predictable is clearly challengeable, identity does, at least to a certain extent, ‘suture the subject into relevant social structures’, and can hence help to understand specific collective social processes (Bechhofer et al. 1999: 516). Thus, assuming that national identity will continue to play a central role in state affairs, a better understanding of the process of national identity construction is crucial for policy makers, who wish to respond wisely to the rapidly changing political realities of the global community (Bruner 2003: xiii).

Moreover, the significance of examining Palestinian national identity in the context of studying one of the world’s major conflicts is obvious. Certainly, policy-makers need to be aware of the Palestinian (as well as the Israeli) consciousness, when attempting to construct new frameworks or develop possible strategies with the goal of solving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

This thesis is not only of interest for scholars of the Middle East, but also for scholars of nationalism, identity formation and transnational networks– themes, which are important well beyond the Palestinian community and interesting also outside the academic sphere.

1.3 Structure of Dissertation

The dissertation, which consists of five chapters, will proceed as follows: **Chapter 2** presents the relevant literature: In subchapter **2.1**, a conceptual and theoretical overview of national identity will be given. Subchapter **2.2** then takes a closer look at the linkage between national identity and territoriality. Finally, subchapter **2.3** illustrates gaps in the literature and subchapter **2.4** presents the theoretical framework, which drives this thesis. **Chapter 3** addresses the research methodology, starting with the research strategy and design in subchapter **3.1**, then explaining the case selection (**3.1.1**) and the data collection method (**3.1.2**). Subchapter **3.2** illustrates the analysis on the basis of the empirical data, starting with an illustration of the dimension of Palestinian separation (**3.2.1**). Then, the identified cross-boundary identity markers will be presented (**3.2.2**) and the discrepancies on specific national notions and attitudes between the examined territories explained (**3.2.3**). In subchapter **3.3**, the findings of the data analysis will be briefly summarized and related to the hypothesis. Finally, **Chapter 4** first draws a conclusion and then addresses the dissertation's limitations, including indications for further research (**4.1**).

2. Literature Review

The ideas around nationalism, a concept, which incorporates concepts of national identity or national consciousness, as some scholars call it, have been objected to intense scrutiny, debate and theories. Already soon after World War II, particularly US and British historians, anthropologists, sociologists and political scientists began paying increasing attention to this issue. More recently, since the 1990s, the particular social scientific interest in nationalism and its correlated themes has been reflected in the multiplication of specialized journals and readers, e.g. *Nations and Nationalism* (Cambridge), *National Identities* (Basingstoke) or *Becoming National: A Reader* (Oxford). However, as Jaffrolet points out, even though this quantity of academic examination might lead to the assumption that ‘this subject has given birth to a well-structured sub-discipline in the Anglo-Saxon political science’, the theory of nationalism has not made much progress. (Jaffrolet 2003: 3)

Why is that so? In fact, nationalism seems to be a problematic concept, as it, according to Calhoun ‘is too diverse to allow a single theory to explain it all’, since ‘much of the contents and specific orientation of various nationalisms is determined by historically distinct cultural traditions, the creative actions of leaders, and contingent situations within the international world order’ (Calhoun 1997: 123). Also John Hall emphasizes that ‘no single, universal theory of nationalism is possible. As the historical record is diverse, so too must be our concepts’ (Hall 1993: 1).

However, even though particularly in a multicultural society defining national identity ‘is an exceedingly difficult enterprise’, as Parekh warns, ‘it is far from being pointless’ (Parekh 1999: 73). Encouraged by this statement, the following presentation of the concept national identity will be focused on those approaches, which seem most appropriate in the light of the present research design, without laying claim to an all-embracing discussion of what has been written on national identity.

2.1 Understanding National Identity

“The assumption that only nationalists create nations is questionable”

(Smith 2008: 15-16)

The world of the 21st century is a world of inter-connected business and finance, a world of multicultural societies, determined by communication and information technologies, which allow individuals to look, communicate and act far beyond the territorial boundaries of one's nation state. Those notions of interconnectivity, which are often based on the prospects of the European Union (Habermas, 2001) and on the impact of migrations (Appadurai, 1993), have led scholars to question the relevance of the nation state and to sometimes even claim that we live in a post-national, globalized world, which is dominated by new forms of cosmopolitanism (Jaffrolet 2003: 45).

While this reasoning does certainly have its value, on the other hand a re-emerge of nationalism as ‘both a political phenomenon and an area of study’ can be witnessed, as an extensive number of armed ethnic conflicts, resurgent nationalisms across and far beyond Europe, the ‘war on terror’ and, most lately, the economic crisis in Europe illustrate, that even during the era of political, social, cultural and economic globalization, national group boundaries are far from being irrelevant (Bechhofer et al. 1999: 515).

Individuals locate themselves within numerous exclusive, often overlapping and sometimes even opposing collectives. Bearing the characteristics of several collective groups or systems of belonging has been described with the term ‘multiple identity’ (Wodak et al 2009: 16). Tracing the term ‘identity’ back to its linguistic roots, it can be described as a notion of ‘sameness’, which is a relational term and hence always relies on the delineation of various ‘others’, depending on context and ideological ‘preference’— as Stuart Hall puts it: ‘Only when there is an other can you know who you are’ (Karner 2011: 34; Hall 1989: 16). National identity is one of those collective identities, and, as Christian Karner points out, ‘amongst the most consequential types of collective for the overwhelming majority of human beings’ (Karner 2011: 2).

In general, theories of nationalism can be assigned to two broad categories: Modernism and primordialism-perennialism. Modernism presents nationalism as a product of

modernization based on allegedly malleable identities, insisting on the relatively recent origins of the phenomenon of nationalism as an ideology of legitimation for (modern) nation-states. Accordingly, nationalism is viewed as a product of social engineering, a 'contingent, artificial, and ideological invention' (Litvak 2009: 5).

In direct opposition to the modernist approach to studies of nationalism stands the primordialist-perennialist approach, understanding nationalism as a 'continuation of pre-existing ethnic characteristics and perennial units of social and political organization' and hence as a natural feeling of belonging to an alleged inevitable entity (Karner 2011: 23). First theoretically outlined by Edward Shils and finally formalized by Clifford Geertz, the primordialist-perennialist approach to nationalism points out 'the irreducible character of cultural and physical givens', such as bonds of blood, race, language, region, religion and custom (Geertz 1963: 109). However, it has been strongly criticized by scholars, claiming this perspective's simplicity. One challenged issue refers to the so-called cultural and physical givens, which, according to the critiques, themselves are products of social construction (Jaffrolet 2003: 43).

Two of the most famous scholars on nationalism are Benedict Anderson and Anthony Smith. With his concept of 'imagined communities', Anderson, a representative of the modernist approach, traces nationalism back to the development of the so-called 'print-capitalism'. Accordingly, through the incorporation of national values the press led individuals to create a self-defined sense of belonging to an 'imagined' community, by arousing the same thoughts at the same time among members of a national culture whose borders are marked out on the basis of language (Anderson 1991: 36). More recently and building on Anderson's concept, Maryam Aouragh suggested, particularly in regard to Palestinian identity, to examine national identity in alternative ways, i.e. different from the birth of modern capitalist nation states, in order to reformulate 'imagined communities' from a colonial context, for instance by looking at examples such as Haiti, where the state-building process was based on anti-slavery and anti-colonial motives (Aouragh 2011: 12-13).

A bridge between the opposing modernist and primordialist-perennialist approaches is presented by Smith. Though accepting the modernity of nationalism as an ideological movement, Smith departs from the modernist camp by maintaining that there is an

essential ethnic core, such as ‘pre-existing traditions, symbols, myths and practices’ to almost all modern nations (Litvak 2009: 10, Karner 2011: 23). At the same time, Smith stresses the flexible and constructed character of nations by describing national sentiments as ‘(...) the continuous reproduction and reinterpretation of the pattern of values, symbols, memories, myths, and traditions that compose the distinctive heritage of nations, and the identification of individuals with that pattern and heritage (...)’ (Smith 2008: 19).

