THE POLITICAL, COMMUNAL AND RELIGIOUS DYNAMICS OF PALESTINIAN CHRISTIAN IDENTITY: THE EASTERN ORTHODOX AND LATIN CATHOLICS IN THE WEST BANK UNTIL 2014

Quinn Patrick Coffey

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD at the University of St Andrews

2016

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The Political, Communal and Religious Dynamics of Palestinian Christian Identity: The Eastern Orthodox and Latin Catholics in the West Bank Until 2014

Quinn Patrick Coffey

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
At the
University of St Andrews

2 March 2016
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Abstract:

Despite the increasingly common situation of statelessness in the contemporary Middle East, a majority of the theoretical tools used to study nationalism are contingent upon the existence of a sovereign state. As such, they are unable to fully explain the mechanisms of national identity, political participation, and integration in non-institutional contexts, where other social identities continue to play a significant political role. In these contexts, the position of demographic minorities in society is significant, as actors with the most popular support – majorities -- tend to have the strongest impact on the shape of the political field. This thesis demonstrates what we can learn from studying the mechanisms of nationalism and political participation for one such minority group, the Palestinian Christians, particularly with regards to how national identity fails or succeeds in instilling attachment to the state and society.

This is accomplished by applying the theoretical framework of social identity theory to empirical field research conducted in the West Bank in 2014, combined with an analysis of election and survey data. It is argued that the level of attachment individuals feel towards the “state” or confessional communities is dependent on the psychological or material utility gained from group membership. If individuals feel alienated from the national identity, they are more likely to identify with their confessional community. If they are alienated from both, then they are far likelier to emigrate. Additionally, I suggest that the way in which national identity is negotiated in a stateless context is important to future state building efforts, as previous attempts to integrate national minorities into the political system through, e.g., devolved parliaments and quotas, have failed to instil a universal sense of the nation.
Acknowledgments:

This endeavour would not have been possible without the support of a number of incredibly kind and patient people. Firstly, my supervisor, Dr. Fiona McCallum, has been a tremendously helpful guide throughout this process; her expertise and advice have been instrumental in making this happen. My second supervisor, Professor Anthony Lang, was also an inspiring and positive force throughout.

I must also thank the Russell Trust for their generous financial support of my field research. Many people and organisations in Palestine have contributed to this study through face-to-face interviews and their hospitality. For reasons of anonymity, it would be impossible to name them all here. But I can extend a special thanks to the Tantur Ecumenical Institute in Jerusalem, the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Centre in Jerusalem, the Bethlehem Bible College, Bethlehem and Birzeit Universities, the Latin Seminary in Beit Jala, the YMCA of Beit Sahour, Holy Land Trust, and the Diyar Consortium. I must also extend a special thanks to the Bethlehem Iconography School and its director Ian Knowles. I wish the school and its wonderfully talented students all the best and thank them for their friendship and generosity.

Finally, I need to thank my friends and family for their support throughout the project. I am particularly grateful to my partner Annabel, who has gracefully put up with four years of the PhD lifestyle, and without whom this would have not been possible.
### Abbreviations:

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>CRO</td>
<td>Church Related Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFLP</td>
<td>Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIDA</td>
<td>Palestinian Democratic Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDF</td>
<td>Israeli Defence Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoLG</td>
<td>Ministry of Local Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCOP</td>
<td>National Coalition of Christian Organisations in Palestine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLL</td>
<td>National Liberation League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA (PNA)</td>
<td>Palestinian (National) Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCBS</td>
<td>Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCP</td>
<td>Palestinian Community Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCPSR</td>
<td>Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFLP</td>
<td>Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLC</td>
<td>Palestinian Legislative Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLO</td>
<td>Palestinian Liberation Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Palestinian People's Party</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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Chapter One -- Introduction:

It seems to me that nationalism is collapsing in the Middle East and the Middle East is going through a crisis of identity. People are not sure who they are and how can they define themselves. And identity is a complex issue because there are a lot of social elements that shape a person’s identity. I can say I am from the West Bank, I am from Bethlehem, I am a Christian – all of them could be true depending on the social context -- each one of us has multiple identities. Sometimes these identities could be in tension with each other and there are dominant identities depending on the reality of the situation.¹

-- Palestinian academic, mid-40s, Bethlehem

The objective of this study is to examine the role that social identity plays in political participation and integration for the Palestinian Christian communities. This will be accomplished by exploring how the two largest confessional communities, the Rum Orthodox and Latin (Catholic), negotiate between loyalty and adherence to the cultural identity and political norms of their confessional communities, and that of the proto-Palestinian state, where they represent a small, but vital part of the population.

As the above quotation illustrates, social identity is a complex and fluid concept. It shapes the ways in which we view ourselves and the other and consequently affects our interaction with the social and political landscape. This is because our membership in social groups not only dictates acceptable behaviour in response to social roles (e.g. As a Palestinian Christian I cannot vote for Hamas)², but also because in-group biases can affect the ways in which we experience integration within our other constituent social identities. This is particularly relevant to our experience of national identity in that nationalisms that are insufficiently broad and inclusive may alienate rather than include groups in the demographic, economic or cultural minority. In the contemporary Middle East, the collapse of authoritarian regimes, which had previously subdued sub-national ethnic, religious, and communal identities, has fractured the notions of the nation and state. As a result, actors from varying ideological perspectives are once again contesting what constitutes “the nation”. This has had a dramatic effect on ethnic, demographic, and religious minorities across the region who find themselves increasingly alienated by evolving notions of national identity in which communalism and religion have become a central focus. Although Palestine has been largely unaffected by the

¹ Palestinian Academic, interview by Quinn Coffey 2014, Bethlehem.
² This opinion was expressed repeatedly during interviews and informal discussions during fieldwork. Following Sen (2009), this study argues that belonging to a social identity limits what are considered acceptable choices in either the social or political sphere; hence publically supporting Hamas, as an Islamist party, is irreconcilable with being a Christian.
violence and upheaval of the Arab Uprisings,\(^1\) the ongoing Israeli Occupation, Islamic fundamentalism, an ineffective Palestinian Authority, and perpetual statelessness have created an environment in which notions of the nation are increasingly splintered along political, communal, and religious lines. As a result, the Palestinian Christian community has struggled to define its role as a small, but integral part of the Palestinian national and cultural landscape. This study uses an analytical framework inspired by social identity theory to address how identity affects levels of integration (national belonging/state attachment) and modes of political participation in the Palestinian Christian communities.

**Social identity and state formation:**

As states form, they are shaped by the various socio-linguistic, religious, and ethnic groups from which they are constituted, which are consolidated or repurposed in the creation of a singular notion of the nation. In some cases, this national identity reflects the plurality of these various sub-national groups, becoming broad and inclusive. In other cases, the national identity is reflective of the group in the demographic, economic or cultural “majority”. This inevitably isolates other sub-national groups who then face the challenge of negotiating between the preservation of their cultural integrity, and loyalty and conformity to the state as “minorities”. Within the context of a stable nation-state, notions of national identity remain consistent over time, as does the relative position of various sub-national groups. However, within unstable states experiencing ongoing conflict, economic underdevelopment or the dissolution of borders, notions of the nation can become fractured along sub-national and supra-national lines. In these contexts, identity becomes a central consideration in the political field as these groups struggle to transform the ideological and structural nature of the state -- often based on the interests of the sub-national group they represent, rather than the nation as a whole.

Despite the relevance of social identity in the contemporary political culture of the Middle East, its effects on the social and political fields are poorly understood. This is partly due to the fact identity itself is difficult to define. As Fearon notes, ‘Even though everyone knows how to use the word properly in everyday discourse, it proves quite difficult to give a short and adequate summary

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\(^1\) The Arab Uprisings (“Arab Spring”; “Arab Awakening”) were a series of countrywide protests against authoritarianism and corruption beginning in Tunisia in 2010. These protests spread throughout 2011 and 2012 to Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Syria where leadership was either ousted or significantly challenged; and Bahrain, Lebanon, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia where the government either quickly quelled protests with minor changes or the threat of violence.
This is because of the nature of identity as a fluid concept with multiple meanings -- it is not easy to define it in absolute, static or singular terms. Rather, it is an ongoing process or dialogue between the social context and our sense of self. As such, it is impossible to define ourselves in relation to one coherent and temporally static identity. It is more accurate, therefore, to speak of moments of identification in which our many constituent “selves” layer in response to the social context. Although we may have a strong sense of who we are as individuals in these moments of identification, we almost always define ourselves in relation to larger social groups. That is, when answering the question, who are you?, the answer is almost always a social identity -- I am British; I am a Christian; I am a teacher. Naturally, we all identify with a number of social identities simultaneously, but certain of these identities become more salient in response to factors like the material or psychological utility of an identity or perceived threat against the group. But the layering of these social identities also affects our behaviour, as it shapes our priorities, needs, and loyalties, as well as the possible choices available to a member of that social group. This is because when we become members of social groups we often take on social roles -- as a Christian, a mother -- and implicit in these roles are certain behavioural expectations from the group and society as a whole.

Using social identity as an analytical tool, this study proposes that if Palestinian Christians feel alienated from the broader Palestinian national identity (i.e. they do not see themselves reflected in it), there can be a decline in the level attachment they feel towards the state and an increase in the level of communalism. Further, if Palestinian Christians do not feel that their leadership (priests, community leaders, etc.) can sufficiently address acute social and political issues, then they are less likely to be willing to endure the daily hardship of the Israeli Occupation and will be likelier to emigrate. As this study will show, this is evidenced by the fact that there is a decline in both religiosity and politicisation in the Palestinian Christian community. This is the result of a dual struggle: within the church to define its identity and vocation; and within the state to define its national identity whilst presenting a unifying narrative of the nation. This is because the level of

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5. "Moments of identification" is a term conceived in the process of writing this thesis. It was inspired by the cited works on social identity theory.
6. The material utility of identity refers to the tangible material benefits of associating identifying with a group; e.g. members of the Latin Church have greater access to the social welfare provided by the Vatican in the Middle East.
8. Communalism herein is defined as a strong connection, prioritisation, and allegiance to the religious community.
psychological and material utility that individuals derive from group identities, whether they are communal or political, is extremely consequential to their willingness to take part in these identities and to endure hardship. In other words, if these identities do not meet certain basic criteria, then there is little reason for individuals to take part in them.

**Approaches to the study of identity and politics in the Middle East:**

The evolving position of minorities in the Middle East and the ways in which they participate politically is an understudied area of academic research. Within the relatively stable context of authoritarianism, Middle Eastern Christians typically had close relationships with authoritarian regimes, both in order to preserve their often fragile position in society and because the alternatives to authoritarianism, such as political Islam, could potentially endanger their relatively stable position in society. In the Palestinian context, as discussed above, the lack of a state over the course of modern history, and the general trend of quasi-secular politics in Palestine has meant that Palestinian Christians have been able to play a significant role in Palestinian politics despite their relatively small number. However, apart from studies that give a cursory overview of political trends as part of broader studies on the history of these communities, there has been minimal academic focus on the issues at the core of these trends in the Palestinian Christian communities. Rather, studies on Palestinian Christians have generally given a historical or theological perspective on their history in the region. These types of published works can be grouped into two areas: those which are part of larger edited works on Middle Eastern Christianity, and those which address the history of a particular confessional community in the Holy Land.

Belonging to the first group, the edited work by Emma Loosley and Anthony O'Mahony, *Eastern Christianity in the Modern Middle East* (2010), offers a valuable interdisciplinary perspective on the contemporary state of Middle Eastern Christian communities, broken down by confessional

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10 The complex and evolving relationship between Middle Eastern Christian communities and authoritarian regimes has been characterised by pragmatism rather than ideological support, although amongst older Palestinian Christians there remains a certain level of allegiance to older Ba'ath party and pan-Arabist ideological perspectives. The issue of the Assad regime has become divisive amongst Palestinians more generally, but popular Palestinian Christian leaders like Atallah Hanna, Bishop of Sebastia, have come out in support of the Assad regime. Naela Khalil, "Syria War Polarizes West Bank Palestinians," *al-Monitor* 2013.
community. Similarly, the edited work, *Christian Communities in the Arab Middle East: The Challenge of the Future* (1998), offers varying interdisciplinary perspectives relating the contemporary struggles of Middle Eastern Christians to their historical origins. Both of these books were invaluable in terms of locating the general historical context of the Palestinian Christian communities in the early stages of this research.

More specific to the immediate regional context under examination in this thesis, Una McGahern’s 2011 book *Palestinian Christians in Israel: State Attitudes Towards Non-Muslims in a Jewish State*, was particularly useful in exploring how the experiences of the Palestinian Christian communities in Israel contrasted those of the Palestinian Christian communities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This work offered insights as to how the relationship between the state and the Christian communities shapes their attitudes towards feelings of integration and political participation. Similarly, Paolo Maggiolini’s 2015 paper, *Christian Churches and Arab Christians in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: Citizenship, Ecclesiastical Identity and Roles in the Jordanian Political Field*, offers a contrasting experience of how neighbouring Muslim-majority states relate to their Christian minority communities. It was particularly useful in terms of the examination of ecclesiastical identity in the context of participation in the political and national processes.

Books on the history of the various Palestinian Christian communities themselves were useful in further stages of the research. The specific historical context of the Palestinian Christian community was examined via a number of different perspectives. Firstly, studies that examined the historical context of the Palestinian Christian community broadly. In this respect, O’Mahony’s 2003 edited book, *The Christian Communities of Jerusalem and the Holy Land: Studies in History, Religion and Politics*, was valuable in discussing both the origins and contemporary context of the various Palestinian Christian confessional communities. Similarly, Marsh’s 2005 paper, *Palestinian Christianity – A Study in Religion and Politics*, gives a useful overview of the post-1948 political and

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Studies specific to the historical context of the two case study communities were also explored. O’Mahony has published numerous works on the Palestinian Latin community and the role of the Vatican in Palestinian/Israeli relations. In regards to both the history and internal political dynamics of these communities, *The Christian Communities of Jerusalem and the Holy Land: Studies in History, Religion and Politics* (2003) was valuable in discussing both the origins and contemporary context of the Palestinian Latin community, but also other Palestinian Christian communities. Similarly, O’Mahony’s 2007 work, *The Vatican, Jerusalem, the State of Israel, and Christianity in the Holy Land* gave insights into both the internal and external political dynamics of the Palestinian Latin community. The contemporary role of the Patriarchal leadership, particularly that of former Patriarch Sabbah, was explored in O’Mahony’s 2005 paper, *Rome and Jerusalem: The Vatican and Christianity in the Holy Land*.

The considerably longer history of the Palestinian Orthodox community was explored both in connection to the history of Orthodoxy more generally and its origins in the Holy Land. In this regard, Tsimhoni’s two papers *The Status of the Arab Christians under the British Mandate in Palestine* (1982) and *The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine* (1978) give a useful overview of the history of this community in

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Palestine. Several other papers focused specifically on the contested identity of the Palestinian Orthodox community, whilst also giving detailed histories. Marsh’s 2011 paper, The Orthodox Church and its Palestinian-Christian Identity, connects the contemporary struggle over the identity of the Palestinian Orthodox community to the issue of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem’s vocation over its long history. Similarly, Vatikiotis’ 1994 paper, The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem between Hellenism and Arabism, discusses the impact of the development of competing Greek and Arab nationalisms on the identity of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Roussos has published numerous studies on issues of identity and politics in the Orthodox community. The 2003 paper, The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and Community of Jerusalem: Church, State and Identity, gives a very useful background to the history of the Palestinian Orthodox community from the Ottoman period into the early 1990s. This paper also usefully examines the role of colonial powers in these struggles over the identity and vocation of the Jerusalem Patriarchate throughout the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries. Similarly, Roussos’ 1999 paper, The Greek Orthodox Community of Jerusalem in International Politics: International Solutions for Jerusalem and the Greek Orthodox Community in the 19th and 20th Centuries, discusses the important role of international actors in the local politics of the Palestinian and ethnic Greek Orthodox communities in the Holy Land. Roussos’ 1995 paper, How Greek, how Palestinian? The Patriarchate of Jerusalem in the Mid-War Years, continues the discussion over the contested identity of the Patriarchate, detailing specifically the transition from Ottoman to British authority. The relationship between the early Arab nationalist movements and Orthodoxy was explored in a 2007 paper, The Emergence of Arab Nationalism and Greek Orthodox Church Networks in the Near East: 1899-1947, which formed a useful basis for the discussion of these
trends in chapter four. Finally, the contemporary manifestations of identity and politics in the Palestinian Orthodox community was explored in a 2005 paper by Katz and Kark titled, The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and its Congregation: Dissent Over Real Estate, in which they detail the relationship of the Greek higher clergy to the State of Israel, centring on the sale of Patriarchal land to the Israeli investors.

In addition to the above texts, studies related more specifically to social, theological, and political issues within the Palestinian Christian communities were examined. In general, these studies can generally be grouped into two areas of focus: studies on identity and surveys. Lybarger has published two insightful studies on negotiating religion and politics in Palestine. The first, a 2007 book entitled Identity and Religion in Palestine, addresses the evolving role of religion in the Palestinian political landscape. This has been particularly useful in understanding how religion has come to shape the political landscape in Palestine. Lybarger addressed Palestinian Christian identity more specifically in a 2007 paper, For church or nation? : Islamism, secular-nationalism, and the transformation of Christian identities in Palestine, in which he relies on ethnographic research to discuss three particular modes of political belonging within these communities. Similarly, Kårtveit's 2014 book, Dilemmas of Attachment: Identity and Belonging Among Palestinian Christians, provides a nuanced and insightful look into the complexities of national belonging for the Palestinian Christian communities, as well as highlighting the realities of Christian-Muslim relations in Palestine. These complex dynamics of Christian-Muslim relations in Palestinian were also usefully explored in Haiduc-Dale's 2015 paper, Rejecting Sectarianism: Palestinian Christians' Role in Muslim-Christian Relations. This paper offers a historical perspective on Christian-Muslim relations, particularly in relation to modes of Christian political participation in the Arab and Palestinian nationalist movements over time. Bowman also addresses the complex modes of national belonging amongst Palestinians in general, with some special emphasis on the particularity of national belonging for the Christian community in the 2007 edited book Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Peace and Conflict Research. Relating specifically to the intersection of religion and politics in the Palestinian Christian communities, Marsh's 2004 paper, Palestinian Christians: Theology and Politics in the Holy

Land, discusses specific theological responses, like Palestinian Liberation Theology, to the social and political context of the communities.32

The second group of studies, which informed much of the framework for this analysis, were a group of demographic and other surveys carried out largely by Palestinian NGOs and CROs. These studies provided a useful basis from which to carry out further study. These included the 2006 Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel33, which addresses demographic issues in particular; a 1996 study by Sabella and Hanf entitled A Date with Democracy: Palestinians on Society and Politics, an Empirical Survey,34 which gives an overview of Palestinian political opinions; a 2008 study by the Diyar Consortium Palestinian Christians in the West Bank: Facts, Figures and Trends,35 which is an excellent resource for understanding the material contribution of Palestinian Christians in the field of social welfare; and two studies by Sabella in 2001, Comparing Palestinian Christians on Society and Politics: Context and Religion in Israel and Palestine36 and 2005 Christian Arab Presence in Palestine,37 which discuss trends in the political opinions of the community. Additionally, the Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research, which has carried out dozens of large-scale surveys on topics ranging from political support to views on violence, has generously made the raw survey data from 38 surveys conducted between 2000-2010 available for this study. Christian-specific data was then tracked and analysed in SPSS. This data has given considerable insights into political support over time, views on the Palestinian Authority, levels of religiosity, opinions on the peace process, and numerous other social and political issues.