This continuous reproduction and reinterpretation of national identity, which is essential for the modernist approach to national identity, describes the rhetorical dimension of national identity and has been sophisticatedly examined inter alia by Ruth Wodak. According to Wodak et al., the process of national identity construction takes place through articulation and negotiating in conversation, as well as through the interaction with outside perceptions and narratives (Karner 2011: 14). This approach can be traced back to critical discourse analysis, centering on communication in education, politics, media, institutions or everyday practices. Through this socialization, regarding both written and spoken ‘discourse’ as a form of social practice, the content of the respective national identity is internalized. It can be, according to Wodak et al., divided into certain core areas, such as a common territory, a common culture, a common future, present and past. (Wodak et al. 2009: 8)

2.2 The Territorialization of National Identity

At this point, from a modernist perspective it can be stated that there is no such thing as *one* national identity, in an essentialist sense. Instead, national identities are ‘malleable, fragile and, frequently ambivalent and diffuse’ (Wodak et al. 2009: 4).

However, despite that widely shared notion, the world of nations traditionally has been territorialized, based on a common conception of the world as a discrete spatial partitioning of territory (Malkki 1992: 34). Just like the concept of culture, it has for long been conceived ‘as something existing in ‘soil’ (Malkki 1992: 29). This commonsense assumption of linking nations and cultures to territory was part of the widely shared

premise among scholars of nations and nationalism that the world should be composed of sovereign, spatially discontinuous units (Giddens 1987: 116). Gellner, for instance, though seeing nations as recent phenomena, conceptualizes them as discrete ethnological units unambiguously segmented on the ground, and thereby naturalizes them along a spatial axis (Gellner 1983: 139-140). Moreover, Smith points out that 'real nations are fixed in space and 'recognizable' on a map' (Smith 1986: 1).

According to this view, since it perceives the world as segmented into prismatic, mutually exclusive units, displaced people such as refugees, are often seen as 'naked unaccommodated man' or 'undifferentiated raw material', as famously characterized by Victor Turner (1967: 98-99). Being territorially 'uprooted', they are easily seen as 'torn loose from their culture', and having a 'damaged nationality', because nation as well as culture, are territorialized (and even botanical and quasi-ecological) concepts in so many contexts (Marrus 1985: 8; Malkki 1993: 34). Simone Weil, for instance, states, that 'just as there are certain culture-beds for certain microscopic animals, certain types of soil for certain plants, so there is a certain part of the soul in every one and certain ways of thought and action communicated from one person to another which can only exist in a national setting, and disappear when a country is destroyed' (Weil 1987: 151-152). Moreover, the concept of mankind considered under the image of a 'family of nations' could lead to the assumption, that whoever was thrown out of one of these 'tightly organized closed communities', as proposed by Hanna Arendt, would find himself thrown out of the family of nations altogether (1973: 294, 300).

However, new visions of nation, identity, and displacement have challenged the commonsense and scholarly views and allowed for a more sophisticated comprehension of the 'complexity of the ways in which people construct, remember, and lay claim to particular places as 'homelands' or 'nations'' (Malkki 1992: 26). Even though people and communities have always moved and reconfigured themselves across geographical space, whether through desire or through violence, particularly with the era of globalization, the chronically mobility and routinely displacement of people has become a social fact (Mandaville 2006). Consequently, in the absence of territorial, national bases, homelands are increasingly invented. In this context, collective memories of, and claims on, places that can or nor longer will be corporeally inhabited, play a significant role (Malkki 1992:

24). Those complex notions of nativeness, including phenomena such as exile and other forms of territorial displacement, have only recently attracted scholarly interest.

For instance, the anthropologist Arjun Appadurai developed the concept of translocality and hence a new linkage between territory and identity, by outlining a transformation from national communities to ‘communities of sentiments’ and relating this to an assumed process of deterritorialization. He uses the term in reference to various processes — such as transnational labor migration and diasporic community-building — ‘in which the locatedness or territorial anchors of identity and community are problematized by modes of practice which effectively reconstitute these communities (and their politics) in locales beyond the boundaries of fixed territory: hence translocality’ (Mandaville 1999: 653-654). Those modes of practice, which constitute translocal spaces, are *inter alia* new technologies and infrastructures, allowing peoples and cultures to cross great distances and to transcend the boundaries of closed, territorial spaces. This leads to an ‘inherent fluidity of political identities’, by allowing them to flow into, through, and out of closed territories — ‘merging and syncretizing as they go’. Consequently, translocality can be understood as an abstract space consisting of the sum of linkages and connections across and between places and thus be theoretically grasped as a mode, ‘which pertains not to how peoples and cultures exist in places, but rather how they move through them’. Very close to the notion of translocality is the concept of transnationalism. However, while translocality can be understood as an abstract space, transnationalism is closely bound to the concept of the nation-state.

To summarize, under globalizing conditions, national and political identities are becoming increasingly disembedded from the context of the territorial nation-state. In fact, identity has a multifaceted nature and hence is a rhizomatic concept. It is ‘always mobile and processual, partly self-construction, partly categorization by others, partly a condition, a status, a label, a weapon, a shield, a fund of memories, *et cetera*’ (Malkki 1992: 37). Therefore, as Malkki concludes, ‘to plot only ‘places of birth’ and degrees of nativeness is to blind oneself to the multiplicity of attachments that people form to places through living in, remembering, and imagining them’ (Malkki 1992: 38).

After all, it should be noted that despite the significance of new notions of nativeness suggested by concepts such as translocality, the ‘national order of things’ has neither

been refuted, nor can an end of the nation state be indicated. Thus, arguing that one should rapidly move beyond territory, assuming that people increasingly understand their political identities in extra-territorial ways, would certainly be far too simple. Instead, as Mandaville emphasizes, it should be considered that people are actually holding on to notions of territory and place, albeit in increasingly complex manners and through the construction of an alternative, competing nationalist metaphysic, which includes highly tangible senses of 'here' and 'there'.

2.3 Gaps in the Literature

Despite the 'mass of literature on national identity', which is quite controversially debated, the relation between territoriality and collective (national) identity has not been addressed yet to a satisfying level (Wodak et al. 2009: 10) As Mandaville claims, though referring to political identity in particular, 'International Relations as a disciplinary project has failed to take account of the implications for the relationship between political identity and territoriality suggested by translocality' (Mandaville 2006: 654).

In addition, even if concepts such as translocality or transnationalism do examine new forms of collective identities in a globalized world, those concepts in general act on the assumption of hybrid boundaries, which allow for the current flow of individuals and goods. This, of course, does not, or only marginally apply for the Palestinian case, where boundaries are rather insuperable instead of hybrid.

Moreover, as Jaffrolet, claims, many theories of nationalism are reductionist and misleading. Focusing mainly on the nation-state, they do not make much room for ideas, 'precisely because they still share with theories of the nation a strong emphasis on material processes' (Jaffrolet 2003: 20). This view is shared by Bechhofer et al., who claim that scholars on national identity tend to focus on the 'national' dimension, rather than on identity. The weight of the question is seen to rest on a top-down-process, on the nature of the 'nation' and how it 'produces meanings', rather than on 'the mechanisms whereby individuals come to construct and mobilize national identity or identities' (Bechhofer et. al 1999: 517). Michael Banton, in this context, talks about a 'macro theory

that does not explore micro questions' (*ibid*). However, those 'micro-questions', according to Bechhofer et al., have recently begun to attract an increasing empirical interest, 'focusing mainly on groups for whom national or ethnic identity is problematic' (*ibid*).

This is where this research seeks to draw on, claiming that examining Palestinian national identity should be conducted from a micro-level and beyond or at least with minimal focus on the nation state, which Palestinians indeed desire to establish, but yet without success for more than half a century. Moreover, it should be referred to Hester and Hously, who claim that 'in many respects the sociology of national identity has been, for the most part, theory driven', while 'little work has been carried out on exploring *lived reality* and local (social) accomplishment of social or national identity' (Hester/Housley 2002: 2) This sentiment is echoed by Fevre and Thompson, stating that 'at the heart of the matter is the need to move beyond theories of nationalism in accounting for national identity', and by Bechhofer et al., who claim that 'there are relatively few studies of identity which address the issue of *national* identity head on and even fewer which adduce detailed empirical evidence' (Fevre/Thompson 1999: 246; Bechhofer et. al 1999: 518).

2.4 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The concept of national identity here is understood as one particular form of collective identity, which positions the 'national self' opposed to 'not national' or 'foreign' (cp. Smith 1991, p. 8). Building on Smith's conception of a 'nation', the fundamental features of national identity are an historic territory or homeland, common myths and historical memories, a common mass public culture, common legal rights and duties for all members and a common economy (1991, p. 14). However, Smith's definition is clearly embedded into notions of the nation state, which reflects the general problem when dealing with Palestinian identity that literature on identity and nationalism, though voluminous, 'in many instances is not applicable to the Palestinian case' (Khalidi 1997: xi). Therefore, the features mentioned will be expanded by a rather micro-level approach,

as presented by Wodak et al, including ‘a complex of similar conceptions and perceptual schemata, of similar emotional dispositions and attitudes, and of similar behavioral conventions’ (Wodak et al. 2011: 4). Further more, it is presumed here that the content of national identities is internalized through socialization (education, politics, media, sports etc.) and reproduced and reinterpreted discursively in the processes of everyday social life and by various conditions that are external to it, such as institutions, and within certain imagined boundaries (*ibid*).

This dissertation is theoretically based on the modernist approach, claiming that national identities are ‘imagined’ and continuously reconstructed. As Anderson states, an ‘imagined’ community does not have to actually ‘know’ each other or physically meet, but is instead ‘imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion’ (Anderson 1991: 224). When taking into account that territorial separation is one central issue of this research, Anderson thus does provide a suitable theoretical framework.

Based on these assumptions, the major hypothesis, which underlies the following case study, is:

The division of a national group into separated entities with different political, administrative and socioeconomic discrepancies, has, under the condition of limited opportunities of cross-boundary social interaction, a negative impact on the group’s collective national identity

3. Empirical Research: The Case of Palestine

The first part of this chapter will briefly outline and justify the research strategy and data collection methods that this dissertation will employ to examine the hypothesis.

3.1 Research strategy and design

In order to examine the relationship between territorial separation and national identity, a case study strategy will be used. Given the complexity of the concept, presenting *lived reality* of national identity by means of a single case study instead of taking a mere theoretical approach, seems an appropriate strategy for an introduction to a scarcely examined issue. As Brubaker *et al.* point out, case studies can provide ‘rich material on micro-social processes at low levels of aggregation that macro theories miss’ (1998:97).

3.1.1 Case Selection

As for examining national identity under circumstances of territorial separation and beyond the boundaries of a nation state, Palestine seems suitable for the following reasons: Since the ‘Nakba’ (Arabic: ‘Catastrophe’), the expulsion of the majority of Palestine’s Arab population as a consequence of the creation of the State of Israel, Palestinians are dispersed throughout four major communities: those who had left Palestine altogether and until today reside in refugee camps, mostly in Lebanon and Syria; those who had remained in geographic Palestine and were divided among the (formerly Jordanian ruled) West Bank; the Palestinian community in the (formerly Egyptian controlled) Gaza strip; and the Palestinian community in Israel. Thus, Palestinian nation is ‘hosted in different states’ and hence in different territories which provide differing environments. Moreover, the geographical separation of the Palestinians is manifest on several levels: Palestine vs. diaspora, refugees vs. non-refugees etc. (Suleiman: 2011: 40-41). However, numerous scholars have attested the

Palestinians a particularly high level of national consciousness, which is reflected in social movements all over the world, supporting the Palestinian demand for an independent state. Admittedly, there are further national groups with a high level of national consciousness despite being dispersed throughout several territories, such as the Kurds. However, the dimension of Palestinian separation is particular, due to the strong hindrance of social interaction caused by strict travel restrictions. Therefore, examining the current level of Palestinian national consciousness can offer valuable clues towards the processes, which lead to the maintenance and reconstruction of collective (national) identities under scarce opportunities of social interaction. Besides, a personal motivation, my in-depth local knowledge and understanding of the cultural foundations of Palestinian society facilitate the collection and interpretation of primary data, which also accounts for this selection.

3.1.2 Data Collection Methods

This case study has been inspired by Bechhofer et al, who examined the construction of national identity amongst social elites in Scotland, utilizing surveys and interviews as a means of exploring the research topic. Taking a similar approach, in order to test the hypothesis this study will draw mainly from primary data: quantitative and qualitative fieldwork in form of a standardized questionnaire, conducted in the West Bank and Israel during June and August 2012. The choice to examine the relation between territorial separation and national identity with a set of questionnaires is obvious: Since national identity is understood here as consisting inter alia of a complex of similar conceptions and perceptual schemata, of similar emotional dispositions and attitudes and of similar behavioral conventions, asking individuals directly can best shed light on their level of national consciousness. Moreover, the decision to restrict the sample to university students was made firstly, in order to prevent possible misunderstandings caused by poor English language skills, and secondly served the practical feasibility of the field research. Given the impossibility of measuring and evaluating national identity, the closed and open questions refer to political conceptions and behavioral patterns, a shared collective memory, ideas of a distinctive national territory, notions of and attitudes towards the 'Palestinian others' and of Palestine as a nation. Those fields are based on the

fundamental features of national identity defined by Smith and Wodak et al. and are used here as a proxy measure. The use of the questionnaires has two main objectives. Firstly, to gain an insight into current Palestinian students' political and national perceptions and attitudes as well as attitudes and behaviors towards their Palestinian 'outgroups'. And, secondly, to compare the answers of the three examined territories, in order to find out, if a level of national consciousness is existent despite the territorial separation and scarce opportunities of social interaction. Apart from the relative large sample in the light of the limitation of this thesis (each 100 respondents from Israel, the West Bank and Gaza), those polled can definitely not represent their entire territory, and thus caution should be applied when interpreting the findings. Respondents were randomly chosen and are students of several fields, ranging from subjects such as English and French literature, psychology, law, finance or medicine. Moreover, they study at various universities:

Gaza	West Bank	Israel
Al-Azhar University	Al-Quds University	Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Islamic University	Arab-American University	Haifa University
University College of Applied Sciences	Bethlehem University	Technion
Al-Aqsa University	Al-Quds Open-University	Bar Ilan University
University of Palestine	Birzeit University	
	Bard College	
	Hebron University	

Table 1.: Universities of the polled students

In Gaza, due to the political situation of the siege, the survey has been conducted online, using the online based survey tool "Survey Monkey".

3.2 Data Analysis

In the following, the validity of the hypothesis will be tested. To do this, first, the dimension of the territorial separation in regard to the cross-boundary movement of Palestinian university students will be briefly illustrated. Then, an abstract of the collected data, which could allow for some assessment of the level of Palestinian national consciousness, will be presented. The collection and selection of the data is based on the definition of national identity, which has been explained previously. First, the elaborated identity markers will be illustrated, which represent cross-boundary shared notions and attitudes of Palestinians in all three examined territories. Then, discrepancies revealed by the survey will be briefly addressed. Finally, the findings of the survey will be summarized and related to the hypothesis.

3.2.1 Israel, West Bank, Gaza – Separated territorial entities, yet separated people?

The survey clearly illustrates the level of the territorial separation of the Palestinians. For instance, 45 percent of the polled students in Gaza have never in their life left the 365 square kilometers of the strip. Despite the fact that 72 percent of them state to have family or friends in the West Bank, only 30 percent of the polled have been there once, mainly for purposes of tourism, visiting friends and family, on the way to the Jordan, for medical treatment, pilgrimage or as participants of social / political initiatives. Moreover, despite the fact that 36 percent of the polled students from Gaza state to have family or friends in Israel, only 17 percent of the polled has been there once, mainly for administrative reasons, such as applying for visa.

Being less restricted in their movement than the population of Gaza, 75, percent of the polled students in the West Bank have left the West Bank at least once. 70 percent have been to Israel, mainly for purposes of tourism, attending summer camps, pilgrimage and medical treatment, and 56 percent state to have friends or family there. However, despite the fact that 38 percent of the polled students in the West Bank state to have family or friends in Gaza, only 14 percent have been there, either for the purpose of visiting family or as participants at governmentally organized educational trips.

As Israeli citizens generally facing less travel restrictions, 92 percent of the polled students in Israel have left Israel at least once in their life. 78 percent state to have family or friends in the West Bank and 90 percent have been there at least once, for purposes of tourism, visiting friends and family, studying and attending political / social conferences. Moreover, 32 percent of the polled students in Israel state to have family or friends in Gaza and 23 percent have been there, for purposes of tourism or as participants at governmentally organized educational trips.

Overall, though only based on a small sample size, those figures clearly illustrate the level of the territorial separation of the Palestinians, with many students never having been to the other Palestinian territories, (if they have been able to left their territory at all) and if so, often only once. Not surprisingly, the most isolated territory is Gaza, with 45 percent of the polled students to have never left the strip, and with only a small percentage of the students from the West Bank and Israel, who have ever been there.