Within the larger field of identity politics, studies have typically relied on survey data in order to track the ways in which gender, ethnicity, and religion affect political participation. However because of the reliance on quantitative data and surveys, these studies have tended to oversimplify or misinterpret the relationships between various levels of identity and politics. One clear example of

34 Theodor Hanf and Bernard Sabella, A Date with Democracy: Palestinians on Society and Politics, an Empirical Survey (Freiburg: Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institut, 1996).
this in the Palestinian Christian context is the disconnect between the perceived dominance of certain political parties within the communities, and the election results themselves. Survey data is unable to explain why, for example, a Palestinian Christian may support Hamas as a resistance group, attend a PFLP rally, and then vote for Fatah. As such, it is valuable to explore the complexities of political choice, identity and social behaviour because this may give us insights into other issues like emigration, sectarianism, and alternative state building models. These issues over the methodology and terminology in studies on identity politics are discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

Studies on nationalism and state development were also used in this study. However, an underlying and potentially problematic assumption of these studies is that they assume that nations necessarily develop into states. Relatively few studies have addressed nationalism within the context of statelessness. Wedeen's 2008 book, *Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power, and Performance in Yemen*, which discusses how Yemenis form national attachments in the absence of a strong and coherent state apparatus, was particularly instructive on issues of statelessness, as well as offering a compelling critique of traditional models of nation and state theory. Chapter Three of this study continues this discussion and engages with traditional notions of nationalism and state building.

Although these publications on identity and surveys of political and social trends have provided useful insights into broad trends within the community, there have not been any studies which have provided a clear link between identity issues and political behaviour within the Palestinian Christian community. There have also been few studies that have detailed voting trends and political party support over time. This study hopes to address these gaps.

As the future of nations and states in the Middle East continues to evolve, it is important to address how groups will enforce, reinvent, and transmit ideas of the nation. Further, studies that address the negotiation between religious and political identity are particularly relevant to the contemporary Middle East, as they can contribute to our understanding of how areas of significant religious diversity envision the future of the nation and state. It is hoped that this study will make a contribution to our understanding of how non-Muslim minorities in particular negotiate between preserving the cultural integrity of their religious identities, whilst participating in a political context that is increasingly divided along religious lines. This is particularly relevant to state-building efforts in Iraq, Afghanistan, and potentially post-conflict Syria as federalism, proportional electoral systems,
and devolved parliamentary powers have thus far failed to successfully integrate minority communities in the national political field. As discussed in Chapter Five, this is because minority communities often have a complicated relationship with affirmative action efforts, which may isolate their communities or exacerbate the perceived differences between sub-national groups and the nation as a whole. This study can therefore offer insights into the ways in which these communities view their place in society, and the effects of these types of political arrangements. Finally, it is hoped that this study will contribute to the study of Palestinian politics more generally, as a supplement to the broader field of Palestinian studies.

Key Definitions:

Before elaborating on the methodology used in this study, it is necessary to define a few key terms. Firstly, this study uses the term “minority”, but does so cautiously and critically. Although the ongoing conflicts in Syria and Iraq have drawn considerable academic and media attention to the vulnerable minorities of the Middle East, there has been little critical examination of how the term is used. Middle Eastern minority groups have been broadly defined as non-Muslim (Christian, Yazidi, Jewish, among many others), but also include Shi’a Muslims, moderate Muslims, atheists, women, children, LGBT communities and any other groups who do not fit into the rigid religio-cultural paradigm of Daesh (Islamic State). However, despite the diversity of these groups, they are discussed within a similar intellectual framework structured by our preconceived notions of what being a minority entails. Our understanding of minority status in the Middle East therefore become amorphous, raising questions as to its usefulness and accuracy.

Within the context of the modern Middle East, minority is used primarily to characterize groups that are in some way subordinate or vulnerable within their specific cultural or political context. It is this understanding of minority that has led to the development of international protections of these groups and the enshrining of minority rights within the legislative frameworks of developing states: e.g. devolved parliamentary powers and reserved parliamentary seats. A fundamental flaw in this

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38 The term “moderate Muslim” is used cautiously and infrequently in this study. As the British journalist Sarfraz Manzoor rightly points out, the term incorrectly implies a distinction between “good” secular and westernised Muslims and “bad” observant Muslims. Within the context of this study, the term is used only to distinguish between Muslims who support political Islam and those who support other political ideologies. Sarfraz Manzoor, "Can We Drop the Term ‘Moderate Muslim’? It’s Meaningless," The Guardian (2015), http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/mar/16/moderate-muslim-devout-liberal-religion.
understanding is that it does not provide the necessarily background to understand how a minority community has interacted with society over time. Thus, we consider both the tragically besieged Iraqi Yazidis and the far more stable Egyptian Copts to be minorities, independent of their vastly different social and political realities. This suggests that the language we use to understand these communities suffers from a lack of precision resulting from our failure to consider the perspectives of the communities themselves, who may reject their characterization as unequal, subordinate or vulnerable. At best this mislabelling may result in a bruising of egos, at worst it may undermine or discredit the enormous contributions that these communities have made to their national cultures, by assuming that they are irreconcilably different from their countrymen. This has wide ranging implications for the ways in which these groups are perceived within their evolving national contexts, but also the ways in which the international community engages with development, state building, and aid. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, the term is used only in reference to the demography of the Palestinian Christians, not to imply that they are in any way subordinate within their societies. This choice was made primarily because, as Chapter Seven will discuss in more detail, the community itself rejects the term, reflecting the complex relationship that Middle Eastern Christians have with their status as “vulnerable minorities”.

It is also important to briefly discuss what is meant by the term “community” within the context of this study. As Mayo discusses, ‘definitions of community’ have tended to focus upon two aspects – community in terms of place or shared geography, and community in terms of shared interests, whether these are based upon ‘race’, ethnicity, religion or some other interest which the community in question shares in common.”39 This study uses community in three contexts: the broad Palestinian Christian community, which encompasses a number of smaller confessional communities; the confessional communities themselves (i.e. Orthodox, Latin, Baptist, etc.); and the national community – Palestinian. The first two comprise “communities of interest”, in which members of the community share in common, but also often imagined sets of interests and values. In that sense, communities of interest are intimately linked with the concepts of social identity and the in/out-group, which are discussed further in Chapter Two. The national community also shares in an imagined set of interests, but has a stronger emphasis on geography, in that the nation or national homeland is an important aspect of how the national community is conceptualised. This

39 Marjorie Mayo, Cultures, Communities, Identities: Cultural Strategies for Participation and Empowerment (Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 39
study is primarily interested in how individuals negotiate between these varying levels of identity and community, as well as the points at which the interests of these varying identities intersect.

These processes of negotiating identity, community, and interest are apparent in the discussion of how the confessional communities define and refer to themselves, as the names of the confessional communities often reflect internal debates as to the identity and vocation of the churches themselves. The two case study communities in this study are the Greek Orthodox and Latin communities, who constitute the two largest confessional communities in Palestine. Although this study also deals with the Palestinian Christian community more broadly, issues of religious identity are explored in more detail within the context of these two confessional communities.

Issues of social/communal identity were particular strong in the Orthodox community. Although the term “Greek Orthodox” is appropriate shorthand to refer to the specific rituals and liturgy of this confession, the identity of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem has been the source of conflict between the Arab laity and ethnic Greek higher clergy since at least the advent of Greek and Arab nationalism in the 19th century. In the contemporary context, the indigenous Palestinian Orthodox community refers to itself using the Ottoman designation “Rum Orthodoks” – although in the Ottoman period this term referred to Orthodox of all ethnicities. Rum Orthodoks is the primary term used in this study, however Greek Orthodox is used when referring to the institution of the Patriarchate itself. The term “Arab Orthodox” is used in some instances to distinguish between the Arabic-speaking indigenous Orthodox Christians of the Middle East and their ethnic Greek counterparts, although the community rarely refers to themselves with this label. Within the considerably younger Latin community, there is not a longstanding struggle over the name of the church and community. But given the presence of approximately 10 other Christian denominations across the Middle East, including sizeable Catholic communities of other rites: Maronite, Chaldean, Melkite, this study refers to the community as “Latin” despite the fact that many respondents referred to themselves simply as Katholik (Catholic).

Methodology and Plan of Study:
This study consists of two major sections: communal identity and political identity. Both sections rely on qualitative data obtained during fieldwork in the West Bank in 2014. A majority of the

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40. Catholics of the Roman rite.
interviews took place in and around the Bethlehem area including: Bethlehem city, Beit Sahour, Beit Jala, East Jerusalem and further afield in Taybeh and Ramallah. 20 semi-structured interviews were conducted lasting from one to two hours, in addition to four focus groups with 5-10 participants each, and hours of observation in youth groups, churches, political rallies, and community events.

Through these interviews with community members, church leadership, NGO and CRO workers, and politicians, this study was able to gain a nuanced view of identity within these communities. Although this study also deals with trends across the Palestinian Christian community as a whole, two case study communities were examined in greater detail: the Rum Orthodox and Latin communities. As detailed above, these communities were chosen not only because they are the two largest confessional communities in Palestine, but also because their contrasting histories and origins can offer insights into the differences and similarities in the experience of identity therein. The case study approach, of course, limits the ability to make generalisations about the community as a whole, but can also show the considerable complexity and depth of the experience of identity and its varying effects on political participation in the community.

A qualitative method was chosen because of its ability to track the dynamics of ‘attitudes, values and behaviour patterns of ordinary citizens’, which other studies on Middle Eastern identity politics are often lacking due to their reliance on survey data. This has allowed for a more thorough examination of the ways in which identity shapes interest and action in the social space, as well as helping to explain inconsistencies within the data – such as Christian support for Hamas or disconnects between perceived dominance of certain political parties and electoral data. Interview and focus group participants were selected using the chain sampling technique, in which initial research contacts referred additional participants from within their own social or professional networks. This technique was chosen because of its proven efficacy in conflict environments in which it may be difficult to gain access to certain groups. I was also acutely aware of the limitations of chain or referral sampling, both in relation to the possible selection bias of community "gatekeepers" and potentially becoming isolated within their social networks. In order to avoid these pitfalls, my initial research contacts were chosen from a variety of sources with diverse backgrounds, professions, confessional communities and age groups. In this way,

42. Ibid.
participants were not limited from within a single social or professional network. Within the context of the fieldwork, several key themes were addressed with interview and focus group participants in order to best identify factors affecting identity and state attachment.

**Communal Identity:**
1. What factors determine whether or not an individual identifies with their confessional community or their broader communal identity?
2. What role does the material utility of the community play in identity choice?
3. Is there a relationship between contextualisation of the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict in the faith and levels of attachment to the communal or confessional identities?
4. How have evolving social norms (such as interfaith marriage) affected views of the confessional communities?
5. What role does church leadership play in influencing political choice?

**Political Identity:**
1. What factors determine whether or not an individual identifies with their national identity?
2. What role does the material utility (the material benefit gained by the individual or group) of the state play in identity choice?
3. How is the Palestinian nation conceptualised within the Christian community?
4. How do Palestinian Christians conceptualise their role in Palestinian society?
   a. In terms of Citizenship
   b. In terms of Equal Rights
5. How does political participation function?
   a. Voting trends
   b. Party support
   c. What factors contribute to whether or not individuals participate in politics?
6. How has political participation changed over time?
7. What are views on resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?
8. What are the major concerns for the future of the Palestinian Christian community?
In addition to addressing the above themes, each interview was concluded with an identity card exercise. Respondents were given index cards with possible social identifications listed on them and then asked to chose the cards relevant to them and arrange them according to personal importance. The respondent was then asked to discuss why they had chosen the particular cards and excluded others, as well as their prioritisation of identities. This exercise gave insights into how individuals identified, what factors influenced their identity, and lead to other discussions about the ways in which respondent's social identity had changed over time. Although this was an enlightening exercise, it was undoubtedly influenced by the context of the interview and interviewer. As is discussed in the introduction, it is expected that the results would vary slightly depending on the context.

The interviews were conducted on the condition of anonymity and names were omitted from the saved data, but information on age, religious background, political background, and location of the interview were recorded. This interview material was transcribed and then entered into the NVivo software for analysis and coding. Major coding themes were as follows:

1. Church life
2. Political support and trends
3. Identity and history
4. Demography
5. Social and public life

Survey data was created based upon opinion surveys conducted by the Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research (PCPSR). I was given access to the raw SPSS data files from 38 large-scale opinion polls conducted from 2000-2010. Christian-specific data was then analysed in SPSS. Sample size varied from survey to survey, but averaged around 50 Christian respondents from an even distribution of male and female respondents to each of the 38 surveys. This sample size reflected the total percentage of Christians to the total population (roughly 1%).

43 The idea of the identity card exercise came from a discussion with members of the Defining and Identifying Middle Eastern Christian Communities in Europe (DIMECCE) research team, who used a similar exercise in their 2014/2015 study. https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/dimecce/
44 The methodology for the PCPSR surveys can be accessed here: http://www.pcpsr.org/en/node/153
45 Geographic distribution was as follows: 'Palestine is divided into several strata with each representing the towns, cities, villages, and refugee camps in the 16 governorates (muhafazat). Palestine is also divided into "counting areas," or clusters, with each containing a number of families (ranging from 80 to 160 families in each cluster). The number of families in each cluster designates the size of that cluster. The 1997 census provides detailed data on the families as well as detailed maps showing every house in each cluster. The total number of clusters in Palestine is 3200.' From the
This qualitative data was supplemented and informed by numerous primary and secondary source materials. Primary source material consisted primarily of electoral and demographic data obtained from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Palestinian Elections Commission, Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research, Birzeit University, and Bethlehem University. The electoral data used in this study was not easily obtained. Data from the Palestinian Central Elections Commission and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics was often incomplete. Therefore, data from all available PA sources was collated into a new list (see appendix) of election results for the electoral districts covered in this study. Student electoral data from Birzeit and Bethlehem Universities was obtained from the Deans of Student Affairs from both universities – this data was perhaps the most complete overall. Information regarding the numerous political parties at the local level was obtained from a combination of qualitative interviews, the PA, and the PLC. Interestingly, the municipalities visited during fieldwork were unable to relate any details about local political parties or offer electoral data.

Additionally, because of the rapidly evolving political and social situation in Palestine, numerous Palestinian news sources were consulted on a regular basis throughout the duration of this study. In order to track Christian-specific issues, the websites of the Latin and Greek Patriarchates of Jerusalem were also consulted on a regular basis, along with newsletters published by these organisations. Press releases and reports from Palestinian NGOs and CROs were also instrumental in this thesis. Social media groups focusing on Palestinian Christian issues were also followed regularly and were essential to understanding how ongoing issues were framed within the communities themselves.

**Positionality:**
Throughout the fieldwork, I was acutely aware of the limitations that my own subject position, both as an outsider, and in dealing with a minority community in a conflict zone, had on the outcome of interviews and the access I was granted to interview subjects. My own interpretation of the data was most certainly affected by my gender, nationality, political opinions, economic background, education, etc. However, following similar theoretical perspectives that inform the discussion of

identity in this study, I take the position that both researcher and research subject maintain a number of subject positions that are expressed differently through the process of social interaction. Therefore, I do not consider the researcher or research subject to be 'representatives of a class, stratum or generation', but rather a layering of various subject positions. In this sense, neither researcher nor research subject has a fixed positionality.

At the same time, there were situations in which certain subject positions became extremely consequential to the access that was granted. My position as an outsider made it necessary for me to gain the trust of respondents before being given access to sensitive or critical information. However, because the research subjects were guaranteed anonymity, they would often share views on subjects that they may have not shared with their fellow community members, particularly critical views of the political or church leadership. In other cases, community gatekeepers questioned my nationality as an American and political perspectives – particularly my views on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict -- as part of a vetting process to allow further access. Whilst this was avoided as much as possible, it did occur in a number of instances and may have impacted upon the types of information offered by respondents.

Plan of study:
The second chapter of this thesis lays out the theoretical framework of this study. Focus is given to the use of identity as an analytical concept, as well as the ways in which identity shapes social and political action. Chapter Three details the development of nations, states, and nationalism in the Middle East, with a particular emphasis on the theories of Benedict Anderson and Anthony Smith. It then examines the particularity of Palestinian statelessness and how this has come to affect the development of nationalism in that context. This analysis also covers the evolving role of religion in the Palestinian national discourse and how this has affected state attachment for the Palestinian Christian communities. Chapter Four discusses the historical development of the two largest Palestinian Christian denominations – the Greek Orthodox and Latin – from the perspective of identity and vocation of the Orthodox and Latin Patriarchates of Jerusalem. Chapter Five examines the interaction of religious, communal, and national identities in order to determine their effect on


47 Nationality becomes an even more important factor in times of conflict – particularly as the involvement of the American government in Israeli/Palestinian affairs continues to be disproportionately greater than any other international player.
social and political action. This chapter details the role of communal identity in political decision making, Palestinian Christian perspectives on the role of their church in their political life, and how the history of these denominations affects political action and national belonging in the contemporary context. The chapter goes on to explore notions of political identity, focusing on Arabism, political affiliation, and notions of national belonging. Chapter Six focuses on political trends within the Palestinian Christian communities, with a particular emphasis on local and student politics. It details major political trends, party support, and the factors contributing to these trends where discernible. Chapter Seven discusses the implications of identity issues on the Palestinian Christian communities, presenting an analysis of contemporary demographic decline and emigration.
Chapter Two -- Identity Choice and Social and Political Action:

As detailed in the introductory chapter, identity can have a significant influence on social and political behaviour primarily because of its ability to shape the frameworks within which we make choices. However, despite the important role that identity plays in human behaviour, it remains a rather elusive concept, with a variety of meanings and uses. Indeed, identification, as Hall argues, ‘turns out to be one of the least well-understood concepts [...] it is drawing meanings from both the discursive and the psychoanalytic repertoire, without being limited to either.’ \(^{48}\) Identification is heavily dependent on the individual or group’s association with a shared origin, often based in a mythically constructed and distant past. \(^{49}\) These origins may be “constructed”, in the sense that they often have imagined or ambiguous attributes, and “real” in the sense that they are often based on tangibles like ethnicity and language or a common religious background and culture. On another level, identification can be based on association with particular social categories and social roles like profession, social clubs or even style of dress. However, the notion of identity as multiple and fluid concept necessarily means that individuals possess many possible identities to which they may or may not associate with depending upon the context. When our many possible identities layer in response to the social context, our internalised understanding of socially acceptable norms and choices are also affected, thus shaping our behaviour.

This chapter address the factors that influence identity choice, and how these choices affect social and political action in the Palestinian Christian communities. The first section narrows the scope of identity, distinguishing between broadly defined *personal* and *social* identities. This is followed by an examination of the various processes of identity choice, and the consequences of these choices for social and political action with a particular focus on notions of state attachment and integration.