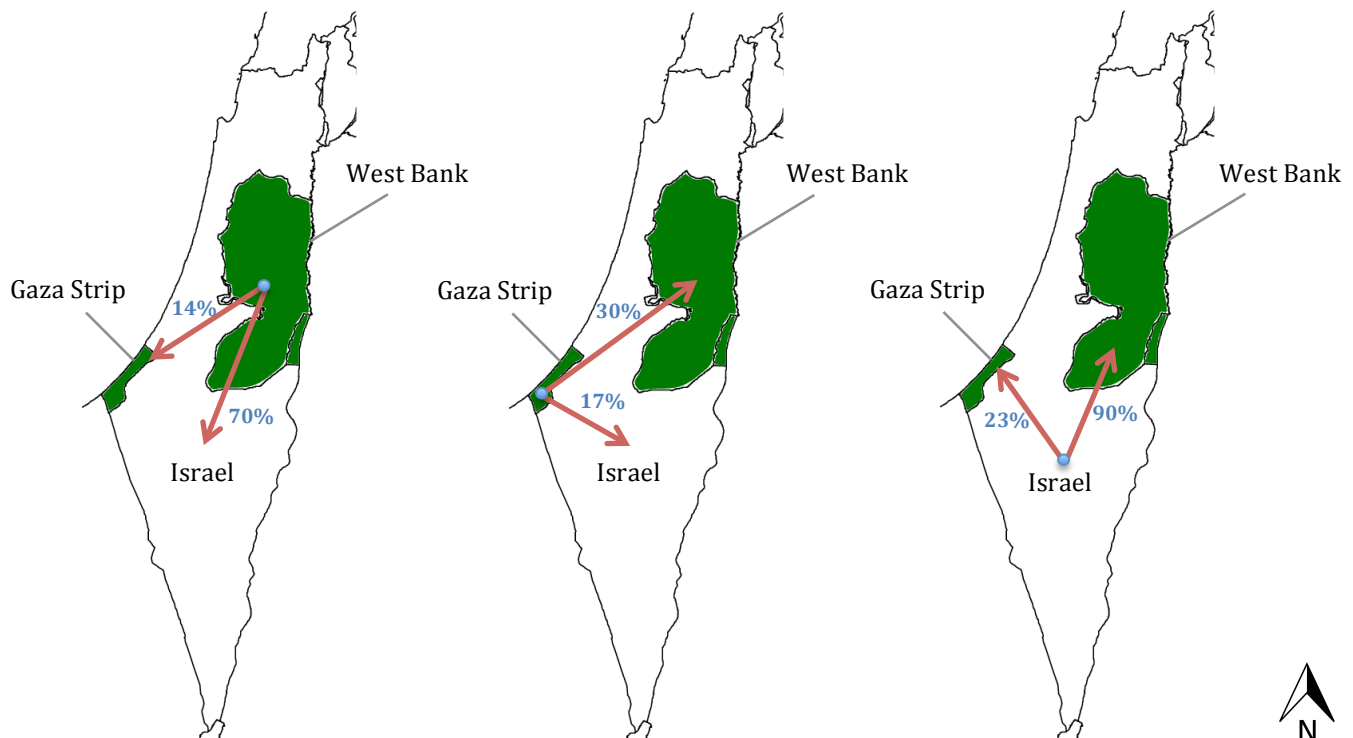


Figure 1.: Cross-boundary movement of Palestinian university students from the West bank, Gaza, Israel

3.2.2 Cross-boundary identity Markers

Palestine as the ‘Holy Land’ with Jerusalem as its focus

The notion of ‘Palestine as a special and sacred land with Jerusalem as its focus, which Khalidi traces back to the very beginnings Palestinian national consciousness, has prevailed until today, at least regarding the significance given to Jerusalem (Khalidi 1997). Hence, in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank, an overwhelming majority rejected the idea of a Palestinian state without Jerusalem as its capital, despite the fact, that many of the polled students, particularly from Gaza, have never been there.

Question: *How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement: ‘If this would lead to an end of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Palestine should accept a Two-State-Solution without Jerusalem as its capital’*

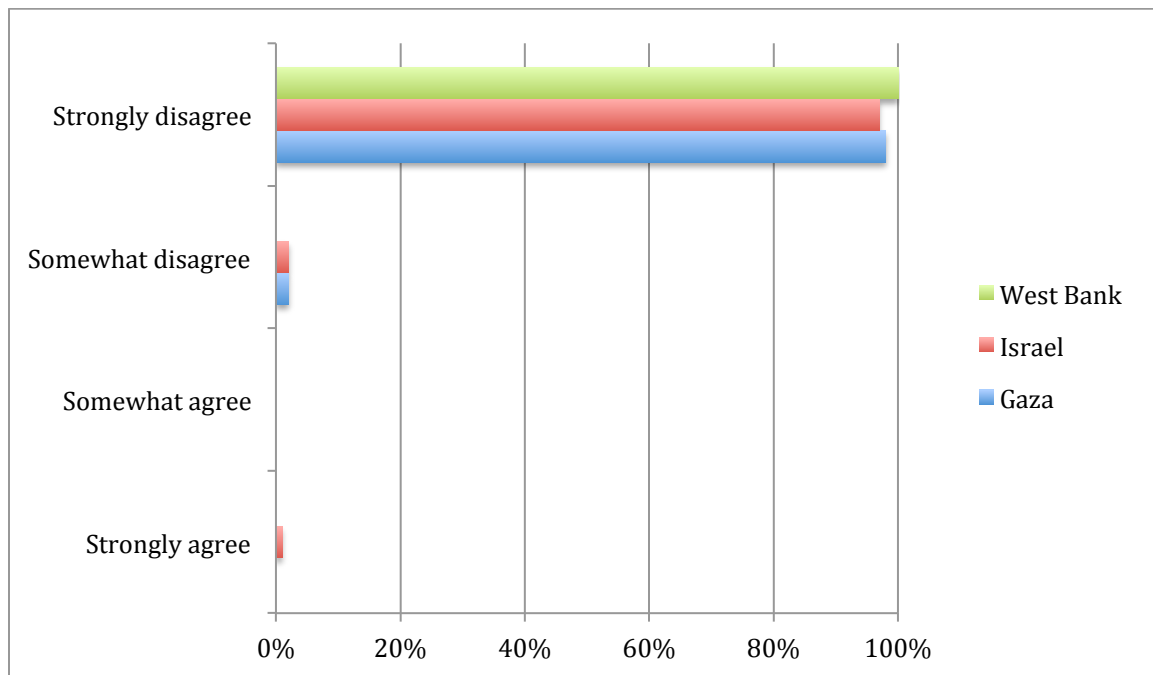
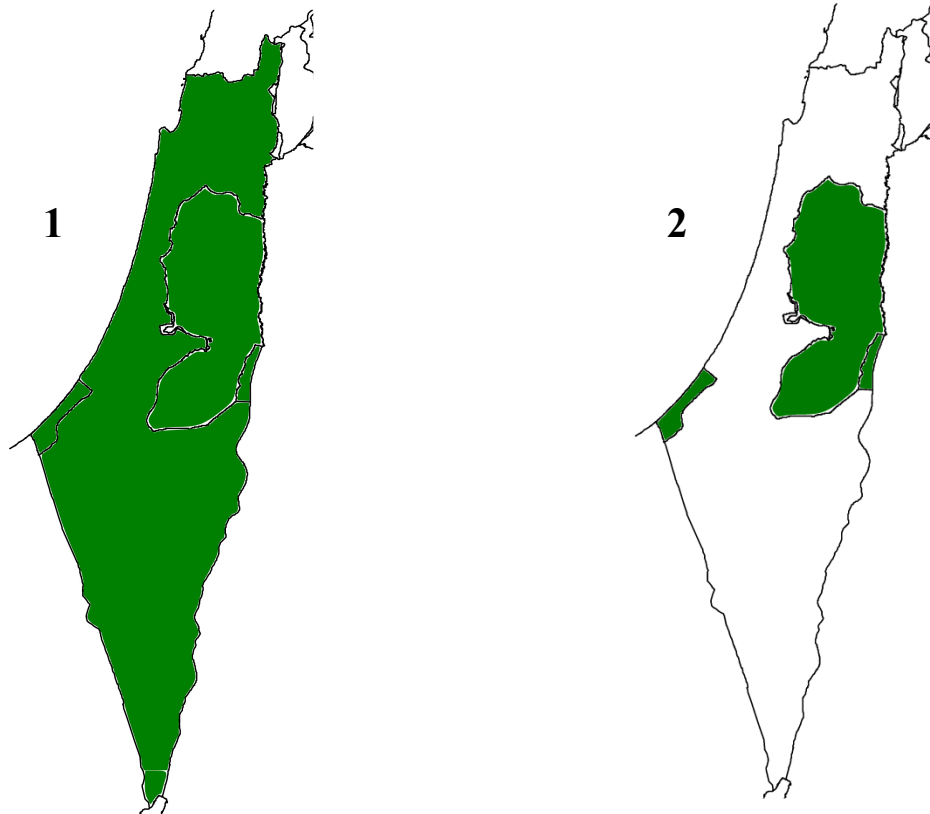


Figure 2.: Results: Question 13

Palestine as a clearly demarcated territory

According to Suleiman, one major challenge for scholarship on Palestinian identity is the question of how to best define Palestinian identity in relation to its varying physical boundaries, the territory of historic Palestine between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean, or today's Occupied Palestinian Territories: Gaza and the West Bank. However, as the survey revealed, students in all three separated territories have a very clear view on the territorial dimension of 'Palestine'. Being shown two unlabeled maps, one highlighting historic Palestine and one pointing out the occupied Palestinian territories, the majority of the polled in all three separated territories (Gaza: 98 %, West Bank: 100 %, Israel: 100%) stated that for them 'Palestine' indicated the historic land of Palestine and hence the territory which today constitutes Israel and the occupied territories.

Question: *Below you see two maps. To your opinion, which map represents Palestine?*



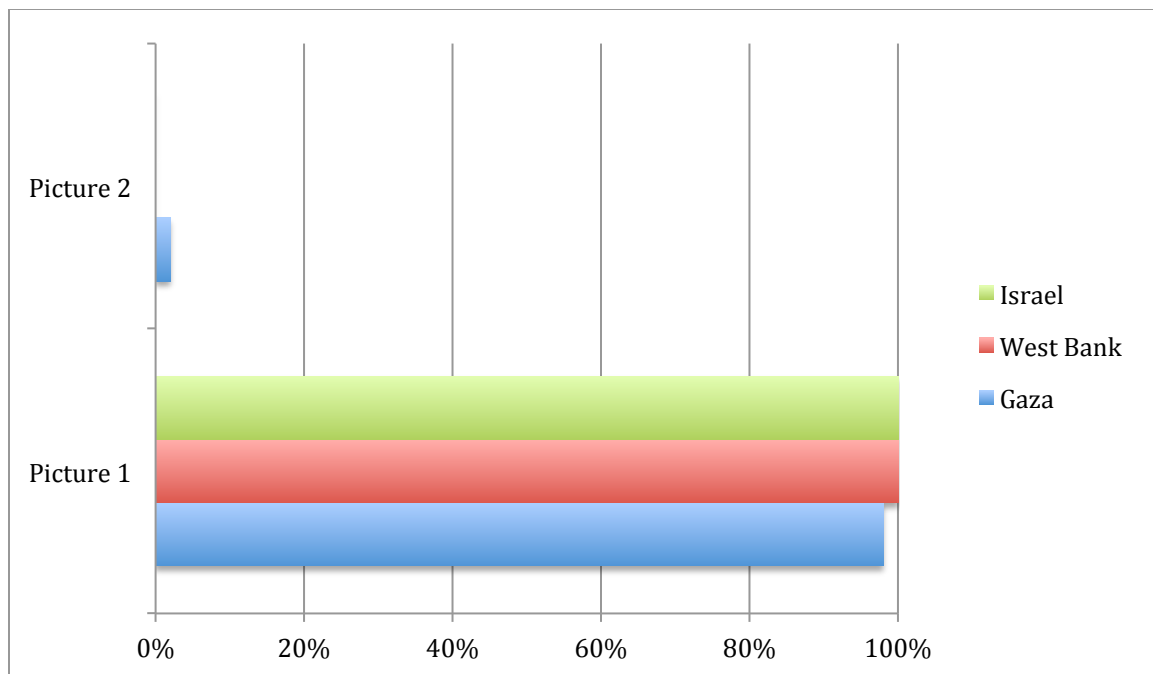


Figure 3.: Results: Question 16

Palestine in the light of a strong collective memory

In all three examined territories, students affirmed to regularly commemorate Palestinian national days (Gaza: 88 %, West Bank: 89 %; Israel: 95 %), particularly the ‘Nakba-Day’, on which Palestinians all over the world collectively remember their national ‘exodus’. Moreover, when being asked what Palestine meant to them, several students primarily referred to Palestine as their ‘*heritage*’ or ‘*grandfather’s land*’. According to Litvak, a shared memory plays a ‘substantial role in shaping the self-perception and culture of peoples that have suffered historical defeats’. Moreover, the ‘participation in rituals of public commemoration reinforces a sense of shared national identity’ and particularly nations, ‘which are fragile and feel that their national identity is threatened, tend to intensify the commemorative effort’ (Litvak 2011: 14-15).

Question: *Most states / nations have national days, at which a huge part of the population celebrates or remembers important historic events. Do you usually commemorate Palestinian national anniversaries?*

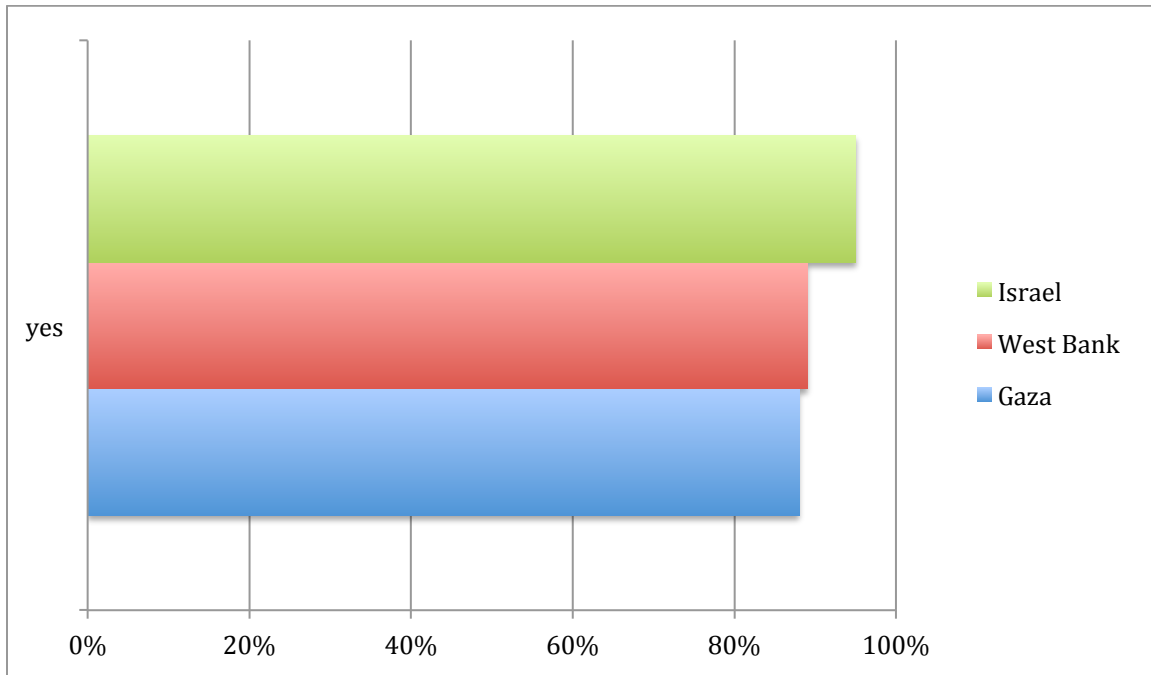


Figure 4.: Results: Question 8

Patriotism – ‘Failure as Triumph’

In general, the survey revealed that students in all three territories strongly perceived the Palestinian nation as particularly brave and somehow indestructible. ‘Resilience’ and ‘patience’ were terms to express a notion of Palestinian power of endurance (*‘palestinians is more strong people than others’*). Moreover, this sense was further emphasized when being asked about the specificity of being Palestinian in regard to other Arab peoples (*‘We are people of struggle’, ‘brave’, ‘Patriots, who do not bow down’, ‘we fight to survive every day’, ‘we survive to still alive whatever the situation is’, ‘my country that I am proud to be from’, ‘self-esteem’, ‘people doesn’t give up’, ‘I am so proud to be Palestinian’*). According to Khalidi, this kind of patriotism can be understood as a notion of ‘failure as triumph’, as the fact that Palestinians have continuously failed to

achieve their national goals at the same time causes a feeling of triumph for not having been shattered as a community (Khalidi 1997: 195).