*Locating Identity:*

Following Penn, this study begins with the empirical observation that individuals simultaneously belong to ‘a large collection of groups’, which they choose (either consciously or subconsciously) to

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associate with or emphasise depending on the social context. In this way it is observed that there are contexts in which certain identities may come to the fore in order to produce a desired action in the social space. In the context of this study, Palestinian Christian participants have dozens of “potential identities” that they may consider to be the most important to them personally in a given context – Palestinian, Christian, Greek Orthodox, Latin, Arab – to name just a few. Although it is often the case that one or two of these identities will take priority over less important identities, identity is fluid to the extent that the individual’s interaction with others causes him/her to constantly renegotiate or redefine themselves in relation to the social context. In other words, because the social context is not static, identity cannot be static or singular. This view is compatible with the concept of situational selection, in which certain aspects of social identity can be more rigid than others – e.g. race, gender, religion, nationality – but are nevertheless partly dependent on ‘situational forces’ like social context and the influence of external actors.

Naturally, the definition and uses of identity within this context are quite broad. But, as Fearon argues, identity is primarily used ‘in two linked senses’: personal and social. Personal identity can be understood firstly as self-categorisation through differentiation from the other, i.e. ‘what individuates us, defines and distinguishes us from others, and makes us this person rather than some other’. Secondly, following Turner and Tajfel, personal identity can be understood as some distinguishing characteristic(s) ‘that a person takes a special pride in or views as socially consequential but more-or-less unchangeable’. Although personal identity is very much linked to, and dependent upon social identity, social identity is distinct in that it understood primarily through our membership within social groups: ‘as a social category and a socially distinguishing feature’; as a process of self-categorisation within a social structure; or of social connectedness and “groupness”.

Although these prevailing definitions are somewhat ambiguous, they do provide a useful basis to discuss how identity is used as an analytical category. As Brubaker and Cooper note, it is largely due

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51. Ibid., 957
52. Fearon, "What Is Identity (as We Now Use the Word)?", 2
53. Sen, "The Fog of Identity.", 286
56. Fernando Aguiar, Andres de Francisco, "Rational Choice, Social Identity, and Beliefs About Oneself," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 39, no. 4 (2009), 552
to the ambiguous nature of identity theory that the uses of identity are so widespread and varied, whilst also being dependent upon the theoretical tradition in which the theorist is situated. Indeed a major criticism of using identity as an analytical category is the fact that it is made to do “a great deal of work” with often flimsy or “weak” definitions of what it actually means. This is complicated by the fact that identity is used across the social sciences to explain a variety of phenomenon, from equally varied analytical and theoretical perspectives. As Aguilar and de Francisco neatly summarise,

*The concept of identity has been employed to analyze non-instrumental, expressive modes of action that assumedly aid us in understanding participation in social movements (Melucci 1994). It has been used in turn to explain the fragmented nature of the contemporary self (Giddens 1991) and to reject that the contemporary self is fragmented (Rinken 2000). Identity has been interpreted as a fuzzy set of roles (Montgomery 2000), as a source of individual security and stability (Woodward 2003), and as a process of self-categorization that creates meaningful group boundaries that, depending on the context, may exacerbate the contrast with other groups through stereotyping and prejudice (Turner et al. 1987).*

A major concern in this study was therefore to use identity in such a way that the empirical data collected during fieldwork is suitably and thoroughly examined, without discounting data that does not fit into an overly rigid paradigm. When used in a theoretical vacuum or when applied merely to quantitative data like elections, identity loses much of its ability to describe the nuance and complexity of human behaviours.

Although there is a great deal of variety in the particular uses of identity, identity choice is understood from two main perspectives. The instrumentalist approach considers interest or utility to be the primary motivator in identity choice and subsequent action in the social and political spheres. In this paradigm, individuals make choices that are most materially or socially beneficial to them in a given context in order to “maximize their benefits.” In contrast, the constructivist approach considers the interaction of identity and a particularistic social context to be the primary motivating factor in social and political action. As mentioned above, empirical data collected during fieldwork suggests that the social constructivist view is more suitable in the context of this study. Identity is recognised as multiple and fluid, and situations were observed in which interest or utility were subverted in exchange for altruism. At the same time however, it is recognised that there are often contexts in which individual or group interest is the primary motivator. Therefore,

58. Ibid.
59. Francisco, "Rational Choice, Social Identity, and Beliefs About Oneself."
60. Ibid., 548
61. Brubaker and Cooper, “Beyond Identity”, 7
although interest takes a lesser role in this examination of identity, situations were recognised in
which the fluidity of identity is made to ‘harden, congeal and crystalise’ often at the behest of
external actors.\textsuperscript{62} However, rather than placing emphasis on ‘traditional issues of labour and
production’ – as instrumentalists have historically done – this study moves identity to a more central
role, stressing the ‘expressive goals of self-realization’ and taking into account ‘previously devalued
differences’ like race, religion, and gender.\textsuperscript{63}

Therefore, following Jenkins, this study attempts to forge a middle path, in which interest and
identity are not viewed as two mutually exclusive or opposing forces.\textsuperscript{64} Rather, it is argued that the
ways in which individuals identify shapes their interests, and \textit{vice versa}.\textsuperscript{65} Thus, ‘individuals may
sometimes pursue interests that appear to run counter to their public identification(s), ethnic or
otherwise.’\textsuperscript{66} As an example, a majority of Palestinian Christian respondents indicated that they
would never vote for Hamas because they viewed the Islamisation of Palestine as a major barrier to
their citizenship status in a future state. Yet other respondents indicated that they knew Palestinian
Christians who had voted for Hamas in local elections because of their perceived ability to resist
Israel – demonstrating clearly that choice is far more nuanced that a wholly constructivist or
instrumentalist paradigm can describe. In this way, it is hoped that this study will contribute to an
ongoing debate within constructivist circles as to the usefulness and rigor of the constructivist
approach, which has been criticised as being overly “soft” and broad.\textsuperscript{67} Therefore, in order to make
a useful contribution to this debate, this study does not take the constructed nature of identity for
granted, but rather continues to explore \textit{how} identity is constructed and \textit{why} this matters.\textsuperscript{68}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{62}Ibid., 29
\bibitem{63}Margaret Sommers, "The Narrative Constitution of Identity: A Relational and Network Approach," \textit{Theory and Society} 25, no. 5 (1994), 608
\bibitem{65}Ibid., 9
\bibitem{66}Ibid., 8
\bibitem{67}For further critiques of the constructivist approach see for example: Roger Brubaker et al., \textit{Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Brubaker and Cooper, "Beyond "Identity.""); James Fearon and David Laitin, "Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity," \textit{International Organization} 54, no. 4 (2000); Fearon, "What Is Identity (as We Now Use the Word)?."
\bibitem{68}Ibid.Roger Brubaker et al., 7.
\end{thebibliography}
**Personal and Social Identity:**

As suggested in the previous section, identity is understood as having both personal and social elements. Whilst enlightenment thought\(^69\) viewed personal identity as being contingent on a “core self” – soul, essence – a post-modern perspective\(^70\) argues that personal identity is defined through a relationship with the social context and is essentially subject to change. This view was further elaborated by Giddens and Hall who distinguish between three different conceptions of identity subject: the enlightenment subject, the sociological subject, and the post-modern subject.\(^71\) In each case the relationship between subject (the individual or group) and structure (the broader cultural context) is dependent on both the individual’s conception of the self and the realities of the social structure, with the distinction being whether or not the individual is viewed as having an autonomous core self. The enlightenment conception of the subject views the individual as having an inner unchanging or unalterable core self which moves throughout time and space as a distinct identity, independent of the structure that surrounds it. In contrast, the sociological subject forms his or her identity based on the relationship with ‘significant others, who mediate to the subject the values, meanings and symbols – the culture – of the worlds he/she inhabited’.\(^72\) In other words, an individual’s identity is formed ‘in the interaction between the self and society’ or the personal and the public.\(^73\) We simultaneously ‘project ourselves into these [public] cultural identities’, and internalise ‘their meanings and values’, which helps to align our subjective feelings and identities with the objective places in our social and cultural worlds.\(^74\)

This conception of identity also provides personal identity with a certain amount of fixity, particularly within "traditional" or pre-state cultures, where social and cultural structures were less prone to the rapid and constant change of the modern and globalised world. This is because the sociological conception of identity maintains that subject’s identity is dependent on its interaction with certain objective points in the structure of the cultural world. It is therefore somewhat fixed in nature, in that cultural reproduction maintains a measure of consistency over time through ‘recurrent social

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\(^69\) Enlightenment thought degraded the role of faith in scientific study, focusing rather on reason and rationality.

\(^70\) Post-modernism disrupted the enlightenment view that there is an essential truth that can be derived through the pursuit of reason and rationality. Rather, it articulated that reality was incomplete and in a state of perpetual change.


\(^72\) Ibid., 597.

\(^73\) Ibid., 597.

practices' like ceremony, tradition, and religious practice. By placing these social actions within a continuous narrative of past, present and future, Giddens argues, traditional societies can make use of symbols and histories that represent the collective experience of previous generations.

However with the emergence of modern societies, which are characterised by the continual expansion and fluidity of cultural and material production, the post-modern subject has emerged. Klar argues that the post-modern subject is detached from 'traditional, overarching social structures' and is therefore free to identify with 'new and multiple social and political groups.' Consequently, the post-modern subject has no "core identity" because, unlike the sociological subject, the lack of recurrent social practices and ever-changing modes of cultural production within modern societies have resulted in fewer "fixed points" within the social structure with which the subject can connect. Rather, as Giddens suggests, modernity is 'a highly reflexive form of life in which social processes are constantly examined and reformed in the light of incoming information about those very practices, thus constitutively altering their character.' In other words, it is no longer thought that a person's identity is derived from a "core self" but rather through his or her interaction with society and the internalisation of group values.

As such, personal identity is understood in the context of this study as 'that part of the individuals' self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership.' It is, in other words, defined primarily through our interactions with the other, so that when we answer the question who am I, the answer is almost always a social identity or social category rather than something essential to only ourselves: I am a student; I am a teacher; I am a Palestinian; I am a Christian.

Social identity is therefore understood through our membership within social groups. Social identities help us to make sense of who we are and also what is expected of us by the society at large when we enter into the social roles dictated by group membership. There are, therefore, both internal and

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76. Hall, Modernity--an Introduction to Modern Societies., 599.
78. Hall, Modernity--an Introduction to Modern Societies., 599
80. Fearon, "What Is Identity (as We Now Use the Word)?"
external expectations when we enter into a social identity. If an individual identifies as a Christian, he or she adopts a certain moral and cultural worldview, whilst simultaneously taking on the social role of a Christian – including all of the expectations that society has of Christians as a group. These social roles have a number of effects on social and political action as they not only shape individual interest, but can also limit an individual's available social and political choices to the extent that only certain choices are socially acceptable given the social role. This is supported by Senn and Parekh who argue that one root of communalism is an individual lack of reasoning about identity choice – an individual's resistance to making reasoned or rational identity choices due to the 'unreasoned conviction that one's personal identity is dependent on one's social identity'.81 This has important consequences for social and political action, in that individuals' identification with a specific group – Christian or Greek Orthodox as an example – consequently places limits on acceptable behaviour and acceptable choices in the social and political landscape: As a Christian, I could not vote for Hamas.

This is related to the ways in which group membership functions. If there are mismatches between group/societal expectations and the behaviour of an individual, this may endanger membership in the group. As an example, national identity is a form of social identity that is defined primarily by the state. Both the state and the society have a set of expectations and values that are meant to be upheld by members of the national group – patriotism, often a specific religious belief, national language, etc. Under stable conditions these expectations and values remain somewhat consistent over time, as do power relations between sub-national groups. Under unstable conditions such as a failed state or state in transition, the expectations and values of the national group are subject to rapid and unpredictable change. As internal power dynamics shift, it may be the case that a new sub-national group becomes more dominant thus having a greater effect on the discourse of the nation. Consequently those sub-national groups who may have enjoyed positions of prominence or stability in the former state/national structure (minorities in particular) may no longer fulfil the expectations and values of the changing social identity of the nation. Their membership in the group may then be endangered. Therefore, as the values and roles of the national identity change, so too do the conditions for membership.

81. Sen, "The Fog of Identity.", 287
This study takes the position that individuals maintain a number of *social identities* that change in response to the social context. This choice may be affected by *in-group* bias, perceived threat against the group, religious or political conviction, pragmatism, and a host of other circumstances. Social and political preference and action are shaped by an individual or group's 'position in social space'; i.e. the relation of 'particularistic categorical attributes' like religious denomination, tribalism, gender, generation, political affiliations, etc., to the social context. Social and political choices are therefore seen as being dependent on the complex interaction of group identities and the social space.

**Identity choice:**
Choosing the ways in which one identifies is a natural process that we use in order to relate to and make sense of society, and also for society to relate to and understand us. Through empirical field research, this study sought to answer two questions; what motivates identity choice? And how does identity choice affect political and social action? Three major internal processes of identity choice were identified, as well as two major external factors influencing these choices. Internal processes of identity choice are the ways in which we negotiate possible social identities in relation to our personal identity. These choices are characterised in three ways: *group pride, utility and defensiveness*.

**Group pride:**
As Turner and Tajfel argue, identification with a group, 'implies that the individual cares about the well-being of the group, and thus exhibits a bias toward the group.' This conceptual framework for in-group bias comes largely from the field of social identity theory, which suggests that self-esteem gained from association with a group is a 'central motivation of behaviour', which is determined and maintained by individual's social settings and the categories or roles they fill in that

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82. In-group bias, as defined by Turner and Tajfel is 'a descriptive concept referring to any tendency to favour the ingroup over the outgroup, in behaviour, attitudes, preferences or perception'. Tajfel, "Social Comparison and Group Interest in Ingroup Favouritism.", 187.
83. Klar, "The Influence of Competing Identity Primes on Political Preferences."
84. Francisco, "Rational Choice, Social Identity, and Beliefs About Oneself."
85. Brubaker and Cooper, "Beyond "Identity".", 6-7
87. These terms are borrowed from social identity theory literature – in particular the work of Turner, Tajfel, Klar, and Penn.
88. Penn, "Citizenship Versus Ethnicity: The Role of Institutions in Shaping Identity Choice.", 957
environment. When an individual chooses to identify with a group it is often because of a sense of group pride that they gain from membership in the group or a special sense of belonging and self-esteem that individuals derive from identification with something larger than themselves.

In the view of social identity theory, identification with a group is a three-step process in which an individual firstly categorises his/her surroundings and labels others based upon established groups. Individuals then enter the process of social identification in which they take on the roles of their particular group identity, as well as classifying "the other" according to specific roles. Finally they compare their group with other groups in order to gain some sense of self-esteem in relation to the other. This results in in-group and out-group biases as we categorise ourselves and our society into different social groups. Competition and conflict between groups arise not merely as a result of any potential material inequities, but also a sense of emotional inequity. Thus, if a rival group is better off than my group, it lowers the self-esteem that I derive from my membership in the group. The well being of my group is therefore tied to my own sense of well being.

When interviewing a young Rum Orthodox student in Bethlehem, during the identity card exercise she described her identity as being first and foremost defined by her pride in being from Bethlehem:

QC: Why do you identify as Bethlehemi above other possible identifications?
I: I love Bethlehem very much because it's my home. I am proud to come from here.

In this instance, there is neither a sense of material utility gained from this association, nor is there a sense that this choice was in any way defensive. Rather, this young woman felt a special connection to the local culture and landscape of Bethlehem – from which she derived a sense of self and pride. In the same interview, when asked why the respondent identified secondly as Christian rather than with her Orthodox faith she responded as follows:

I love all Christians – I don't separate between Orthodox and Catholic. Lately I've been more into Catholicism because Orthodoxy likes to separate from other Christians. The priests keep teaching the little children that Catholics aren't like us. But we are the same; we don't have very large differences.

90. Tajfel, "Social Comparison and Group Interest in Ingroup Favouritism."
91. Focus Group Bethlehem University Students, interview by Quinn Coffey2014.
It is observed here that the respondent identifies with the broader Christian community as a whole rather than her confessional community, specifically because of her negative experience of in-group bias within the Orthodox tradition. This is suggestive of several things. Firstly, because she identified primarily as Bethlehemi, her sense of the in-group extended to all those from Bethlehem – Christians, Muslims, secular groups. In this sense, the sphere of her in-group subdued the barriers between these other potential groups. Although her faith was her second strongest identification – she felt that the relative in-group biases of Orthodoxy and exclusion of others was not representative of either her life as a Bethlehemi or as a Christian. Although a member of the Rum Orthodox community, she no longer derived a sense of self-esteem from membership in this group and expressed interest in the Latin Church, which she felt was more open to ecumenical relations – and thus more in-tune with her primary identification as a Bethlehemi.

This has important implications for feelings of national solidarity and state attachment amongst the Christian minority. If the national identity is increasingly defined along religious lines, it may be that non-Muslim experience of Palestinian nationalism is exclusionary. These trends will be discussed in more depth in Chapters Five and Six but it is clear from the above example that the effect of in-group bias and group pride can be a particularly strong motivation to either join or leave a group.

Utility:
The second factor affecting identity choice is the perceived or real effect of the identity choice on individual utility. Two levels of utility were observed. The first is the material utility of choice. Following rational choice theory, it is observed that social action can be explained by the assumption that individuals will make choices that maximise benefits. In other words, individuals are faced with a variety of possible choices and they will choose the option that leads to the best or most useful outcome for them personally. In an international political context, we can think of an example in which international aid is contingent upon a community supporting certain international norms or at least those held by the main donors. As is discussed in greater deal in Chapter Six, the Bethlehem municipality received very little international aid from 2005-2012 because of the election

92. Ibid.
94. Francisco, "Rational Choice, Social Identity, and Beliefs About Oneself."
of a PFLP mayor.\textsuperscript{95} The PFLP was considered by the American government to be a terrorist organisation and aid organisations (particularly those affiliated with the US government) were therefore unable to carry out aid missions in the Bethlehem municipality during this period. This hindered development of major municipal projects in the city and surroundings, which are heavily dependent on aid. Despite the historically strong support of the political left in Christian areas of Palestine, the victory of Fatah in the 2012 elections was explained by respondents as being the result of years of underdevelopment under PFLP leadership:

\begin{quote}
The mayor has been Fatah since 2005 because the foreign donors approve of Fatah, so they give the municipality funds to do projects. Whereas the previous election of Hamas and PFLP candidates – the donors did not approve.\textsuperscript{96}
\end{quote}

Voters shifted their private political identity in order to maximise the material utility of their political choice – even if they continued to publicly support the PFLP.

Penn describes a less obvious form of utility in which individuals view the common fate of the group, or its overall welfare, as having psychological utility to them personally. In other words, the relative success of the group may encourage or discourage identification. If an individual sees that the group is faring poorly, they will associate this with their own personal sense of well being. This phenomenon was observed in regards to the notion of samud or steadfastness in which groups who can most successfully oppose Israel gain popular support regardless of their ideological stance. But there is another more existential level to the utility of this form of in-group bias. Schuessle describes the utility of voting choices in situations where the electoral outcome is not affected by the individual vote; i.e. there is no chance for the voter's party to win the election, but he/she votes for the party regardless out of a sense of either civil duty or in order to identify with a political social group: "It is only the voter herself that can point to her electoral deed and legitimately draw her political identification from it: to be Democrat, she has to vote Democrat."\textsuperscript{97} In essence, the voter in this example derives internal existential utility from group membership in the American Democratic Party as a function of self-esteem or pride, despite there being little external utility or material payoff to this choice; it is useful emotionally.

\textsuperscript{95} Batarseh was boycotted by the US: Daoud Kuttab, "Why Do U.S. Officials Boycott Bethlehem's Mayor?," Huffington Post, 02/09/2011 2011.
\textsuperscript{96} Municipality Employee, interview by Quinn Coffey 2014.
\textsuperscript{97} A. Schuessler, "Expressive Voting," Rationality and Society 12 (2000), 556
Defensiveness:
A final internal factor, which, in reality, is a function of both utility and group pride, is a perceived threat towards the group. In these situations, individuals will identify with a group in order to either protect their sense of self-esteem derived from group membership or the utility of their membership in the group. Choices based upon threat are far more dependent on the external factors of social context and identity priming, as they occur primarily in relation to other groups or individuals. In this study, certain defensive situations were identified in which identification with communal identity, either as broadly Christian or with a specific denomination, was provoked by demographic decline, conflict, and perceived social status.

Demographic decline:
The ongoing issue of emigration, combined with the changing social norms within the Christian community produced a number of situations in which the community reacted defensively to the changing demography of traditionally Christian villages and cities – leading to an increased sense of communalism:

Now there is a small minority of Christians who emphasise the fact that we are Christians before being Palestinians – this is a small minority and I try to understand it in the context of demography. I’ll give the example of Bethlehem city where Christians used to be the big majority of the city, but with emigration during the last century, they’ve found themselves as a small minority in their own town. As families leave and sell their houses, Muslim families come to Bethlehem. Now there are neighbourhoods in Bethlehem where there are no Christians at all. They feel that their Christian presence is threatened so they want to emphasise that we are Christians. For example, 10 years ago you would see big crosses on houses illuminated in the night – we are Christian – what do they mean by this? What are we trying to prove?

Conflict:
Defensive responses to conflict can occur in a number of situations: when the community faces an existential threat during times of war; in the interaction between Palestinian citizens and Israeli soldiers; between Palestinians themselves. These confrontations can enhance or degrade solidarity with possible social identities as the individual seeks to support the identity that is under threat.

98 As discussed in Chapter Seven, the changing demography of the Palestinian Christian community is affected not only by emigration, but also an increase in marriage age, decrease in the amount of offspring produced by each couple, raising standards of living, and an aging population.
QC: How do you negotiate between the Arab, Palestinian, and Christian parts of your identity – which comes first, if any at all?

Son: I think I identify as Arab Palestinian – or maybe Palestinian Arab Christian

QC: So the Palestinian part is more important for you?

Son: Currently yes -- in light of the Occupation.

Father: Yes, no but I think maybe now what he is talking about is that the main problem today is Occupation so that is emphasised.

Son: I’ll become Arab Palestinian after we are liberated... [laughs]

Perceived social status:
Similar to the threat of conflict, the perception that one’s community is subordinate or is not a full member of society increases the feeling of communalism and thereby decreases the level of national solidarity.

I am not less an Arab than any other person -- I was an Arab before Islam. 600 years before Islam I was here. I welcomed Islam. So I’m not a minority. Maybe in number I am few, but I belong to the land. And before I was Christian, I was from the Canaanite people -- I have deep roots in this country and I don’t want to have any political religious state. As much as I am against Christian Zionism, I don’t trust any political religious state in Islam nowadays, I also don’t believe, of course, in a Jewish state.

Here we see just a few of the contexts in which defensive identity choices become salient. It was observed and reported by respondents that these defensive types of choices have become increasingly frequent with the ongoing impact of demographic decline, the Israeli Occupation, and perceived Islamification of the social and political spheres. It was also reported that communal identity was becoming increasingly common amongst the youth in particular. As one respondent indicated:

Many of our people – young people now are starting to think individually about life about everything. Sometimes they feel connected for a national or social cause or public issues, but other times they feel that they are only themselves, they are individuals – they have this ego centric value and this makes many of them as a result of not finding the solution for their difficulties, finding their own way – sometimes religion is the inspiring issue for them so they go for only the church – also sometimes they get disconnected from the community.

100. NGO Employee, interview by Quinn Coffey2014, Bethlehem.
101. Ibid.
102. CRO Employee 2, interview by Quinn Coffey2014, Bethlehem.
There was a definite sense that identifying defensively decreased the perceived level of national solidarity or interest in nationalist causes. This was a factor mentioned repeatedly by those who had been especially active during First Intifada and amongst the older generations when the public role of religion was less pronounced.

External factors:

These choices, however, do not exist in a vacuum. There are a number of factors affecting whether or not a person chooses to associate with communal or political identity. The first is the social context – or ‘the environment in which all individuals live and interact within.’ A number of factors within the social context that shape identity choice were identified, both through observation and qualitative interviews. Empirical work suggests that certain social context factors are far more salient than others in determining identity choice. Firstly, the level of religiosity is a very significant factor in identity choice. Survey data indicates that, of those who self-identify as either very religious or moderately religious, only 20% indicated that politics was important to them. This was also reflected when individuals described their constituent identities, but was also dependent on a generational element. Respondents under the age of 50 who identified as either very or moderately religious listed either Christian or their denomination as their primary identity in 60% of the interviews. Whereas, those above the age of 50, regardless of levels of religiosity, identified either Arab, Palestinian or a combination of Arab Christian or Palestinian Christian as their primary identities in 100% of the interviews. This is indicative of several things. Firstly, with the younger generation, following what Lybarger identified as a trend of 'apolitical piety', there is a strong negative correlation between level of religiosity and identification with national, supranational or party-based identities. This generational difference suggests that there is an increased level of identification with communal identities, either globally or regionally, within the younger generation and less identification with national or supranational identities.

104. There are numerous external factors that were considered relevant to the research including but not limited to: generational difference; level political participation; level of religiosity; family history of political activism; economic status; who do they consider the ‘other’; identity priming from religious or political actors; accidental priming from the researcher. By simply mentioning an identity group, researchers effectively prime an identity and increase the salience of that identity. Samara Klar, "The Influence of Competing Identity Primes on Political Preferences," ibid.75 (2013), 2.
105. Adapted Data from the PCPSR Surveys."Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research", 2000-2010.
The second factor, identity priming, is the overall effect of political or communal organisations in inducing or subduing specific identities to fulfil a specific social or political agenda. Following Klar, this study focused on three forms of identity priming: basic prime, efficacy prime and defensive prime. The first, and least effective type of priming, basic identity priming, involves merely mentioning the desired identity choice in a political or religious context in order to ‘increase its salience’. As an example, frequent mentions in PLO speeches of ‘Our Arab Palestinian people’, without directly relating the relevance of Arabism to the audience, situates the speech within the general ideological context of the PLO, without specifically mentioning any potential policy implications. The second, far more effect type of priming, efficacy priming, involves an actor mentioning the direct relevance of a particular piece of policy, legislation or event to a social group. As an example, a Palestinian politician may mention aid given to the country by the United Nations in a speech about whether or not the Palestinian state should apply for UN membership. This is done in order to directly relate the utility of a policy to the audience. The final type of identity priming observed is defensive priming. In this instance, a specific identity may be mentioned as being under threat in order to encourage individuals to associate with and support it. Identity priming also happens at the state level as the state attempts, through various methods discussed in the next chapter, to induce a national identity. Political and religious actors may also utilise a specific discourse of the nation in order to gain support.

Conclusion:
As this chapter has illustrated, identity choice, in this case between communal and political identities, has a significant impact on social and political action because these choices not only shape interest, but also limit possible action given the values and social restrictions of group identities. This chapter set out to address two questions: What motivates identity choice? and How does identity choice affect social and political action? In addressing the first question, it was argued that identity choices in the Palestinian Christian communities were made both in response to the personal identity of the individual and the social context. That meant that within particular moments of identification, individuals assess the material and psychological utility of a particular identity in response to external factors like threat, group pride, in-group bias, and internal factors like morality, personality, and self-

108. Klar, "The Influence of Competing Identity Primes on Political Preferences.", 3
109. Methodology borrowed from Klar.
esteem. Individuals were less likely to identify with the nation if they felt that communal interests were not fulfilled by this national identity. In other words, when faced with a national identity that is insufficiently broad and inclusive, Palestinian Christians will retreat to their communal identities, which decreases levels of integration and, as the next chapter explores, attachment to the state. Similarly, individuals who prioritised broader identifications like "Palestinian", "Christian", "Bethlehem", over their confessional communities, were less likely to identify as such if their confessional communities were not open to these broader groups. Therefore, identity choices responded both to material and psychological factors. This has important implications for the study of identity politics, particularly for Middle Eastern minority groups who are increasingly faced with having to negotiate between preservation of their threatened communal identities, whilst striving to take part in the struggle for national self-determination through participation in the national identity and culture of the state.

As the next chapter will discuss, decades of statelessness, instability, and military rule have exacerbated divisions within the Palestinian national consciousness, potentially alienating the Palestinian Christians. This leads to declining political participation and increased emigration. Discussed within the broader context of state development in the Middle East, the next chapter explores the development of national identity in the Palestinian context in relation to the Palestinian Christian communities.
Chapter Three -- Nation, State, and Statelessness in the Middle East:

In the history of Christian-Muslim relations you will find Christians were defined at one time as dhimmi people. During the Ottoman period they were defined as millet. And as a dhimmi – the main definition of relating to a person in the community is religion. So religion becomes the main defining factor to define the relationship. As a millet, community becomes the main defining factor – ethno-religious community. So the Armenians will be a community, the Greek Orthodox will be another millet – not Christians in general. So the ethno-religious identity becomes how you identify the other. Then comes the Palestinian Authority for example – nationalism if you wish and then citizenship becomes the defining factor. But millet and dhimmi did not disappear, but it depends on the group and their convictions. And now you have citizenship, but citizenship is not citizenship as defined in the US or in England – it is citizenship for a state that is based on Islamic law and developed into a political system whose roots are dependent on Islamic shari'a.110

-- Palestinian Christian academic, mid-40s, Bethlehem

As discussed in the previous chapter, identity plays a significant role in the level of attachment individuals feel towards their nation, state and society as a whole. People are made to feel a part of the state primarily through identification with a national identity – *I am British, I am a citizen of the United Kingdom* – and only then if they feel that the national identity reflects or is inclusive of their other constitutive identities -- the Scottish Referendum on membership in the UK in 2014 was illustrative of this point.111 This is because belonging to a *social identity* entails in and out-group biases which come to characterise not only what the *social identity* is (we are X and therefore we are not Y), but also who qualifies for membership/citizenship (e.g. X's have parents that were born here, they speak a certain language and belong to a certain religion). National identity, as a contingent construct,112 allows us to imagine ourselves as part of a wider community of individuals.113 It compels us to go to war in order to protect and serve this community, and it provides some measure of social cohesion in times of peace. Although, as Connelly has put it, to confess a particular identity is to belong to difference, national identity also allows us to forgo internal differences in order to unite us in otherwise potentially problematic configurations.114 Within the context of a majority of sovereign nation-states, the primary vehicle for the transmission and reinforcement of

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110. Palestinian Academic, "Personal Interview."
113 Ibid.
national identity is the state itself. The introduction of universal education, military conscription, official ceremonies, and speeches, all work to indoctrinate citizens into a very specific and codified sense of national loyalty and belonging. National identity in this context is somewhat rigid because it is secured in a distant and mythologised past, and also because it has been monopolised by the state, whose own legitimacy depends on it.

In the Palestinian context there is a very strong sense of the nation – nationalism, patriotism, and loyalty are also prevalent – and yet there has never been a state through which to transmit these ideas to the public. National identity, although constituted from and partly reinforced by the people, is largely a top-down phenomenon in a sovereign nation-state in that it is ultimately the state that monopolises and transmits the national narrative to the citizen. However, as Khalidi notes, the ‘absence of sovereignty’ throughout Palestinian history has ‘denied the Palestinians full control over the state mechanisms – education, museums, archaeology, postage stamps and coins, and the media, especially radio and television – which myriad recent examples show is essential for disseminating and imposing a uniform “national” criteria of identity’. National identity is therefore constructed through a combination of everyday actions, and the influence of majority political, social and religious actors. The actors with the most popular legitimacy or support are then able to articulate specific ideological programmes, which allows them to embed their own socio-cultural worldview into the national identity of the developing state.

In the context of the contemporary Middle East, the experience of statelessness and a fluid national identity is increasingly the norm. However, the theoretical perspectives used to analyse these national experiences rely heavily on theories that have developed, as Owen argues, ‘on the basis of an evaluation of a purely European experience.’ Two of the most widely cited theorists in this regard have been Benedict Anderson and Anthony Smith, who represent the modernist and ethnonationalist perspectives respectively. Although their analysis of nation, state, and nationalism provide considerable insights into some of the more universal mechanisms of national identity, they fall short in explaining two primary areas of concern for this study: the role of religion in national identity.

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politics and statelessness. This chapter aims to bridge the gap between Anderson and Smith’s perspectives, and the realities of state development in the Middle Eastern context. This is accomplished firstly through an exploration of the historical context of nationalism and national identity, followed by a critical discussion of Anderson and Smith’s theories of nationalism, national identity and state development. The particularity of state development in the Middle East is then discussed, followed by an exploration of how statelessness comes to affect the transmission of nationalism across societies. This chapter concludes by discussing the evolving role of religion in the Palestinian national discourse, and how this has affected perceptions of national identity, citizenship, and equal rights amongst the Palestinian Christian communities.

Nationalism:
As the previous section discussed, national identity is a type of social identity constructed largely through the apparatus of the state. It is through this relationship that we are able to imagine ourselves as being part of a larger community of the nation, often by subduing other potentially divisive social identities like race, religion, and gender.\textsuperscript{119} Although these interrelated concepts of nationalism, national identity, and the nation seem perfectly natural and inevitable forms of social identification in the contemporary context, their present form is a consequence of the creation of the modern state system beginning in 17\textsuperscript{th} century Europe.

The subsequent growth, in the 17\textsuperscript{th} century, of popular sovereignty and the declining power of the church meant that the individual now belonged to something larger than themselves and their community. Indeed, the reorganisation into a state system necessitated a new way for powers to legitimise their authority in the eyes of a newly empowered public, who had transitioned from subject to citizen. Previously, in the western context, the great monarchies of Europe had bound their authority together with that of the Church, granting the ruler a religiously sanctioned authority. But the emergence of the state system and the decline in the Church's power meant that the state had to institutionalise its legitimacy in some other way. Most early European states were composed of multiple nations (e.g. England, Wales, Scotland, and, beginning in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, Northern Ireland), each with its own socio-political, and often ethno-linguistic origins. Importantly, however, in the era of pre-Westphalian sovereignty, borders between these disparate nations were often

\textsuperscript{119} Anderson, Imagined Communities.
'flexible and porous'. Borders began to solidify as the notion of sovereignty developed in the wake of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648), as states agreed in the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 to end involvement in the domestic affairs of other states – respecting, namely, the territorial integrity of other states.

The territorial nature of the new state system meant that nationalisms, which often pre-existed defined international borders, would also be territorially bounded. Accordingly, the construction of a state-specific national identity eventually transformed these sub-national groups into a unified nation-state. This is not to suggest that this process entailed a rapid or universal paradigm shift. Indeed, the Western European context offers a number of examples of ongoing sub-national conflict up to the contemporary context – the Basques of Spain being an obvious example. However, the evolution of notions of sovereignty, followed by the growth of vernacular print culture and universal education helped to create and reinforce a previously vague sense of a unified and territorially bounded nation-state. This "national idea" would grant the state ultimate authority over its citizens (overshadowing other affiliations) and allow the state to project its power at an international level against other newly defined nation-states.

However, a parallel process of state development did not occur in the Middle East. From the outset the newly formed Middle Eastern states, emerging gradually in the postcolonial era, faced three major problems. The first was that the artificial imposition of a Westphalian state system onto the Middle East did not necessarily reflect the realities of pre-existing ethno-linguistic, cultural or national boundaries. Rather, these new borders were based primarily on the whims of British and French colonial officers during the Sykes-Picot Agreement in 1916, in which Britain and France agreed upon their future spheres of influence in the Ottoman lands in the event of an Ottoman defeat in the First World War. Although these borders were partly based upon Ottoman provincial and administrative boundaries, the sudden imposition of territorial nationalism onto populations that had been under Ottoman rule for close to 500 years did not put an end to the broader supranational identities and loyalties that most individuals possessed. As a result of this incongruity between nation and state, Middle Eastern states were forced to compete with supra-national loyalties.

120. Ibid., 19
to the broader Arab World and the Islamic *Umma*,\(^\text{122}\) as well as a host of other affiliations to tribe, ethnicity, communal identity, and region,\(^\text{123}\) which ultimately undermined the authority of the state. In addition, sub-national identifications were often exacerbated by colonial powers who co-opted traditional power networks in exchange for loyalty and economic incentives – reinforcing the distinctions between these groups, rather than fostering national belonging early on.\(^\text{124}\)

Second, the nature of the Middle Eastern political culture of the period did not necessarily support the transplant of what would become a largely secular model of the nation-state onto a more communally oriented public, both because of the mismatch between state borders and national groups, and also because of the differing relationship between religion and politics in the Middle East. Consequently, as newly independent Middle Eastern states began to determine the shape of their own legal systems, and more importantly for this analysis, the shape of their national identities, they were faced with significant challenges from within their societies to reconcile the apparent disconnect between what was viewed a primarily western mode of thought (secularism) and the Islamic tradition. This was exacerbated by the fact that secularism in the Middle East was ‘generally imposed from above as a political programme by rulers wishing to modernize’, rather than evolving organically from decades long conflicts and debates as in the western context.\(^\text{125}\) Therefore, in the post-colonial context, secularism became associated with despotic and authoritarian regimes, whilst religion, and eventually pious nationalism or religious nationalism, e.g. Islamism, ‘became a source of refuge and a marker of identity for many Arabs and Muslims.’\(^\text{126}\) As the salience and legitimacy of pan-Arabism\(^\text{127}\) and state-based nationalism (both largely secular phenomena) has declined in recent decades as a result of economic and social underdevelopment, the legitimacy of religion ‘as an alternative paradigm’ has increased.\(^\text{128}\) This decline has been evidenced by the growing strength of Islamist parties in a number of Arab countries, and, of course, the steady growth in popularity of

\(^{122}\) Zebiri notes the communal nature of much of the Islamic world as being a particularly strong pull. Kate Zebiri, "Muslim Anti-Secularist Discourse in the Context of Muslim-Christian Relations," *Islam and Christian-Muslim relations* 9, no. 1 (1998), 49

\(^{123}\) Hall and Du Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity*.


\(^{125}\) Zebiri, "Muslim Anti-Secularist Discourse in the Context of Muslim-Christian Relations.", 47


\(^{127}\) Pan-Arabism was a series of popular political movements throughout the 1950s, 60s, 70s that promoted the goal of creating a unified Arab republic. Although the movement had a number of different leaders and perspectives over time, it was primarily anti-colonialist and socialist. In this regard, it rejected the political and economic remnants of colonialism.