Sharing the same Fate – A ‘joint sense of grievance’

What Anderson calls a ‘joint sense of grievance’ might be a matching description for what unites the Palestinians as a collective until today. Particularly when being asked about possible differences between Palestinians and other Arab peoples, students from all three entities emphasized their sharing the same fate of being occupied and a people without rights (*‘Palestinians are humans with no rights’*, *‘they have a choice we do not’*, *‘we are prohibited from main rights: travelling, light, security’*, *‘Palestinians don't have their basic rights or needs’*, *‘The Arab people have airports and have the right to travel freely when they want but the Palestinians have nothing’*, *‘Palestinian rights lost’*, *‘more oppressed’*, *‘Palestinians are humans with no rights’*). Moreover, a clear feeling of disappointment about being left alone by fellow Arab nations has been expressed (*‘Palestinians the only who fight for Palestine’*, *‘we are fighting for a just cause and the Arab peoples left us alone in the field’*, *‘in the airports or any government corporation of some countries (even arab ones) they treat palestinians really bad’*, *‘all arabs are asleep’*, *‘Palestinians care for all Arabs, other Arabs care only for themselves’*, *‘Arabs belonging to America but Palestinians refuse’*).

The lack of a representative political framework

Interestingly, as the survey revealed, in all three examined territories, when being asked how represented they felt by their respective governments on a scale from 1 – 5 (1 = ‘not at all’, 5 = ‘very much’), a clear majority of the student stated to not feel represented at all. Thus, neither did students in Gaza feel represented by Hamas (mean: 1,4) nor did Palestinian students in Israel feel represented by the Israeli government (mean: 1,0). Only the polled students from the West Bank attested at least a slight amount of representativeness to the Palestinian Authority (mean: 2,2).

The right of return of the Palestinian refugees

On a scale from 1 – 5 (1 = ‘not at all’, 5 = ‘very much’) students in Gaza (mean 4,8), West Bank (mean: 4,8), and Israel (mean: 4,9) expressed their strong positive notion towards the right of return of the Palestinian refugees. This has also been reflected in the fact that the key, which stands for this right, was often mentioned as one major Palestinian symbol.

No clear confidence in the end of the conflict

When asked if they agreed with the statement that one day the Palestinian-Israeli conflict would be solved, in all three examined territories students did not have a clear opinion.

Question: *How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement: ‘Someday the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will be solved’*

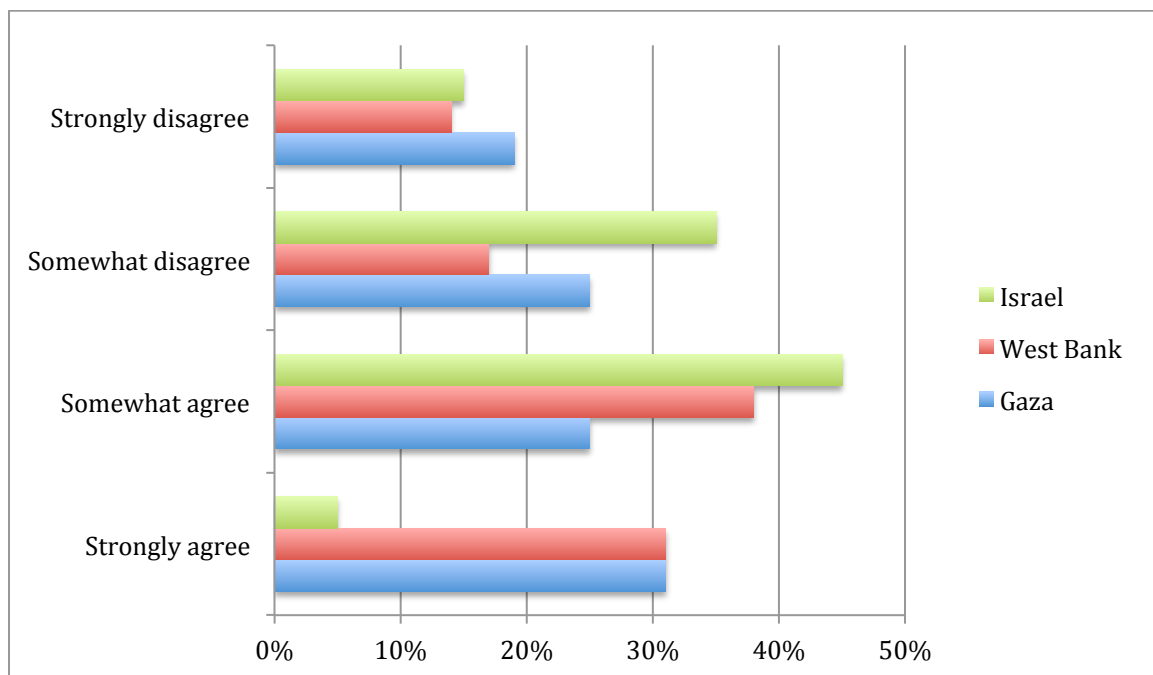


Figure 5.: Results: Question 15

3.2.3 Discrepancies

In addition to the dimension of separation, the survey indicates the different realities of the polled students in each of the three examined territories. For instance, when being asked if they had experienced the killing of a family member or close friend by the Israeli army, 82 percent of the polled students in Gaza answered with yes, while in Israel, for instance, only 2 percent of the polled had made such an experience. Moreover, when being asked about the specificity of being Palestinian in relation to other Arab peoples, only students from Gaza mentioned the siege / blockade and indicators for their subsequent bad economic situation (*‘poor people’*), notions of suffering (*‘we don’t have the main basics to live decent life’*, *‘There is no way Entertainment’*, *‘we do not feel happy’*), as well as their being in danger, not feeling safe etc. (*‘we live in danger more than any other nation’*, *‘they feel safe at home but we don’t’*, *‘does not feel comfortable or safe’*).

Question: *Do you have family members / close friends who have been killed by the Israeli army?*

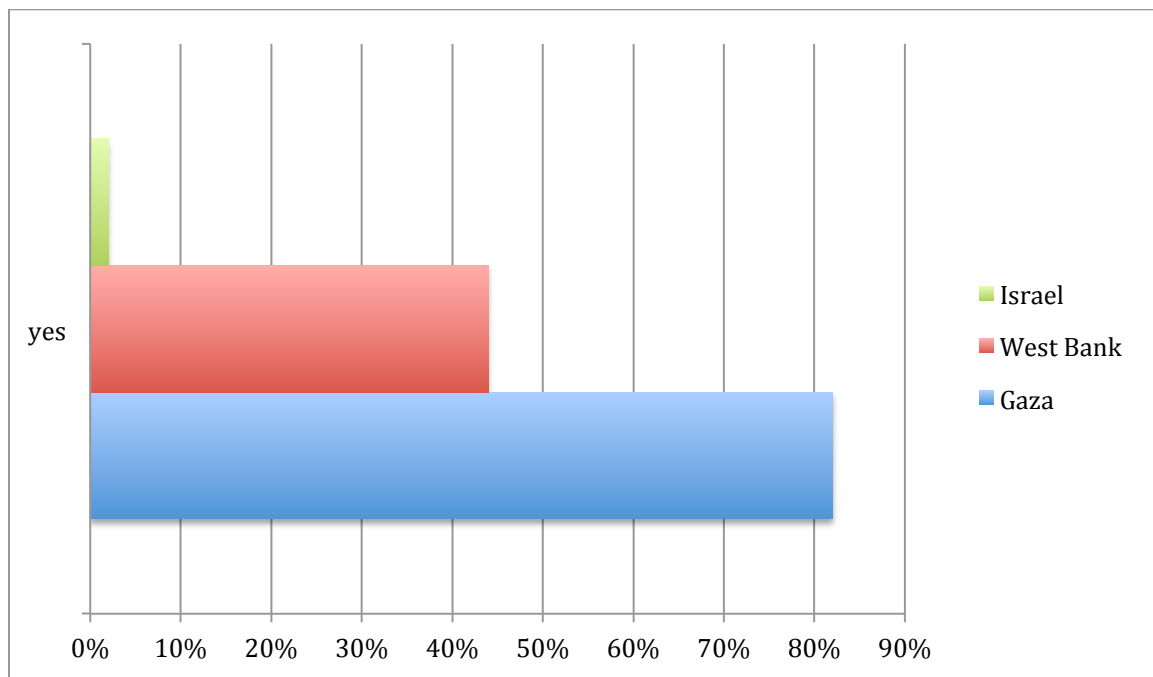


Figure 6.: Results: Question 22

Moreover, in contrast to the polled Palestinian students in Israel, religious sentiments in general or religious notions towards Jerusalem could be particularly noticed from the side of the students from the occupied territories. This became visible when being asked if in a future Palestinian state, religion and politics should be clearly separated. While in Israel Palestinian students by the majority stated that in a future Palestinian state religion and politics should be clearly separated, there was no clear tendency among the students in Gaza and the West Bank. Moreover, the stronger sense of religiousness among students from the Occupied Territories, in contrast to Palestinian students from Israel, is further reflected in their statements towards their association to ‘Palestine’ (*‘the holiest land on earth’*, *‘my holy land’*, *‘cradle of religions’*).