\(^{128}\) Hashemi, "Rethinking Religion and Political Legitimacy across the Islam–West Divide.", 7
Hamas in the Palestinian context at the expense of left wing socialist parties like the PFLP, DFLP, and PPP. This notion of political piety\textsuperscript{129} or religious nationalism\textsuperscript{130} integrates expressions of both supra-national and more localised communal and tribal group identities into ideas of the nation. Hence, groups like Hamas have integrated the broader discursive language and symbols of the global Islamic community into their nationalist rhetoric on Palestinian resistance. In this way, their worldview is grounded in an Islamic religio-cultural milieu, whilst being centred on the Palestinian context. As will be discussed later in this chapter, this more religion-centric view of the nation has potentially divisive consequences for minority groups – particularly in contexts in which the state has a weak or ineffective role in national cultural production.

Finally, the theoretical literature on the development of nations and states assumes that nations \textit{necessarily} develop into states or that, in the contemporary context, nations are unsustainable without reinforcement from a state apparatus. Despite the fact that there is a strong sense of the Palestinian nation, the lack of an effective state apparatus has meant that ideas of the nation are often fluid and highly contingent upon changing popular sentiment. In this sense, the Palestinian context, and stateless nations more generally, present a clear challenge to the assumptions of nationalist theorists like Anderson and Smith, whose paradigms rely on the state as the primary vehicle for the transmission of nationalism. Statelessness can provide a context in which national cultural production is essentially non-instrumental.

The nationalism of stateless groups has been explored in some detail by Wedeen who argues that, in the absence of effective state institutions, ‘national solidarities – to the extent that they do exist – tend not to be generated through state institutions usually credited with inculcating national values, but through the ordinary activities undertaken by men and women in pursuit of their daily lives.’\textsuperscript{131} In this context, ideas of the nation and the construction of national identity are fluid in the sense that a variety of actors (not just the state) are able to influence and shape the national imagining based upon their own ideological stance. The relative influence of these actors is determined then, not by their monopoly on the use of force, in the Weberian sense, but rather on their ability to reflect popular sentiments and gain critical masses of support.\textsuperscript{132} Further, new and developing states

\textsuperscript{129} Wedeen, \textit{Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power, and Performance in Yemen}.
\textsuperscript{130} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., 3
\textsuperscript{132} Lybarger, \textit{Identity and Religion in Palestine}, 19
like Palestine will often construct a national identity which seeks to merge or reconstitute a variety of "traditional" identities (communal, tribal, ethnic, religious) in order to both consolidate power (through identification with the cultural majority), and to unify otherwise heterogeneous populations as the state seeks to secure its position as the primary authority.\(^{133}\)

As this section has demonstrated, the particularly of state development in the Middle Eastern context, as well as the impact of statelessness on ideas of the nation, necessitate a more precise understanding of how nation and state are used as analytical concepts when applied to the Middle East. The development of Arab nationalism has received significant attention in scholarly works on the Middle East. Amongst these numerous studies, historians like Rashid Khalidi, Albert Hourani, and others have brilliantly detailed the development of specific regional and localised national identities, which have made invaluable contributions as political histories. However, aside from Tibi,\(^{134}\) few of these works have critically addressed theories of nationalism and the interplay of state and nation in the Middle East. Rather, the majority have typically used the term nation-state 'as if the concepts were synonymous', without concern for either the context in which these theories of nationalism were developed or the historical context of state development in the Middle East.\(^{135}\) As a result, theories that were originally intended to serve as models of nationalism in the Western European context have been applied to regions whose historical trajectories are vastly different. The next section critically engages with two prevailing nationalism theories of Benedict Anderson and Anthony Smith.

**Imagined Communities -- Benedict Anderson:**

In his *Imagined Communities* (1982), Anderson argues that nationalism emerged as a consequence of the growth of print capitalism, which effectively ended the virtual monopoly that sacral languages and the church had on the printed word. This is because of the combined effects of universal education and print in vernacular languages. For the first time, people were able to imagine themselves as being a part of something larger than their immediate communities and feel connected to other citizens whom they may have never met or had anything in common with – the “imagined community”. This coincided with a changing relationship between church and state as

\(^{133}\) Hall, *Modernity--an Introduction to Modern Societies.*, 597

\(^{134}\) Tibi, *Arab Nationalism: Between Islam and the Nation-State.*

\(^{135}\) Charles Smith, "Imagined Identities, Imagined Nationalisms: Print Culture and Egyptian Nationalism in Light of Recent Scholarship," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29, no. 4 (1997), 608
the state began to fill roles traditionally occupied by the church – providing, for example, education and healthcare – whilst also becoming the primary legal authority. The following sections address Anderson’s notion of the nation and state and the role of language.

**Nation and State:**

Perhaps most striking about Anderson's *Imagined Communities* is that he makes no real attempt to distinguish between his tirelessly elaborated "imagined community" of the nation, and the state. Rather, the modern notion of nation-state is discussed as if it were a given, a simple side effect of the collision between history, technology and capitalism, which Anderson suggests is 'a recent and often uneasy mating'. In fact, a closer examination of Anderson's definition of the nation: 'an imagined political community – imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign', tells us that, in his view, there is no real distinction between the modern nation and state, rather, one seeps into the other. It is not surprising then that Anderson assigns traits to the nation, which in the Middle Eastern context, are typically associated with the state, namely territorial limitation and sovereignty. When we compare this with the widely used definition of the state elaborated by Max Weber, 'a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of force within a given territory [emphasis added]', we see that by contrast, Weber associates the notion of sovereignty (independent authority over territory) and territorial limitation as being characteristics of the state rather than nation. Anderson addressed his conflation of nation and state in his book, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia*, arguing that in the modern political spectrum, 'the legitimacy and self-determination' of nations have become 'accepted norms', which nations secure through the institution of the state, whilst the state, in turn, relies on the nation to legitimise its existence (both to its citizens and to the international community). In other words, the state exists in a sort of symbiosis with the nation. This is due, in part, to the development of nations and states in the European context, where the modern nation-state emerged out of several decades-long conflicts between nations, arriving finally in its modern form as the victors of these conflicts formed into distinctive states – and as sub-national groups were either integrated or accepted some form of power-sharing with the state. In this context, the marriage of nation and state, however

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137. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6
bloody its origins, was a somewhat natural and gradual process.\textsuperscript{140} As mentioned in the previous section, states in the Middle East did not develop out of conflict between Middle Eastern nations, but were rather the result of an external imposition of the Sykes-Picot Agreement. Therefore, the term \textit{nation-state} must be used cautiously in the Middle Eastern context, particularly because it implies that nations are entirely bound or limited by a state’s borders, when numerous examples to the contrary are available: the Kurds, Assyrian Christians, and Palestinians.

The term nation-state is particularly misleading when used to explain the phenomenon of multiple identities, which, as the previous chapter discussed, characterises nationalism in the Middle East. The external imposition of Westphalian or European style nation-states in the region created arbitrary borders, not based on any single national culture or shared cultural experience, meaning that nationalism in the region is bound neither to specific territories, nor is it consolidated, rather it is at once religious, ethnic, linguistic and territorial. Therefore, in the case of the Middle East, the nation cannot fit neatly into the state and vice versa. Further, without the legitimacy granted from a unified and coextensive nation\textsuperscript{141}, Middle Eastern states have strategically co-opted, crushed or attempted to assimilate multiple identities through coercion at the state level. Although authoritarianism was able to successfully suppress competing nationalisms for decades, the Arab Uprisings have released a great pressure valve, allowing substate and suprastate identities to spill back out as each national group vies for self-determination. The result is a post-authoritarian identity crisis with substate and suprastate/transstate groups seeking to revive their identities, whilst the mass migration of refugees has created and reawakened pre-state cultural networks across the region.

\textit{The Role of Language:}

In Anderson's view, the only difference between the older "imagining" of the state and the contemporary is the operation of sovereignty, which in the former was based around centres, where borders were often 'porous and indistinct' and the latter where sovereignty is applied in equal measure over the entirety of the 'legally demarcated territory'.\textsuperscript{142} This implies that in the older imagining, nationalism could indeed exist across the boundaries of proto-states, but that these

\textsuperscript{140}. Ibid.
\textsuperscript{141} A coextensive nation-state would be one in which the internationally recognised borders of the state reflect a unified and territorially bounded nation.
\textsuperscript{142}. Anderson, \textit{Imagined Communities}, 19
transstate identities ended with the advent of the nation-state beginning in the 17th century. In other words, suprastate identities were made to fall in line with the national identity of the state, within legally demarcated territories, and substate identities were either marginalised (Britons in France) or absorbed (Gaelic tribes of Great Britain) – an argument very much in line with that of White, who argues that states in formation would generally assume the cultural identity of the majority. This is significant because it highlights the fact that the advent of the nation-state exacerbated differences between majority and minority communities, with the latter struggling to retain their unique cultural characteristics in an increasingly majority-centric nation-state.

Anderson argues that these more fluid and multiple identities were consolidated through a process of linguistic opportunism on the part of print-capitalism, which had the dual effect of undermining the authority of the Church, whilst giving the nation a degree of simultaneity by which citizens could better imagine and associate with other members of their national community. This imagining of the national community was only made possible when sacred texts were printed in vernacular languages, shedding the limited access that Latin, Greek, and Hebrew placed on ontological truth, and when members of an increasingly literate public were able to associate themselves with the rest of the imagined community of the nation through newsprint and literature. Simultaneously, the rapid imperial expansion of the British and French Empires put Europeans in contact with ancient central/south Asian, Egyptian, Chinese, and other cultures with histories and languages that often pre-dated Latin, Greek and Hebrew, 'undermining the idea that Hebrew [and other languages were] either uniquely ancient or of divine provenance'; all languages were now equally worthy of study and standardisation. Latin, Greek, and Hebrew no longer had a monopoly on "ancientness"; print-capitalism and the newfound equity of languages helped to reinforce the idea that nations extended into the pre-religious past, which, in turn, undermined the authority of the Church as the ancient institution to which all authority was owed.

This was also affected, to a large extent, by the adoption of vernaculars as state languages beginning as early as the 16th century. Not only did this, in effect, determine exactly which linguistic and cultural groups were included/excluded as part of the nation-state, but it also allowed the various

144. Anderson, Imagined Communities.
145. Ibid., 70
dialect groups, who ordinarily may not have had a mutual intelligible spoken vernacular, to understand one another through a standardised national print language. In the European context this meant that, through the advent of universal education, many dialects quickly disappeared in favour of the state vernacular, but this also had the added effect of allowing nation-states to explicitly define which culture they belonged to, whilst undermining the power of any alternative associations that may have weakened their authority. In this way, these early nation-states were able to take ownership over their official languages and, more importantly, distinguish between older religious and ethnic identities and the newer national identity of the state. This was the case with the Latinisation of the Turkish alphabet as part of the process of Turkish nationalism and the reforms of Kemal Atatürk in the early 20th century, which sought to distinguish itself from Arab nationalism, whilst attempting to limit the power of the traditional religious elite through the secularisation of the country. However, in contrast to the European and Turkish examples, where the adoption of official languages and the increase in print and literature in vernacular languages helped states/nationalisms distinguish themselves from other states/nationalisms, the rise in Arabic language print in some ways undermined the newly established states' nationalising projects, in that ideas and dialogues were able to more easily move throughout the vast Arabic speaking landscape – crossing state borders and increasingly the salience of suprastate ideas like pan-Arabism and Islamic revivalism.

Print capitalism 'created languages of power' that challenged the traditional authority of the Church, and provided new, secular means for the imagined community to interact with one another. Print-capitalism also allowed the ideals of nationalism, as well as those of the French and American Revolutions to spread rapidly, allowing for the mass distribution and "piracy" of models of the independent state. In the European context, there was a linguistic barrier between the sacral language and the vernacular, limiting access to an educated few. This created a lopsided relationship whereby the priestly and educated classes held the keys to "ontological truth", whilst the uneducated masses remained reliant on those at the top for access. Print-capitalism and the expansion of education evened the playing field, as scripture became increasingly accessible to the growing

146. Ibid., 44
147. Ibid., 47
149. Smith, "Imagined Identities, Imagined Nationalisms: Print Culture and Egyptian Nationalism in Light of Recent Scholarship."
150. Anderson, Imagined Communities, 80
middle-class intelligentsia. In the Middle East, however, the sacral language and the vernacular were one and the same. Islam, moreover, did not place the same emphasis on a priesthood nor did it privilege access to ontological truth to a select few.\textsuperscript{151} Whilst illiteracy was certainly an issue in the Middle East, the rise of standardised education and print-capitalism broadened access to both the pan-Arab nationalist movement and Islamic reform movements. Simultaneously, the expansion of European missionary schools throughout the \textit{Levant} in beginning in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, created a new middle-class urban intellectual elite – populated largely by Arab Christians, who would come to have a significant influence on the articulation of secular nationalist movements in particular.

In contrast to Anderson's model, where the rise of secular consciousness through print-capitalism supplanted religious identification and encouraged territorial nationalism, print culture in the Middle East simply reinvigorated or fostered pan-Arab and Islamic identifications, forcing territorial nationalist movements to make concessions to populist pan-Arab and Islamic nationalisms in order to sustain their authority, which ultimately undermined the nature of territorially based nationalism in the region. Therefore, despite the relative decline in popularity of pan-Arab movements in the 1970s, a number of Arab state have retained their attachment to what Hinnebusch calls ‘symbolic politics’\textsuperscript{152} – even to the point of enshrining these symbolic relationships in their constitutional documents.\textsuperscript{153}

\textit{The Ethnic Origins of Nations -- Anthony Smith:}

In contrast to Anderson, Anthony Smith's ethnonationalism distinguishes between the development of the nation in the western and eastern contexts, with the West having paved the way, through war, revolution and the civic ideals of the Enlightenment, for the East to eventually replicate. In this way, he argues that the roots of nationalism in each context were unique, but, as a consequence of the modern international system, all fit, more or less, under his umbrella definition of the nation as 'a named community possessing an historic territory, shared myths and memories, a common public

\textsuperscript{151} Depending on the branch of Islam, there are honorific titles and roles given to learned men such as \textit{sheikh}, \textit{mullah}, \textit{imam}, \textit{hafiz}, \textit{ulamah}, however, these titles denote the individual's scholarly knowledge of religious law, texts or practice, rather than their special spiritual role. Religious scholars and leadership play a slightly enhanced role in Shi'a Islam, but that is beyond the scope of this study.

\textsuperscript{152} Raymond A. Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami, \textit{The Foreign Policies of Middle East States}, The Middle East in the International System (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), 7

\textsuperscript{153} Nazih Ayubi, \textit{Over-States the Arab State: Politics and Society in the Middle East} (I.B. Tauris, 1995).
culture and common laws and customs." Smith attempts to pave a middle ground between 'perennialists' (Armstrong 1982; Geertz 1973), who argue that collective cultural associations are not only very ancient, but entirely natural or inevitable, and 'modernists' (Anderson 1983, Gellner 1983, Hobsbawm, 1983) who insist that nations are an entirely modern phenomenon, most typically associated with the advent of capitalism. Ethnonationalism posits that nations have their roots in much older entities called *ethnies*, which, depending on historical circumstance, may or may not ultimately form into nations, and, even more infrequently, into 'full nation-states'.

*Ethnie*, according to Smith, are 'named human populations with shared ancestry myths, histories and cultures, having an association with a specific territory and a sense of solidarity', and represent the base from which contemporary nations and nationalisms emerged. As Smith suggests, nations today *must* have an ethnic base, which they should work into a coherent aggregate. If nations do not have a real ethnic component, with the aforementioned characteristics, they must, in the words of Hobsbawm, attempt to invent one. The cultural aspects of the modern nation then are determined, to a large extent, by the ethnic roots or *ethnie* of the majority, which, in most cases, both informs the national culture and serves to mobilise populations. Not all *ethnie* aspire to nationhood, but, as Smith argues, within the international system of nation-states, *ethnie* must become politicised in order to survive, which means that they must adopt, to some extent, 'features of rational political centralisation, mass literacy and social mobilisation.' Logically, this means that multiple *ethnie* and nations can exist within a given state, but as Charles Smith points out, 'Anthony Smith's idea of *ethnie* does not permit any denouement other than its evolution into full-fledged nationalism, even if the *ethnie* do not occupy the territory with which they identify.' Therefore,

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154. Anthony D. Smith, "When Is a Nation?", *Geopolitics* 7, no. 2 (2002), 12
155. Ibid.
158. Ibid., 139
159. Ibid., 32
162. Ibid. 157
163. Smith, "Imagined Identities, Imagined Nationalisms: Print Culture and Egyptian Nationalism in Light of Recent Scholarship.", 611
ethnie have been forced by modern convention into the nationalist model simply to participate at the state and international level.

The picture that emerges is one which Smith himself admits to being confusing, without clear distinctions between ethnie, nation, state or nation-state, which it may be useful to elaborate upon in more plain terms. Ethnie form the backbone of modern nations, whether they are invented or based on some real cultural cohesion. The modern political system has forced many of these ethnie to take on political characteristics in order to operate within the state system, but not all ethnie have become "true" nations, which Smith defines as named communities 'possessing an historic territory, shared myths and memories, a common public culture and common laws and customs.' States, like the United Kingdom can encompass several nations with Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England all claiming status as sub-national groups. It follows then that, 'few states today are full "nation-states" in the sense of being congruent and co-extensive'. Rather, the majority of states today are perhaps more accurately described as national conglomerates, comprised of multiple ethnies and, quite often, multiple nations, which, in turn, inform the national identity of the state. States are only "full nation-states" when their international borders reflect and coincide with the boundaries of the nations that form their foundation.

If we examine Smith's definitions of nation more closely, it becomes clear that, by attributing features to the nation that are more commonly associated with the state, such as citizenship and common legal rights and duties, Smith fails to suitably distinguish between the concepts of nation and state. In his most recent definition presented in his 2002 article, "When is a Nation?" Smith defines the nation as, 'a named community possessing an historic territory, shared myths and memories, a common public culture and common laws and customs.' This is in contrast to his admittedly more idealised definition from his 1991 book National Identity, in which he defines the nation as, 'a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members.' In the former he attempts to reconcile, as Guibernau argues, his insistence on 'mass

165. "When Is a Nation?", 15
166. The Ethnic Origins of Nations., 129
167. "When Is a Nation?", 15
168. Ibid.
public culture', a 'common economy', and 'common legal rights and duties' with less idealized forms that seem more commonplace in the contemporary international system. Although Smith asserts that his definition of the nation 'clearly sets it apart from any conception of the state', with the state being defined in the Weberian sense, his attribution of legislative duties to the nation, such as those involved in citizenship, are self-contradictory. The state, not the nation, is responsible for the drafting of written laws and holds the sole power over the granting of 'citizenship rights and duties' within a given territory.

When applied to the Middle Eastern context, Smith's definition of the nation leads to a number of contradictions. Take, for example, the history of confessionalism in the region. Under Ottoman law, the various ethno-religious groups were able to take advantage of both the Ottoman (Shari'a) courts, and the courts within their own Millet or ethno-religious community. After the collapse of the Empire, this confessional court system continued across much of the Levant. In the contemporary Palestinian context, the Basic Law provides for equal protections of all citizens 'without distinction based upon race, sex color, religion, political views or disability', but simultaneously states that 'the principles of Islamic shari'a shall be a principal source of legislation'. As such, 'matters governed by shari'a law and matters of personal status, shall come under the jurisdiction of shari'a and religious courts, in accordance with the law.' However, are we to assume that, because Palestinian Christians have the option of a different legal system than Muslims, they would not both consider themselves to be part of the same nation? Conversely, if the state's official legal system is based upon the faith of the majority and non-Muslim legal independence is restricted to the realm of family law, are the non-Muslim members of the Palestinian proto-state considered to be part of the broader Palestinian nation, which has characterised itself as Islamic through the legal system? This extends to notions of citizenship, as the rights and duties of each citizen may differ based upon their confession, gender or other categorisation, which creates a potentially stratified society, contrary to Smith. This is an issue common to Christians across the Middle East, particularly as governments like that of Egypt, Syria,

171. Ibid., 128
173. Ibid.
Iraq, and Palestine continue to place at least symbolic emphasis on the role of shari'a in legislative matters.  

Finally, if a nation were to lose control over its legislative and economic dimensions, would it cease to be a nation? The Palestinian case offers an interesting example of why a more clear-cut distinction needs to be made between concepts of nation and state. In the Palestinian Territories, citizenship and legal rights are granted in a very limited way to the Palestinian Authority, who has the power to issue passports its citizens (excluding residents of East Jerusalem). This stateless nation holds power over the granting of passports, but does not have control over its 'common legal rights and duties', meaning that, in effect the granting of passports remains a symbolic act, as control of the borders and legal repercussions of citizenship remain under the control of the State of Israel. Management of the Palestinian economy is also very limited, with the Israeli government continuing to collect tax revenue on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, while severely regulating imports and exports in the region. Despite Golda Meir's 1969 comments to the contrary, the Palestinians undoubtedly constitute a nation; much of the conflict now having to do with Palestinian aspirations for statehood in order to guarantee rights which, according to Smith, they should already possess as a nation, namely control over citizenship, law and the economy.

Ethnic and Territorial Nationalism:

This final section exploring Smith will turn to the development of nationalism itself, addressing the ways in which Smith has arrived at his definition of the nation. As Smith rightly points out, ethnically mixed states tend to produce citizens who are divided in their allegiance and associations between the state and the ethnie, but how does the nation fit into this? 176 This divided allegiance happens more frequently, as Smith suggests, in states where the territorial boundaries are not co-extensive with the national boundaries. Smith therefore distinguishes between two types of nationalism: territorial and ethnic. The first, which Smith argues, is more or less the Western European model of the nation-state, defines the nation in terms of territory, sovereignty, and the legal basis of citizenship, where the nation is a 'community of laws and legal institutions'. 177 In fact,


176 Smith, The Ethnic Origins of Nations., 130

177 Ibid., 135
Smith takes this one step further by stating that territorial nationalism is difficult to imagine without the ‘realization of sovereign statehood’. Territorial nationalism is also characterised by the often artificial imposition of a ‘civic religion’, which can be thought of in Andersonian terms as the construction of the “imagined community” of the nation, which invents a shared history and culture, and occasionally revives a language – e.g. Zionism and the Hebrew language, in order to satisfy the necessity for an ethnic core, which Smith insists is essential for the project of nation building. Territorial nationalism tends not to be based around a unified ethnie, but is more typically a modern construction, with the more dominant nation asserting control over an often heterogeneous population.

Nations and nationalism, as Smith argues, were 'Western concepts and Western formations’. Their influence on successive nationalist movements, particularly in colonised Asia and Africa, was considerable. The colonial project exported not only western technology and bureaucracy, but there was also significant political and cultural exchange, particularly through nationalised education and print capitalism. Through this exchange, indigenous elites in the post-colonial era sought to replicate the Western model of territorial nationalism in their newly formed states, but, because of the external and arbitrary imposition of the Westphalian state system, these elites found difficulty in uniting their often ethnically and religiously heterogeneous populations. They then attempted to unify their populations based on ethnic and religious populism either through the application of force from a strong centralised government (Syrian regime), cultures of resistance (Palestine), socialising wealth (Gulf states) or creating a new civil religion based on much older ethnic ties. Typically these polyethnic/religious states have been dominated by a prevailing ethnie, which has sought to either exclude or co-opt smaller ethnie into its national narrative. However, as Smith argues, the early post-colonial history of these ethnic nationalist movements had been largely unsuccessful. Rather, as he argues, they have been forced to make considerable concessions to the territorial model of nationalism, to the extent that they have adopted significant legislative aspects of the territorial model. In other words, ethnic nations, despite their initial trajectory, have largely adopted a western model of territorial nationalism.

178. Ibid., 135
179. Ibid., 144
180. Ibid.
181. White, "The Emergence of Minorities in the Middle East: The Politics of Community in French Mandate Syria."
In the Middle East, as the next section will discuss, the post-colonial imposition of a western-style state system made any moves by ethnic or territorial nationalist movements extremely problematic because the new Arab states faced highly diverse and multiple *ethnie*, to which their populations continued to identify, whilst pan-Arab movements faced the same 'geographical, economic and political problems of any pan-movement.'\(^{183}\) It is therefore argued that, despite Smith's insistence that these movements will all seek to replicate the Western territorial model and hence fit neatly into his definition of the nation, the plurality of identity in the region, and the multiple stateless and transitional nations, make Smith's definition of the nation problematic in the Middle Eastern context.

*The Development of Middle Eastern States*

As the previous section suggests, the particularity of state development in the Middle East necessitates a critical approach to the analysis of nationalism in the region. However, as this section will make clear, we cannot discount either Anderson or Smith's theories outright, partly because of the interconnectedness of the global political system, which has 'made the nation-state a compulsory model.'\(^{184}\) Indeed, as Uri argues, although notions of nation and state may have been partly introduced or imposed in the Middle East through western colonialism and cultural borrowing, they have now 'become indigenous to the political debate of the Middle East today.'\(^{185}\) This means that, despite the unique historical trajectory of Middle Eastern states, they have had to adopt certain aspects of this more generalisable notion of the nation-state simply as a consequence of the international political order. However, as Zubaida argues, despite the importation of the nation-state model, the politics and administration in Middle Eastern states have, since the early post-colonial era, moved away from the ideals of constitutionalism\(^{186}\) 'sometimes to the point of complete abrogation' of constitutionally enshrined rights and values.\(^{187}\) It is here that the theories of nationalism must be reconsidered: at the intersection of the Western model of the nation-state and the socio-cultural organisation of Middle Eastern societies. As this section will argue, equating the development of nationalism in the West with the Middle East is problematic, partly because of

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183. Ibid., 143-44
184. Sami Zubaida, *Islam, the People and the State: Political Ideas and Movements in the Middle East* (I.B. Tauris, 2009), 121
186. Including, primarily, the limiting of governmental powers.
187. Zubaida, *Islam, the People and the State: Political Ideas and Movements in the Middle East*, 121-2
historical context, but also because of the nature of power relationships in the region, which continue to have roots in traditional associations and loyalties.

In the European context, nationalism and the eventual development of nation-states coincided with the development of capitalism and subsequent division of labour and the growth and empowerment of the middle class. This process, accompanied by revolution and the undermining of the authority of the Church, created a social space for these revolutionary political discourses, which were gradually integrated into the new political process, and became part of how these newly founded nation-states functioned; with a variety of political parties and mechanisms for debate and inclusion of dissenting voices. In this way, Western states acted 'in unison with society' in that the government represented a variety of voices and motivations, rather than an authority distinct from the will and voice of the people.\footnote{188} The reverse was true in much of the Middle Eastern context where states have taken a top-down approach in which authority and legitimacy are not derived from society, but are a force external to society that co-opt and sacrifice traditional units like the tribal and religious leadership in order to foster authority through the widespread use of coercion.\footnote{189}

This has been accomplished partly through neopatrimonialism, with the central governments entering into clientistic relationships with the periphery, using traditional social structures to benefit the state, whilst at the same time maintaining the vertical power relationships between government leaders and the society.\footnote{190} In this way, the horizontal solidarities upon which national integration relies have been prevented from prospering. The consequence of these factors has been that Middle Eastern states have typically produced strong centralised governments who use coercive means to unify otherwise segmented populations. Although authoritarianism has masked sectarian tensions, it has not been able to create states that successfully integrate multiple sub-national groups into a broader state-level national identity, primarily because the groups in power have tended to look out for the interests of the networks that support them rather than those of society as a whole.\footnote{191} This has been the case in post-Saddam Iraq, where the controversial election of Nouri al-Maliki in 2006, a

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{188} Ibid., 126
\footnote{189} Faleh Abdul-Jabar and Hosham Dawod, eds., Tribe and Power: Nationalism and Ethnicity in the Middle East (London: Saqi, 2003).
\footnote{190} Sami Zubaida, "The 'Arab Spring' in the Historical Perspectives of Middle East Politics," Economy and Society 41, no. 4 (2012).
\end{footnotes}
Shi’a Muslim, has exacerbated sectarian tensions\footnote{Dylan O’Driscoll, “Autonomy Impaired: Centralisation, Authoritarianism and the Failing Iraqi State,” Ethnopolitics (2015).} between Iraq’s Kurdish, Sunni, and Shi’a communities owing largely to his attempt to further the powers of his own party and ethno-religious group.\footnote{Noureddine Jebnoun, Mehrdad Kia, and Mimi Kirk, eds., Modern Middle East Authoritarianism: Roots, Ramifications, and Crisis (Routledge, 2013)., 13}

However, national identity in the Middle Eastern context has also been affected by the ways in which Middle Eastern states were created in the post World War I era. As Hinnebusch argues, the consolidation of nation-states in the Middle East has been ‘obstructed by the profound flaws originating in its largely external imposition: the resulting often arbitrary borders and ill fit between states and national identities means that loyalty to the individual states is contested by substate and suprastate identities.’\footnote{Hinnebusch and Ehteshami, The Foreign Policies of Middle East States., 7} This was due, in large part, to the colonial processes by which the former Ottoman territories were divided, which in some cases reflected certain pre-existing entities, but for the most part involved either the restructuring of former Ottoman provinces, as in the case of Trans-Jordan, or combining several provinces, as in Syria and Iraq.\footnote{Ibid., 9} As a result, the new states took on a rather artificial shape, ‘with their new names, their new capitals, their lack of ethnic homogeneity and their dead-straight boundaries' not being reflective of any organically derived divisions.\footnote{Ipek K. Yosmaoglu, “Counting Bodies, Shaping Souls: The 1903 Census and National Identity in Ottoman Macedonia,” International Journal of Middle East Studies 38, no. 1 (2006)., 57} The immediate effect of this fracture was that these new states and their citizens had no real nationalistic attachment to the state, and often times only a flimsy attachment to its territorial boundaries. Common colonial practices like census taking and the issuing of identity cards were used to re-categorise and re-identify populations, whilst central governments drafted laws by which the relationship between citizen and state, as well as the principles of the newly defined nationalism were established.\footnote{Ibid., 9} The census had the dual effect of becoming a ‘principal reference for social differentiation’, hence exacerbating divisions, which organically may have not been consequential.\footnote{Ibid., 57} But the census and new views of citizenship also had the effect of further defining who was included as members of the new states – often through proof of ancestral territorial attachment to the state within its newly defined borders.\footnote{Owen, State, Power, and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East., 9} However, implicit in this attempt at territorial
nationalism was the presumption that nationalism could be limited to the boundaries of the state, whereas, in reality, nations in the Middle East have acted more as 'a set of interconnected organisms separated only by porous membranes', than the territorial particularity of the western model.200

As a result, Arab political elites have attempted to secure their legitimacy through a number of populist strategies aimed at creating a singular identity for their citizens, whilst attempting to absorb traditional and localised power structures on the periphery through patronage of traditional elites. These problems of legitimacy are also connected to the economic situation of Middle Eastern states. The shift in the 1950s and 60s in many Arab states to a socially rooted pan-Arabism promised a great deal more development and security for larger portions of the population through modernising reforms.201 The Nasser period (1956-1970) in Egypt offers a clear example of this phenomenon, which was reproduced across much of the Arab world.202 Initial socialisation of the Egyptian economy in the 1950s, with the strong backing of the USSR, provided considerable political stability throughout the 1950s and 60s, despite the steady, but subdued support for the Muslim Brotherhood and parties on the left. Economic stability and the momentum of Arab Nationalism were enough of an incentive for the Egyptian people to support the Nasser regime. This support declined with the failure of the 1967 War with Israel and the subsequent, but unrelated decline in economic support from the USSR. In response, the Egyptian government privatised large parts of the Egyptian economy, which concentrated wealth within an inner political circle of regime supporters who owned interests in mining, agricultural and other industries, and profited from the export of raw materials to the developed world.203 Economic development was then used as a way of ‘solving strategic puzzles’ like an unruly public or decline profits, rather than for the sake of development itself.204 This resulted in an export-based economy in which self-sustaining industry was not fostered locally – an effect that was similarly reproduced across the Arab world. As a result, unemployment became widespread, as did dissatisfaction with the ruling regimes.

States responded to this dissatisfaction by expanding their security apparatuses and the use of

200 Hinnebusch and Ehteshami, The Foreign Policies of Middle East States, 7
202 Ibid., 97
203 Zubaida, Islam, the People and the State: Political Ideas and Movements in the Middle East.
204 Michel Chatelus and Yves Schemeil, "Towards a New Political Economy of State Industrialization in the Arab Middle East," International Journal of Middle East Studies 16, no. 2 (1984), 257
coercion, which furthered the gap between the state and the society. Simultaneously, the expansion of patronage networks undermined the growth of a universal sense of national identity, as the relationship with the ruling regime became the primary mode of belonging to the state. In response to the failed political policies of these regimes, and of pan-Arabism more generally, the Arab public began to look for alternative political solutions. Although political Islam had a strong presence in the Arab world throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries, its widespread repression by secular-nationalist regimes meant that it never caught on as a political movement. The success of the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, however, provided the intellectual and political momentum for these movements to gain ground against regimes across the Arab World. Consequently, it became clear to Arab leaders that any attempt to legitimise their authority must include what had then become popular issues, namely, anti-colonialism, the Palestinian/Israeli Conflict, and Islamism. This was accomplished, in part, through what Hinnebusch and other have termed 'symbolic politics', with the Arab leadership co-opting issues more broadly central or symbolically relevant to the Arab world.

The situation in Palestine, whilst subject to many of these same concerns, had the added effect of the Israeli Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip following the 1967 War, which exacerbated economic hardships, whilst also increasing national solidarities. Unlike neighbouring Middle Eastern states whose national identities were perhaps more ambiguous throughout this period, the presence of Israel as a coherent threat would ultimately, as Bowman argues, both unify the Palestinian population and provide an extremely effective scapegoat for the failures of the national leadership. However, the failure of the Oslo Peace Process and ongoing economic, social and other hardships has undermined the ability of the Palestinian Authority to govern and be viewed as a legitimate authority. Although it has attempted to foster civil society and encourage development, it is viewed as increasingly corrupt and ineffective. This is due, in part, to its failure to fulfil basic requirements for legitimacy in the eyes of the Palestinian public. As the next section will discuss, the relationship between legitimacy, authority, and national identity in the Middle Eastern context is

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205 Zubaida, "The ‘Arab Spring’ in the Historical Perspectives of Middle East Politics."
206 O'Driscoll, "Autonomy Impaired: Centralisation, Authoritarianism and the Failing Iraqi State."
207 Zubaida, "The ‘Arab Spring’ in the Historical Perspectives of Middle East Politics."
208 Hinnebusch and Eltahawi.
210 Ferrandiz and Robben, eds.
closely related to levels of state attachment – especially so for minorities. If a state has not derived its authority from society, but through coercion, national identity will not be an organic outgrowth from society, but rather a top down and artificial construct. In other words, these states will attempt to create a nation in order to legitimise themselves or to secure legitimacy through its association with broader supranational or suprareligious identifications.

*Legitimacy and authority:*  
In order for a political or social actor to exercise authority or to hold a significant influence on society – including the obligation to perform actions for this social or political body – it has to prove its legitimacy to the society. On an individual level, belief that a political or social actor is legitimate is highly subjective and responsive to one's own moral and social worldview. The process of legitimisation is one that is carried out in the social space – as actors attempt to prove their legitimacy in response to a changing social and political context. As Hurd argues, actors can attempt to prove their legitimacy either by adhering to some normative principles that the society upholds or by fulfilling interest-based societal demands in a more populist manner. In this way, we can describe both a normative understanding of legitimacy and a descriptive understanding.

The descriptive view of legitimacy is largely based on the work of Weber, who 'emphasizes the macro-social consequences of citizens' belief in the legitimacy of their rulers'. Weber described legitimacy as 'the basis of every system of authority, and correspondingly of every kind of willingness to obey, is a belief, a belief by virtue of which persons exercising authority are lent prestige.' Legitimacy, in Weber's paradigm stems from three sources: *tradition:* the political or social order is sufficiently "old"; *charisma:* the people have faith in the system because of one or several charismatic leaders; and *legality:* 'the rationality of a rule or law'. If one or more of these conditions are met, the political body is viewed as legitimate. Additionally, once a legitimate authority is created, it structures society 'in such a way that even those who do not share the belief in its legitimacy face incentives to behave as if they did.' These incentives, whether they are in some way coercive or material, consequently shape individual and group behaviour.

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212. Ibid.  
214. Ibid.  
215. Hurd, "Legitimacy."
This view has been criticised by Beetham, who argues that Weber's overly descriptive view of legitimacy neglects 'people's second order beliefs about legitimacy', i.e. an individual's internalised sense of morality, spirituality, and justice. In other words, legitimacy is not, ipso facto, persuasive. Rather, people must believe that authority is justified in terms of their personal beliefs. As an example, the free and fair election of a leftist presidential candidate can be considered to be descriptively "legitimate", whilst being considered normatively "illegitimate" by conservatives whose own beliefs might view this election as proof of some systemic injustice or corruption merely because of a disconnect between their worldview and that of the candidate. This highlights a more normative view of legitimacy, which holds that government must conform to society's moral or legal norms in order to be considered legitimate – both internally and externally (membership in the UN is partly based on adherence to normative standards of international law). Unlike the descriptive model, the normative view is less concerned with what individuals actually think, and more in what they should think under perfect conditions.

Under stable conditions in a nation-state, it is difficult to fully ascertain whether individuals truly view a political authority as legitimate or whether they are merely acquiescing to the ruling authority. This is partly due to the fact that, within these stable states, political choices themselves are less consequential to the overall manner in which the state is structured. In other words, we elect political candidates in the hope that they might be able to make changes that suit our worldview, but we do not expect them to completely change the nature of the political system itself. In stateless or unstable conditions, the connection between political choice and legitimacy may become more apparent simply because political choices can be extremely consequential to the overall nature of the political and social reality. This is particularly true when religion comes into play, in that a religious party may be the only legitimate choice for a pious person – choice then being limited by a normative understanding of legitimate authority. Under stateless conditions, it is then more apparent which actors have the most legitimacy and also how they come to shape the national narrative and social context.

These issues of legitimacy and authority are crucial to understanding the nature of state development in the Middle East for a number of reasons. Firstly, because of the external

216. Peter, "Political Legitimacy."
imposition of the state system in the region, governments were forced from the outset to compete for legitimacy with a host of other potential actors. The sudden and arbitrary imposition of the state system created a gap in legitimacy, as both state and citizen struggled to define their relationship with one another, whilst continuing to negotiate allegiances to tribe, region, and supra-national identities. The lack of congruence between notions of nation and state in the Middle East created a situation in which the state exercised authority, but not legitimacy and remained in competition with a host of other identities to which its citizens identified.