Question: *How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement:*
“In a future Palestinian state politics and religion should be clearly separated.”

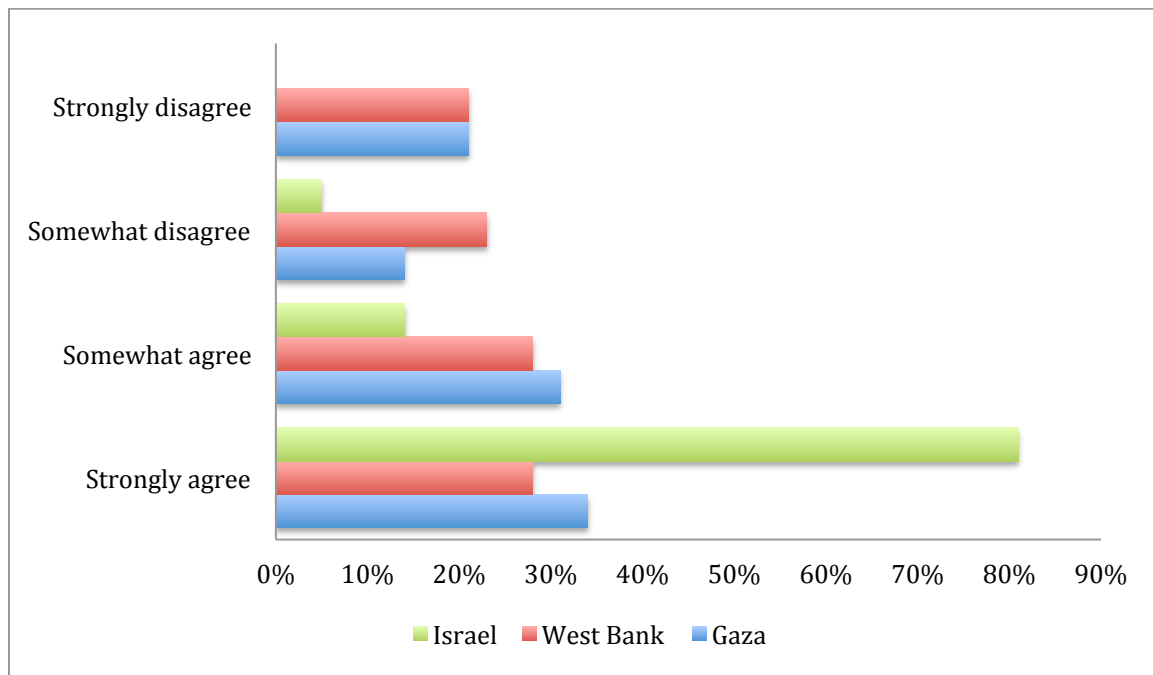


Figure 7.: Results: Question 12

According to Khalidi, a ‘powerful local attachment or feeling of rootedness’ was a characteristic of Palestinian national consciousness already in its very early stages. This notion, as the survey revealed, is particularly present among Palestinian students from the Occupied Territories. When being asked for their purpose of visiting Israel, many stated that they were ‘visiting their destroyed village’ or ‘their descendant city’. According to Aouragh, ‘Palestinians make their local attachments regardless of time and space’, and ‘the incessant references to belonging to a certain village or house’ are ‘one of the clearest illustrations of the indomitable claims of identity’ (Aouragh 2011: 14). Moreover, as Malkki emphasizes, attachments to places ‘that can or nor longer will be corporeally inhabited’ play a significant role (Malkki 1992: 24). This is reflected by the fact, that exclusively students from the Occupied Territories mentioned Jerusalem when being asked what Palestine meant to them, despite the fact that they in many cases had never been there and are in general prohibited of visiting the city.

Apart from the specific local attachment or feeling of rootedness, students from the Occupied Territories often expressed their associations with Palestine in very emotional, romantic or even poetic terms. While the Palestinian students from Israel mentioned terms such as ‘human rights’ and ‘culture’, students from the West Bank and Gaza stated that ‘Palestine’ was ‘*my everything*’ / ‘*everything what I have*’, ‘*the whole world to me*’, ‘*I do not exist if there is no Palestine*’, ‘*the only place I can live in*’, ‘*my life*’, ‘*my soul*’ or ‘*my blood*’, in some cases even personifying Palestine, by using terms such as ‘*another mother to me*’ / ‘*motherland*’, ‘*mum*’, ‘*dad*’ or ‘*friend*’ or ‘*me*’.

Finally, when being asked if they believed in the feasibility of Palestinians and Jews living together in one secular democratic state, in Gaza 42 percent and in the West Bank 48 percent either strongly or somewhat agreed. On the other hand, 83 percent of the polled Palestinian students in Israel, who in fact do live in one state with Jews and hence speak from experience, do believe in the feasibility of Jews and Palestinians living together in one secular democratic state.

Question: *How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement:*
“Palestinians could live together peacefully in one secular democratic state as equal citizens.”

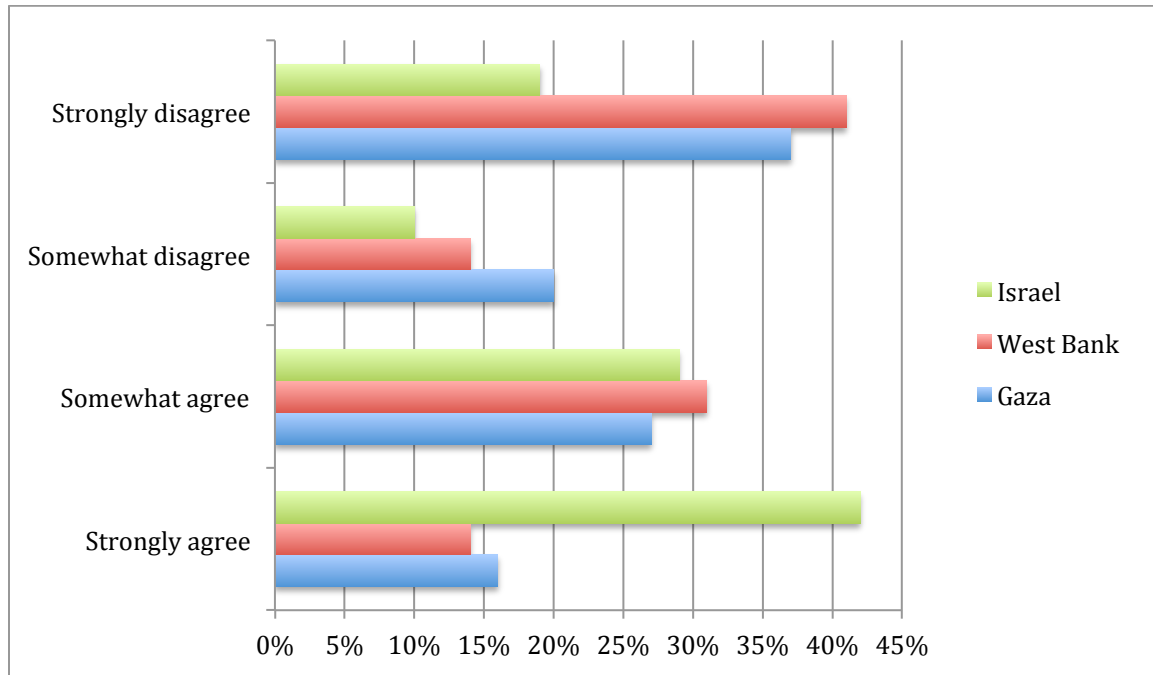


Figure 8.: Results: Question 14

3.3 Summary and Reassessment of the Hypothesis

The identity markers, which have been illustrated on the basis of primary data, clearly indicate a high level of national consciousness among the polled Palestinians students. Particularly significant is the ‘local consciousness’, relating to a very distinct demarcated territory. Moreover, ‘historical memory’ as one specific feature of Palestinian national identity could be identified, as well a number of ‘similar emotional dispositions and attitudes’, such as patriotic sentiments or the notion of sharing the same fate. Also, a strong perception of the ‘Palestinian *self*’, in contrast to the ‘Arab *others*’, became visible, inter alia by the shared assumption of being a particularly educated people. Finally, several identify markers were identified based on shared notions of the political

present and towards the political future of Palestine, for instance the cross-boundary support of the Palestinian refugees' right of return.