The Palestinian context is not immune from wider trends in the development of nations and states in the Middle East. It has been the case the Palestinian political parties have had to adhere to populist issues: Pan-Arabism, Islamism, and socialism. But unique to the Palestinian case of legitimacy and authority is a culture of resistance in which political parties prove their legitimacy partly through their perceived ability to resist Israel. In this culture of resistance, as Kårtveit notes, "practices and gestures that signal resilience in the face of an Israeli occupation, and solidarity with victims of Israeli violence are seen as expressions of national belonging." The notion of samud has been a core element of national discourse and party politics in Palestine since the 1948 War and establishment of the State of Israel. Political parties must adhere not only to ideological or religious norms, but also be able to successfully project their image as resistance groups. In the post-Oslo landscape, the nature of samud or at the very least its iteration in the political and public discourse has changed significantly along with popular sentiment. This can be seen quite clearly in the shift in popular discourse about the conflict from a long secular-dominated discourse to one in which religion is increasingly relevant.

One notable shift in the practice of samud, which respondents indicated began during the Second Intifada, is the enforcement of public protest by youth wings of political parties. During the fieldwork for this project in the summer of 2014 at the height of the Gaza War, local shops across the West Bank closed in solidarity with the victims of the Gaza War. Due to the hardship that days of closed doors would cause to local business owners, several stores remained discretely "open". However, groups of young men patrolled the streets ensuring that shops remained closed under the

217. Kårtveit, Dilemmas of Attachment: Identity and Belonging among Palestinian Christians., 28
218. Lybarger, Identity and Religion in Palestine.
threat of violence or destruction of property. One respondent, a local shop owner in Bethlehem, had had her storefront bombed by a Molotov cocktail during the Second Intifada for such an offence. Although these dissenting shop owners most certainly felt solidarity towards their fellow countrymen, the solidarity of the First Intifada, demonstrated in the famous Beit Sahour tax boycott\textsuperscript{220} has been splintered as political and ideological infighting has increased. Expressions of resistance and national solidarity are also increasingly coloured by party and ideology, which, as the next section will discuss, has important implications for the expression of national identity.

\textit{Statelessness:}

As discussed in the introduction, nationalism in the Palestinian context has taken a slightly different historical trajectory than other Middle Eastern states because of the ongoing lack of a state. Much like its neighbouring Arab states, the Palestinian Authority has attempted to codify a sense of national identity, whilst playing to supra-national affiliations like the Arab and Islamic worlds. The Palestinian Basic Law explicitly mentions Arab unity as a goal: ‘Palestine is part of the larger Arab world, and the Palestinian people are part of the Arab nation. Arab unity is an objective that the Palestinian people shall work to achieve’, while listing Islamic shari’a as a ‘principal source of legislation’.\textsuperscript{221} These concessions to symbolic politics highlight the ongoing importance of suprastate identities within the Palestinian context. Increasingly, however, the declining legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority has decreased its ability to influence and shape public opinion. This is due, in part, to economic hardship and the perceived corruption of the PA, but also because they are increasingly viewed as an ineffective liberation organisation. This perspective was observed throughout the 2014 Gaza War, in which numerous respondents linked the PA’s failure to respond to Israeli aggression to their inability to govern. In a PCPSR survey conducted four months after the War in December of 2014, 53\% said they would elect a Hamas candidate for president versus 42\% for Fatah, whilst 81\% viewed the PA as a corrupted institution. Further, overall satisfaction with the PA government was 26\%.\textsuperscript{222}

Although the PA has attempted to create many of the physical and ideological structures of a state, its declining popularity has eroded its influence on the public. Further, as Lybarger, Wedeen, Kårtveit and others have argued, the lack of a sovereignty, has meant that national identity, as such,

\textsuperscript{220}Bowman, "Christian, Muslim Palestinians Confront Sectarianism: Religion and Political Identity in Beit Sahour.", 53
\textsuperscript{221}Palestinian National Authority, "Amended Basic Law (Current)."
is not necessarily transmitted by one official organ, but is both a product of semi-institutional
networks like political actors and civil society, and everyday interactions. In the case of Palestine,
these are primarily acts of resistance, shared experiences of trauma or shows of solidarity with those
under more immediate threat of violence or imprisonment.223

In this way, as Kårtveit notes, national solidarity can be temporarily invoked through a clear
articulation of the culture of resistance in protests or everyday actions.224 However, the articulation
of a specific national ideological programme is highly contested, as the formal channels for
constructive national debates like elections, lobbying, civil society, etc. have become either
inconsistent or nonexistent. Consequently, the ideological divide has sharpened as these dialogues
have become largely insulated within their own political camps. Whilst this is by no means unique to
Palestine – one can certainly see the same phenomenon happening across the globe, however the
reality of statelessness means that articulations and demonstrations of national identity are highly
fluid, individualised, and politicised. Therefore, those parties with the most public support can
influence not only the ideological stance of individuals, but also their conception of a Palestinian
national identity. This relates back to Weber’s notion of legitimate authority, in which a critical mass
of popular legitimacy can create a situation in which the relative influence of actors increases
regardless of whether or not society completely agrees with them. Similarly, Lybarger argues that
those actors with the greatest amount of institutional strength are ‘more successful in articulating
the hopes and fears accompanying an emerging historical moment; these groups would generalize
their particular interpretation of events, embedded within the narratives and symbols of distinct
sociopolitical milieus, to individuals and groups beyond their immediate sphere. Others not directly
affiliated with these groups/milieus would nevertheless absorb their orientations.’225 The result
being that national identity shifts along with popular sentiments. As the popularity of political Islam
increases in the region, the demonstration of religion in the public sphere – including issues of
public morality, display of religious symbols and behaviour, and the nature of political debate – also
increases. Consequently, the articulation of national identity becomes shaped by this increased
public role of religion, which has the effect of alienating groups that feel threatened by the Islamist
discourse – including Christians and secular-oriented Muslims.

224. Ibid., 28
Secularism and post-colonialism:

As discussed in the introduction, in the post-colonial era, from the outset, Middle Eastern states had to not only enforce a new territorial nationalism that often contradicted the social realities on the ground, but also reconcile the disconnects between "modernisation" and secularisation with a more communally orientated public. In the Western context secularism has been associated with the modernisation of European economies and state systems beginning in the seventeenth century. As the state began to play a larger role most aspects of public life, it supplanted the church. The validity of this “secularisation thesis” is contested particularly in the Middle Eastern context where religion continues to play a significant role in public life. This is partly explained by the fact the modernisation processes that occurred in the Middle East often came with strict social controls, which made the secularisation of the public problematic, 'insofar as it did not seek to separate religion from politics, but rather subjugate religion to political control.' This had the effect of politicising religion as Muslim institutions struggled with the state, 'often in an effort to loosen the state's control over society.' As the state was made increasingly illegitimate through heavy-handed and repressive tactics, the relative legitimacy of religion remained quite strong as it was viewed as an indigenous rather than colonial concept. Notions of secularism then became intimately tied with the history of Western colonialism, but also Middle Eastern authoritarianism. Consequently, the legitimacy of the state was tied to the legitimacy of secularism as an ideology – 'the decline of secularism was the same as the decline of the postcolonial state'. For their part, Middle Eastern Christian communities have had a complex relationship with secularism. As a political ideology, parties that support secularism are generally more popular with Christians, as the alternatives, like political Islam, are viewed as potentially detrimental to their interests. However, as Christians were heavily involved and invested in the development Arab and Palestinian nationalisms, they naturally sympathised with anti-colonialist movements. Therefore, secular Palestinian nationalism, as iterated by the Soviet-aligned Palestinian political parties in the 1960s, became an acceptable mode of

226 Fiona McCallum, Christian Religious Leadership in the Middle East: The Political Role of the Patriarch (Edwin Mellen Press, 2010), 12
227 Zebiri, "Muslim Anti-Secularist Discourse in the Context of Muslim-Christian Relations.", 47
228 Vali Nasr, "Lessons from the Muslim World," Dædalus 132, no. 3 (2003), 68
229 Ibid., 68
230 Houchang E. Chehabi, "Staging the Emperor's New Clothes: Dress Codes and Nation-Building under Reza Shah " Iranian Studies 26, no. 3/4 (1993), 212-213
231 Nasr, "Lessons from the Muslim World.", 69
232 McCallum, Christian Religious Leadership in the Middle East: The Political Role of the Patriarch.
233 Primarily the PFLP, DFLP, PPP (see appendix)
secular politics, as it was both anti-western and secular. As discussed in Chapter Six, this explains the continued popularity of socialist parties amongst the Palestinian Christian communities.

In the broader Palestinian political context, the PA has proved to be increasingly ineffective in the post-Oslo era, both in their resistance towards Israel and then in their ability to create a successful outcome for the Palestinians in peace negotiations. As a result, the relative success of Hamas as both a provider of social welfare (which the PA was lacking after the Second Intifada) and as a successful revolutionary movement, increased their legitimacy to the extent that the public discourse itself has become increasingly religious, whilst the traditional leadership appropriates aspects of the religious discourse in order to "bolster their legitimacy."²³⁴ In this context, because religion remains a powerful ideological force in the public imagination, legitimacy remains tied to religion, resistance, and postcolonial movements.

In traditional societies, identification was more localised, i.e. based largely upon regional structures (whether they were tribal, ethnic, religious or otherwise), and was, by its very nature heterogeneous and only loosely territorial. Palestine is clearly a "modern" society and is therefore subject to this same fluidity, but traditional identifications continue to play a crucial role.²³⁵ It is clear in the Palestinian context that not only the secularism model, but also Hall's argument that the post-modern subject is somehow completely severed from tradition are problematic. Realistically, whilst both individualism and globalisation play a much larger role in self-identification for Palestinian youth in particular, religion, tribalism, and traditional networks of loyalty continue to play a very significant, but perhaps less obvious, role – particularly in light of statelessness. Therefore, the transfer of allegiance from traditional affiliations like tribe or religion to the nation is incomplete. Without a state, there is no one fixed point to which an individual can transfer allegiance, but rather a whole host of actors vying for legitimacy in the eyes of the public. As a result, the more legitimacy an actor has, the more they come to shape the national imagining. Because, as Bowmen notes, Palestinian nationalism was largely founded upon an antagonism towards Israel, and because of the difficult daily realities of life under Occupation, the legitimacy of actors is largely based upon their ability to resist Israel (either successfully or unsuccessfully).²³⁶ Added to this, the more an actor

²³⁴ Nasr, "Lessons from the Muslim World.", 71
²³⁶ Bowmen, "Constitutive Violence and Rhetoric of Identity."
can be shown to reflect popular cultural sentiments – such as an increased desire for Islam to play a more public role – the greater their legitimacy.

In this context, Wedeen, Zeberi, and others have discussed the role of pious nationalism within Arab states, where religion has continued to play a significant role in the public discourse and politics. Pious nationalism expressly codes nationalistic rhetoric and issues of public morality and control in religious language – either Islamic (Hamas), Christian or some mixture of both (Fatah). This model can largely forgo territoriality in the place of membership in the global religious community. However, while the long-term goal might be unification of the religious community in a single territory, national aspirations may take priority. Hamas, for example, views Palestine as an Islamic waqf, however its political ideology and goals are largely based upon a territorial nationalism, which prioritises the liberation of Palestine over the establishment of a global Muslim Caliphate. In other words, its national identity is simultaneously Palestinian and Islamic. However, the emergence and rise in popularity of Islamic political movements in Palestine in the 1980s created an 'alternative Islamic nationalist project' parallel to and interacting with the quasi-secular nationalist project of the PLO.

Also somewhat unique to the experience of Palestinian nationalism is the focus on the present and future rather than the distant and mythical past. Although historic figures, events, and sites of religious significance are a large part of Palestinian nationalism, the focus of national imagining tends to be on the contemporary struggle against Occupation and, to a lesser extent, the imagined future after Occupation. Indeed as Bowman notes, 'Although there tends...to be an imagined utopian future state in which all of the other's antagonisms will have been elided, the chief emphasis of the nationalist imaginary is on the contemporary struggle to expel or extinguish the sources of constitutive violence.' Common articulations of Palestinian identity will most typically begin with a personal anecdote about the Occupation or reiteration of common Palestinian problems resulting from Occupation, rather than an emphasis on what might be thought of as typical Palestinian cultural elements. This is why, when asked the question: how would you define what it means to be a Palestinian?, a typical response would include several minutes of discussion about the amount of

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238 Kårtveit, Dilemmas of Attachment: Identity and Belonging among Palestinian Christians., 29
239 Bowman, "Constitutive Violence and Rhetorics of Identity.", 120
suffering, both personal and national, that the Israeli occupation has caused. As the head of a Palestinian NGO that works with young students related,

> When we ask students to define themselves we get the whole identity linked with victimisation: refugee, occupied, suppressed, you know isolated, that whole understanding of Palestinian identity. And then what we ask them to do is to define identity from the future, what does it mean to be a Palestinian in the future, what does the future hope to create? And how does that identity look like? And of course it’s completely different than this.\textsuperscript{240}

There are also significant differences between self and collective imaginings of Palestinian national identity, which are affected by upbringing, religion, daily experience, wealth, etc. In other words, we can identify structures of identity within a national discourse for example, but, as discussed in Chapter Two, there are simultaneously a host of psychological and other factors that play a role in our individual interpretation of these national discourses.

**Conclusion:**

As this chapter has shown, the particularity of state development in the Middle East necessitates a critical approach to the study of national identity in the region. It was argued that the ongoing role of religion in public life and the continued salience of suprastate and substate identities in the Middle East, contradict a number of key assumptions made by Anderson and Smith. Further, the experience of statelessness in the Palestinian context runs contrary to models in which the sovereign state is the primary vehicle for the definition and transmission of national identity to the public. Rather, the lack of a sovereign state and a legitimised state apparatus opens national identity to the influence of a variety of actors (political, religious, institutional), with equally varied ideological perspectives. Those actors with the most influence then have the greatest effect in shaping this identity, as well as the future shape of the Palestinian state.

The decline of secular-nationalist politics in Palestine, and the decreasing public faith in the PA has important implications for the Palestinian Christian communities who may feel that they no longer identify with popular public expressions of nationalism. As Chapter Two discussed, this is connected to the ways in which they participate politically and socially, as their experience of the “in-group” of the nation strongly impacts upon their willingness to participate or associate with the

\textsuperscript{240} CRO Employee 3, interview by Quinn Coffey 2014, Bethlehem.
group. If they feel alienated from an increasingly narrow or exclusionary definition of the nation, then they are likelier to identify with their communal identities, which may feel under threat. However, the same applies to their experience of the confessional communities themselves. In the case of the Rum Orthodox and Latin communities, long-standing issues over the identity and vocation of the Patriarchates of Jerusalem has had a significant impact on whether or not individuals choose to associate themselves with their confessional communities. The following chapter provides a historical context to these struggles over the identity of the Patriarchates, with an emphasis on the social and political roles of the church hierarchies.
Chapter Four -- Contextualising Rum Orthodox and Latin History in the Holy Land:

As the previous chapter discussed, the history of state development in the Middle East has had a profound impact upon the experience and growth of Arab and Palestinian nationalisms. The role of Christians in the early development of Arab and Palestinian nationalism was equally profound, as Middle Eastern Christians provided much of the intellectual momentum that would come to shape both pan-Arab and state-specific nationalisms in the region. These forces were also shaped, to a large extent, by the institutions of the churches themselves. In addition to the presence of a number of eastern-rite churches across the Middle East, whose histories span millennia, the introduction of European missionary churches, the Arabic language printing press, and the translation of numerous works of the Enlightenment into Arabic -- largely facilitated by Christian printing houses -- informed the growth of an indigenous nationalist culture of its own right.

However, as a consequence of the rise of nationalism across the Middle East, the Christian lay communities began to call for greater rights and access within the Patriarchal hierarchies themselves, which had long been dominated by foreign clergy. Indeed, throughout their historical development, both the Greek Orthodox, and considerably newer, Latin Patriarchates of Jerusalem have struggled to define both their identity and vocation as "foreign" churches with significant indigenous lay communities. For the Orthodox Patriarchate, this has manifested itself in a centuries-long struggle between an ethnic Greek Patriarchal hierarchy and Arab lower clergy and laity, spurred on by the advent of Greek and Arab nationalism in the 19th century. As Sir Ronald Storrs, British Military Governor of Jerusalem observed in 1917,

> If anything, Palestinian Orthodoxy suffered by such external contacts as it possessed; for the attempt to preserve it less as the Church of the Palestine Orthodox than as an outpost of Hellenism almost of the modern Church of Athens was a source not only of constant intrigue and wire-pulling, of anxious colloquies with the Greek Consul in Jerusalem, and of journeys by the Archbishop of the Jordan to Athens, but also of increasing discouragement and bitterness to the Orthodox Arabs of the country. The only spiritual exhortation received by the unfortunate "Arabophone" from his earliest youth was administered, if at all, in a language which not one in a thousand could understand.241

This often-contentious relationship is partly due to the fact that, unlike many of the other churches in the Holy Land who have undergone a process of "Arabisation" over the past 100 or so years, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem remains governed almost exclusively by ethnic Greeks.242

In fact, in the modern history of the Patriarchate, there have only been two Arab Bishops, Bishop

Symon of Taybeh and the recently appointed Archbishop Theodosios (Atallah Hannah) of Sebastiya. However, neither Arab Bishop has held voting rights within the Patriarchate's decision making body, the Holy Synod of Bishops, making their actual impact on the administration of the Patriarchate largely symbolic, despite the considerable role that Archbishop Atallah Hannah plays as a political advocate for the Palestinian people.243

By contrast, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, despite being founded in 1099 as part of foreign occupying forces during the Crusades, has evolved over the course of the 20th century into a largely Arab institution in the contemporary context. However, this process was gradual and not without complications. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, the Latin Church is one of several Catholic institutions in the Middle East, but is uniquely European in its liturgical practices in comparison to the far more numerous eastern-rite Catholic communities. Therefore, upon its reestablishment in 1847, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem struggled to define its vocation and identity in the Holy Land -- particularly in light of the presence of well-established and far more numerous eastern-rite Catholic communities. The Eastern-rite Catholics were understandably cautious of the Latin presence, as European missionaries frequently sought to Latinise local parishes. However, after this practice was banned in 1894 by Pope Leo XIII, the Jerusalem Patriarchate slowly began to accommodate the so-called "oriental-rite" liturgical traditions.244 As the Palestinian Latin community grew from roughly 4,000 members in 1847 to 40,000245 by the early 1920s, the role of the Patriarchate began to change. The first modern Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Msgr. Valegera saw the value of establishing a local church, with local clergy.246 As one Palestinian Latin priest related:

They recognised the need to have a local church and to not have a missionary church — a missionary church meaning the priests come from Europe to help the local Palestinians. No, they wanted local priests and local bishops so that we could have a local church. And this is important and we can see it everywhere for the Catholic Church — including here in Palestine. So now we have an Arab Patriarch and auxiliary bishops — they are Arabs. And that was a gradual change. Where we don’t see this happening with the Orthodox.247

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243 Rum Orthodox Community Leader, interview by Quinn Coffey 2014.
244. Ines Angjeli Murzaku, Returning Home to Rome: The Basilian Monks of Grottaferrata in Albania (Rome: Monastero esarchico, 2009), 16
246. Rev. Hanna Khildani, Modern Christianity in the Holy Land (Author House, 2010), 310
247. Latin Priest 1, "Personal Interview."
Indeed, since the early 20th century, the Latin Patriarchate has become a definitively Arab institution, with numerous Arab bishops, two Arab Patriarchs, and hundreds of Arab priests serving the Palestinian community.\textsuperscript{248} Although its presence in the Holy Land has been considerably shorter than that of the Greek Orthodox, the relative impact of the Latin Patriarchate is significant both in terms of its social and political impact on the Palestinian Christian communities.