On the other hand, the survey revealed several inconsistencies as well, mainly when comparing the survey's results from Israel with those from the Occupied Territories. Here, the phrasing of the latter indicates a particularly stronger emotional attachment to Palestine. Moreover, stronger religious sentiments as well as a slightly lower believe in the feasibility of Palestinians and Jews living together in one state could be assessed.

4. Conclusion: Insights and Implications

In the light of the presented results of the survey and based on this dissertation's theoretical framework, what can be implied regarding the impact of territorial separation on national identity? The initial hypothesis, based on previously defined assumptions on the construction of national identity, presumes the following:

The post-1948 boundaries and subsequent political, administrative and socioeconomic discrepancies between the Palestinian groups located in different territories have, due to the limited opportunities of cross-boundary social interaction, created distinct sub-identities, which are gaining relative importance with regard to notions of a Palestinian collective.

Relating to the illustrated primary data, this hypothesis can be falsified. As revealed by the survey, the territorial separation of the Palestinians does not have a weakening effect on Palestinian national identity. On the contrary, as part of the occupational system, it seems to rather strengthen collective Palestinian sentiments.

When asked what Palestine meant to them, 'homeland' was the term most frequently mentioned in all three territories. This leads to the assumption, that despite deferring notions on how a prospective Palestinian state should be organized, the experience of injustice and suffering fuels the creation of collective sentiments. Thus, the strong desire for freedom and political self-determination, a desire shared by Palestinians cross-boundary, is projected on 'Palestine' as an imagined homeland– an abstract space of belonging, while in reality living under occupation or as second-class citizen in Israel. Due to their 'generalized condition of homelessness', as stated by Edward Said, Palestinians seem to hold on to this imagination, which serves as a leitmotif for a better future (Said 1979:18). After all, 'to be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul', as Simone Weil recognizes (Weil: 1987:41). Hence, some students referred to 'Palestine' as their '*dream*' or a '*phantasy*'.

It is this shared dream that unites Palestinians and transcends all existent discrepancies, which come along with their separation. 'Griefs are of more value than triumphs, for they

impose duties, and require a common effort', as Litvak puts it. (Litvak 2011: 1) Reflected by the survey, many students stated: '*We live for a target*' or '*we still have an important case to defend for*', when asked to describe, what distinguished them from their fellow Arab nations. As a final statement one of the polled students from Gaza, summarized this with the following words: '*Although Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank, Israel and worldwide have different "styles", I think their relation is very strong because there is a strong common thing between them*'.

Embedding those findings into a broader framework, it can be stated, that although territorial separation and strongly differing environments might lead to the simultaneous construction of sub-identities, national identity can be maintained and even strengthened, particularly in the light of a shared sense of suffering and a strong collective memory. Overall, those different dimensions of identities are not mutually exclusive, since, as Mandaville puts it, 'the activities of individuals are not limited to a single political space, either in terms of territory or discourse and one's presence in a particular territorial state does not restrict one from engaging in translocal relations, which seek to politicize a component of identity which is not "of" the territory from which these activities emanate' (Mandaville: 2006)

4.1 Limitations and further research

As mentioned already in the introduction, this thesis did not aim on providing definite answers. As for the nature of abstract concepts such as 'national identity', it is always difficult if not impossible to make clear statements. However, specific proxies can serve as a tool to examine identity, which in this research inquiry, could only be conducted within a very limited scope. Therefore, further studies could expand the number of the examined proxies for national identity and provide a more sophisticated analysis. In this context, a regression analysis could elaborate the impact of specific independent variables, for instance the personal economic situation, on the perceptions and attitudes of the polled, and hence allow for a more valid assessment of the actual relation between territorial separation and subsequent different environments and notions of a collective national identity.

Certainly, the significance of a quantitative study increases with the size of the sample. While this study is based on a relatively limited sample, which cannot claim to be representative of the respective region, further studies could on the one hand significantly increase the number of polled individuals. Furthermore, the sample could be broadened, including further societal groups beyond university students. Over and above, the examined sample does not reflect the whole reality of Palestinian separation, since it excludes one very significant group: the refugees residing in camps in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan (while in the latter case many have been naturalized), and, in addition, the Palestinians living in the diaspora. To complete the picture of current Palestinian national consciousness, those groups certainly need to be included.

Finally, as this study revealed, Palestinians maintain a strong national consciousness, despite a very limited amount of direct social interaction. Hence, it would be of great scientific value to examine the processes which in fact allow for the discursive (re)construction of Palestinian national identity. This relates first and foremost to new forms of communication, such as the Internet, which can play a significant role for the construction of collective identities, particularly regarding displaced or isolated societies.

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Discursive Construction of National Identity, second edition; Edinburgh University
Press, Edinburgh

APPENDICES:

1. Have you ever left the Gaza?

- If your answer is no, please continue with question 6

☐ yes

☐ no

2. Have you ever been to Israel?

- If your answer is no, please continue with question 4

☐ yes

☐ no

☐ don't know

3. If yes: What was the purpose of your trip to Israel?

Please explain briefly

4. Have you ever been to the West Bank?

- If your answer is no, please continue with question 6

☐ yes

☐ no

☐ don't know

5. If yes: What was the purpose of your trip to the West Bank?

Please explain briefly

6. Do you have family members / friends in Israel?

☐ yes

☐ no

☐ don't know

7. Do you have family members / friends in the West Bank?

☐ yes

☐ no

☐ don't know

8. Most states / nations have national days, at which a huge part of the population celebrates or remembers great or sad historic events.

Do you usually commemorate Palestinian national anniversaries?

- If your answer is no, please continue with question 10

☐ yes

☐ no

9. Which national day do you usually commemorate?

Please name the one, which is most important to you.

10. How represented do you feel by Hamas?

not at all

very much



11. How important is for you the Right of Return of the Palestinian refugees?

not important at all

very important



12. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"In a future Palestinian state politics and religion should be clearly separated"

☐ strongly agree

☐ somewhat agree

☐ somewhat disagree

☐ strongly disagree

13. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"If this would lead to an end of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Palestine should accept a Two-State-Solution without Jerusalem as its capital"

☐ strongly agree

☐ somewhat agree

☐ somewhat disagree

☐ strongly disagree

14. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"Palestinians and Jews could live together peacefully in one secular democratic state as equal citizens"

- ☐ strongly agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ strongly disagree

15. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"Someday the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will be solved"

- ☐ strongly agree
- ☐ somewhat agree
- ☐ somewhat disagree
- ☐ strongly disagree

16. Below you see two pictures - to your opinion, which picture represents Palestine?

- ☐ Picture 1
- ☐ Picture 2

Picture 1



Picture 2



17. Which is for you a typical Palestinian symbol?

- 1
- 2
- 3

18. What does 'Palestine' mean to you?

Please provide at least one answer

- 1
- 2
- 3

19. To your opinion, what is the difference between Palestinians and other Arab people?

Please provide at least one answer

- 1
- 2
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20. What subject are you studying?

21. At which university do you study?

22. Do you have family members / close friends who have been killed by the Israeli army?

- ☐ yes
- ☐ no

23. Thank you very much for having completed this survey!

This is your space, if you have any comments on the topic of Palestinian identity and the relation between Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank and Israel.

If you would like to comment on the questionnaire, please feel free to do so as well.

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1. Have you ever left the West Bank?

- If your answer is no, please continue with question 6

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☐ no

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4. Have you ever been to Gaza?

- If your answer is no, please continue with question 6

☐ yes

☐ no

☐ don't know

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Please explain briefly

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