At the local level, the Catholic Church maintains 43 schools in Palestine, 13 of which belong to the Latin-rite.\textsuperscript{249} This compares with only three run by the Greek Catholics and 12 by the Greek Orthodox.\textsuperscript{250} Additionally, the Latin Church is affiliated with 43% of Palestinian scout groups, which are considered by respondents to be an integral part of both the nationalisation of Palestinian youth and their after school development.\textsuperscript{251} This is in addition to numerous hospitals, housing developments, elderly care and other establishments.\textsuperscript{252} Therefore, relative to the size of the Latin community itself, roughly 8,000 followers in the West Bank, it has a considerable impact on Palestinian society.\textsuperscript{253} The Latin Patriarchate also benefits from its relationship with the institutions of the Vatican, both in terms of its influence in international politics and its ability to develop and finance social institutions in the Holy Land. In addition to the strong history of Vatican diplomacy on behalf of equal rights in Jerusalem, in recent years it has turned its efforts towards the Palestinian people themselves – most recently with the recognition of the State of Palestine on 26 June 2015.

This chapter details the historical trajectory of these two communities as they continue to define their identity and vocation as important local institutions in Palestine. This chapter will not give a point-by-point description of the history of these two institutions, both because this is beyond the scope of this study and because it has been accomplished thoroughly in dozens of other publications.\textsuperscript{254} Rather, it focuses primarily on issues of identity and politics, highlighting the significance of particular historical trends to the contemporary context. The Latin presence in the

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{248} O'Mahony, "The Vatican, Jerusalem, the State of Israel, and Christianity in the Holy Land."
\bibitem{249} Raheb, \textit{Palestinian Christians in the West Bank: Facts, Figures and Trends}.
\bibitem{250} Ibid.
\bibitem{251} Author's own calculations based upon data from: ibid.
\bibitem{252} Ibid.
\bibitem{253} O'Mahony, \textit{The Christian Communities of Jerusalem and the Holy Land: Studies in History, Religion and Politics}.
\bibitem{254} See, e.g.: Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine."
\bibitem{Roussos} Roussos, "How Greek, How Palestinian? The Patriarchate of Jerusalem in the Mid-War Years."
\bibitem{248} Vatikiotis, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem between Hellenism and Arabism."
\bibitem{Kark} Kark, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and Its Congregation: Dissent over Real Estate."
\end{thebibliography}
Holy Land began with the siege of Jerusalem in 1099. Therefore the first several sections focus primarily on the early development of the early Orthodox community and institution of the Patriarchate.

**Early Social Dynamics:**

The considerable Greek cultural influence in the Middle East is not a new phenomenon. Its origins are rooted in the Byzantine era when Greek culture was spread through trade, politics, and religion throughout the Middle East and in the coastal regions of the Levant. It was the Byzantines who first established the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem in the 4th century and who financed the maintenance and protection of holy sites in the pre-Islamic era. However, the socio-political climate of the Middle East during the Byzantine period was by no means a monolithically Hellenic world. In fact, the numerous ecumenical councils convened from the 4th through 7th centuries, as well as the movement of various ethnic and religious groups throughout the Empire, significantly transformed the makeup of the Christian communities throughout the region. The Councils of Ephesus (431 c.e.) and Chalcedon (451 c.e.) drew a line in the sand between what became known as Oriental Orthodox communities (commonly, but incorrectly, called "monophysite" in the historical literature or self-identified as miaphysite; non-Chalcedon; Jacobite) and the Eastern Orthodox (diaphysite; Chalcedonian; Melkite) communities aligned with Constantinople.

For the purpose of this study, the Council of Chalcedon was of particular importance partly because it resulted in the elevation of Jerusalem to the status of Patriarchate in 451 c.e. Although Jerusalem was seen as a site of great spiritual significance for early Christianity, the city itself had not maintained a level of economic and political importance during the early Byzantine period. The status of the city changed, however, with the establishment and recognition of holy sites in the Byzantine province of Palestina Secunda beginning in the 4th century. In addition to the construction of the Church of the Nativity in 333 c.e. and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in 335 c.e., a number of monasteries were established throughout this period, which greatly increased the

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255. Tsimhoni, 1978, 281
256. Despite the persistence of the term "monophysite" in the historical literature about the Oriental Orthodox, the communities themselves object to the term because it implies that they believe Christ has two natures. 
257. Fiona McCallum, "The Political Role of the Patriarch in the Contemporary Middle East" (University of St Andrews, 2006).
religious significance and relative importance of Jerusalem in the Eastern Christian World. Although the initial purpose of the Jerusalem Patriarchate was likely symbolic, over time, and with the continued emergence of rival churches, control and protection of holy sites became its primary vocation.\textsuperscript{260} This role was further evidenced by the creation of the monastic fraternity known as the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre in the 4\textsuperscript{th} century, who were tasked with the protection of holy sites and who also had the responsibility of electing the Patriarchate's Holy Synod.\textsuperscript{261}

\textit{Arab Conquests:}

After the successful Arab conquest of Jerusalem in 637, Patriarch Sophronius famously surrendered the city to Caliph 'Umar, and accepted certain economic and social capitulations in lieu of the conversion of the city's Christian inhabitants. Although historians dispute the details of this surrender and subsequent 'Umari Covenant,\textsuperscript{262} the narrative has been adopted by the Orthodox Patriarchate as a recognition of Greek supremacy over the holy sites in Jerusalem because the treaty allegedly alludes the Greek nation. It is therefore cited as legal precedent for the primacy of Orthodoxy in the region's holy sites. As the Orthodox Patriarchate's website states:

\begin{quote}
Caliph Omar by personal decree (ahttiname) recognized the Patriarch of "the imperial nation" (namely the Greeks), the position of leader of the nation and spiritual leader of all the Christians of Palestine, even of the heterodox, as well as the legation of honour among all the Christian leaders, granting him guarantees of goodwill, security and freedom from taxation on behalf of future Muslim leaders. However, his successors, high handed Arab leaders, proved to be very tough. The Christian community started to become afflicted by intense efforts of Islamization and anti-Hellenic cleansing.\textsuperscript{263}
\end{quote}

The Arab conquests effectively disrupted Greek control over the Patriarchate of Jerusalem for several centuries. In the absence of Constantinople's influence, the ubiquity and control of Byzantine culture in the Levant sharply declined. This extended not only to the practice of the liturgy, but also to the selection of patriarchs, church leadership, and clergy -- a majority of whom were now selected from within the communities themselves.\textsuperscript{264}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[260.] Vatikiotis, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem between Hellenism and Arabism."
\item[261.] Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine."
\item[262.] Daniel Sahas, The Encounter of Eastern Christianity with Early Islam, ed. Emmanouela Grypeou, Mark Swanson, and David Thomas (Brill, 2006)., 40
\item[264.] Bruce Masters, "Christians in a Changing World," in The Cambridge History of Turkey, ed. Suraiya N. Faroqi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)., 274-75
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
The relative autonomy of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem from the influence of Constantinople during the early Islamic period was periodically interrupted by the Crusades and subsequent Arab reconquest throughout the period between the 11th and 12th centuries. During the Crusader occupation of Jerusalem 1099-1187, the Patriarch of Jerusalem resided in exile in Constantinople, along with a majority of Greek Bishops, allowing the Ecumenical Patriarch to briefly reassert control over the institution of the Patriarchate. However, the Arab Orthodox remaining in the Holy Land experienced a period of marginalisation under Crusader rule – both socially and liturgically. This was due to the fact that the Frankish Crusaders, who were of the Latin-rite, regarded the Arab Orthodox as duplicitous due to their mixed cultural background (using the Greek language for the liturgy and speaking in Arabic vernacular). As Jotischky explains,

"Customs that deviated from the Roman norm were understandable if they derived from distinct liturgical and theological traditions, because such traditions were themselves indices of an ethnic identity. Thus the Armenians, who possessed their own distinctive language, dress and customs, were highly regarded, despite the collapse of their union with the Roman Church and the refusal of most Armenians to abandon monophysite doctrines. In contrast, the native orthodox, though members of the same church as the Latins, were despised because their religious customs did not appear to derive from the same root as their ethnicity."

Despite the fact that the Arab Orthodox community fell under the same ecclesiastical authority as the Franks during the Crusader period, the Franks themselves had a difficult time characterising the indigenous Orthodox community. They were, in many ways, culturally Arab, and yet their liturgical practice was significantly influenced by Byzantine culture: 'they were Greek Orthodox, but not Greek; Arabic speaking, but not Muslim; Christian inhabitants of a Christian state, yet subject to the rule of the conquerors.' This level of multiculturalism caused the Franks to have a 'universally negative' perception of local Christians because the duality of their culture and religious practice was seen as duplicitous.

The crusader period ended with the fall of Saint-Jean-d'Acre and the death of the Latin Patriarch in 1291. With the Arab re-conquest of Jerusalem in 1187, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem was re-established. Although the Arab Orthodox community welcomed the Arab re-

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266 Krijnig Ciggaar and Herman Teule, *East and West in the Crusader States: Context, Contacts, Confrontations* (Peeters Publishers, 2003), 10
267 Ibid., 3
268 Ibid., 3
269 O’Mahony, "The Latins of the East: The Vatican, Jerusalem and the Palestinian Christians.", 99
conquest of Jerusalem, they only experienced a short-lived growth in Arabisation of the Patriarchate, which vacillated between Greek and Arabic influence until the 15th century.

The origins of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem:

As noted above, when the Crusader armies entered Jerusalem in 1099 they found that the Orthodox Patriarch had fled, along with a majority of his bishops, to Constantinople. Without the input of the Vatican, the Franks installed a Latin Patriarch in the vacant see. This was done, 'without the necessity or the ambition to create a Latin Catholic community in the Holy Land', but primarily to assert Latin control over the region's holy sites. Therefore, there was not an effort to convert local Christians to the Latin rite. It is for this reason that a significant indigenous Latin community did not develop during the Crusader States period. After the fall of Acre in 1291 and the death of the Latin Patriarch, the hierarchy retreated to Europe, where the title of patriarch remained largely titular until its re-establishment in 1847.

Although the institutional presence of the Latins in the Holy Land was effectively ended with the Arab re-conquest of Jerusalem, the Franciscan Order established a province and custody of the Holy Land in 1219. Through diplomatic efforts with the Mamluk Caliphate, the Franciscans were able to maintain Latin rights to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and Church of the Nativity throughout the 600 year absence of the Latin Patriarchate. This Franciscan presence was maintained in the Holy Land, often in very hostile contexts, until today. However a significant indigenous Latin community did not develop until the reestablishment of the Patriarchate in 1847.

Ottoman Period:
Rum Orthodox Community:

The Ottoman period had the most significant impact on the identity of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem. This is because the Ottomans not only changed the political and social realities of the region, but the combined effects of the millet system, Tanzimat reforms, and European missionary work reshaped individual conceptions of the nation, state, citizenship, and the

271 O'Mahony, "The Latins of the East: The Vatican, Jerusalem and the Palestinian Christians.", 101
273 O'Mahony, "The Latins of the East: The Vatican, Jerusalem and the Palestinian Christians."
274 Ibid., 99
275 Ibid.
role of religion in public life. In addition, the attempted centralisation of authority within the Patriarchate of Constantinople helped to more deeply engrain ethnic and territorial nationalism across the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman Empire ruled over a vast ethnically and religiously diverse. Due to the fact that within the Islamic tradition 'religion is theoretically the sole legitimate basis for defining minority status', all non-Muslims minorities were organised into broad confessional communities known as millets. Each millet was headed by its own 'highest ecclesiastical authority', which, in the case of the Orthodox millet, was the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople. Although the early Islamic period saw the balance of power shift towards the Middle East, leading to the relative autonomy of the Patriarchates of Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria, the reestablishment of the seat of imperial power in Constantinople once again put the Ecumenical Patriarchate in close proximity to the ruling authority. Indeed, 'the supreme position of the millet başı [head of nation] and the nearness to the Sultan, allowed the Patriarch of Constantinople, with the growth of the Ottoman Empire, to extend authority over all Orthodox Patriarchates.' Traditionally, because of the autocephalous nature of the Ancient Orthodox Patriarchates, the Ecumenical Patriarch held the title of primus inter pares (first among equals), holding no special ecclesiastical or administrative dominion over the other Patriarchates. However this restructuring of the Orthodox hierarchy allowed for the 'concomitant consolidation of supremacy' of the Ecumenical Patriarchate over all other Orthodox Christians in the Empire -- regardless of the vast cultural, liturgical, linguistic, and ethnic diversity within the millet itself.

As Tsimhoni argues, this was partly because the Ottoman system preferred to deal with groups of people rather than individuals under the law. As such, 'the status of the individual dhimmi'

277. Roussos, "Eastern Orthodox Christianity in the Middle East.", 107
278. Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine.", 78
280. Roussos, "Eastern Orthodox Christianity in the Middle East.", 107
281. Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine."
282. The term dhimmi is an Islamic legal concept referring to non-Muslims of the Abrahamic faiths. In theory, dhimmi would enter into a legal contract with their Muslim rulers that classified them as subordinate in matters of law, in exchange for their protection. As an early example of tolerance, they were then allowed to practice their faiths
[protected non-Muslim minority] was derived from his membership in a protected community called a *millet*, headed by a *millet başı* who, in addition to his spiritual and ecclesiastical powers, was responsible to the state for administration of his *millet*. As a result, non-Muslim religious groups were, generally speaking, lumped together into major confessional branches, 'irrespective of difference in self-identification by the various groups'. Initially only two Christian *millets* were established: the *Rum Ortodoks Millet* and the *Armenian Millet*. All Orthodox Christians were placed under the authority of the Ecumenical Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople and all ethnic Armenians and other non-Chalcedonians were placed under the authority of the Armenian Apostolic Patriarch until the establishment of the Syriac Orthodox and Catholic *millets* in subsequent decades.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate, more so than the three other ancient Patriarchates, maintained a definitively Greek character because of its location in the *Phanar*, the traditionally Greek stronghold in Constantinople. With Greek domination of the *millet* leadership, the Greek Orthodox hierarchy were able to not only extend the influence of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, but also to install Hellenic higher clergy within the other Patriarchates under its dominion. As Roussos notes, this had the effect of extending Greek influence across those portions of the Middle East under the control of the Ottomans, which led to a consolidation of power amongst the Greek Orthodox such that 'the vast majority of Palestinian Christians became Orthodox during the long years of Ottoman Rule', just as many in the *Levant* had converted to non-Chalcedonian faiths when the balance of power favoured them under Arab rule. This was due to the simple fact that economic and political power once again favoured Greek Orthodoxy. Further, because the Orthodox *millet* somewhat openly. As Emon notes, “the dhimmi rules were a legal expression of the way in which the Muslim polity contended with the fact of diversity and governed pluralistically.” In practice, the *dhimmi* rules were applied unevenly across the Islamic lands since the 7th century. These regulations were largely abandoned with the introduction of the Ottoman *Tanzimat* Reforms in the 19th century. Anver Emon, *Religious Pluralism and Islamic Law: Dhimmis and Others in the Empire of Law* (Oxford: Oxford Islamic Legal Studies, 2012).

283. Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine.", 166
284. O'Mahony, "Palestinian-Arab Orthodox Christians: Religion, Politics and Church-State Relations in Jerusalem, C. 1908-1925.", 63
285. Roussos, "Eastern Orthodox Christianity in the Middle East.", 107-08
286. "How Greek, How Palestinian? The Patriarchate of Jerusalem in the Mid-War Years."
287. O'Mahony, "Palestinian-Arab Orthodox Christians: Religion, Politics and Church-State Relations in Jerusalem, C. 1908-1925.", 64
288. The rural Syriacs were able to more easily integrate into the early Islamic Caliphates because they were not viewed as having been associated with the rival Byzantine Empire like their urban dwelling Greco-phone neighbours, who represented a potential fifth column in the ongoing conflict with Byzantium.
was the primary administrative and political unit for a majority of Christians, positions of social, political and economic prominence were directly tied to posts within the millet hierarchy – as the vast majority of high-level political roles within the Ottoman bureaucracy were limited to Muslim subjects prior to the Tanzimat reforms of the 19th century.289 The millets themselves had near total autonomy from the Sublime Porte in 'areas of religious, ritual, charitable and educational affairs, as well as in the maintenance of law courts to deal with matters of personal status', all under the authority of the Patriarch of Constantinople.290

The Greek character of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem was also secured through the considerable influence of the Greco-phone Phanariotes of Istanbul. This was due to the fact that they maintained strong ties and economic relationships with the Ottoman Empire's main European rivals. As such, the Phanariotes began to exercise considerable influence on the Sublime Porte, who became increasingly reliant on their economic relationships with Europe, whilst they sought positions of power within the millet bureaucracy because of their social and economic prestige.291 By gaining access to positions within the Patriarchate, the Phanariotes were able to influence who was elected to high office within the four ancient Patriarchates, and well as manage their administrative affairs.292

The Greek dominance over the Patriarchate of Jerusalem was also furthered by the organisation of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre and the Patriarchal constitution. As it evolved from its establishment in the fourth century, and particularly in the Ottoman period, the members of the Brotherhood became 'exclusively Greek'.293 The Brotherhood itself was responsible for the appointment of clergy and the larger task of appointing the Patriarch. However, the rules governing appointment to the Brotherhood prevented 'decisive participation of the laity in the administration of the church of Jerusalem.294 This was due to the Patriarchate's constitution,

292 Ibid., 272
293 Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine.
which, on the one hand, required that parish priests be married in order to become ordained, but also restricted membership in the Brotherhood to unmarried monks. 295

It was typical for parish priests, who were responsible for the day-to-day pastoral care of their communities, to come from the indigenous Arabic or Syriac speaking communities. However it had become customary to 'restrict the choice of Bishops and members of the order to Ionian Greeks'. 296 As a result, the indigenous parish priests bore the brunt of communal responsibilities, whilst the 'majority of bishops became merely titular with no actual diocesan responsibilities', focusing rather on the preservation and maintenance of holy sites. 297 This prevented the majority of the Arabic and Syriac-speaking laity from participating in the election of higher clergy, the Patriarch, and the administration of Patriarchal finances – which also meant that the majority of the Patriarchate's funds went towards the preservation of holy sites. This led to the growing discontent of both the parish priests, who resented their limited role in Patriarchal affairs, and the Arab Orthodox laity, many of whom were drawn to the Latin or Russian Orthodox Churches during the 19th century because of better schools, hospitals, and other social welfare institutions that were established in this period.

Indeed, the intervention of European missionaries and the capitulations granted to them by the Ottoman authorities had the effect of deepening 'economic and cultural divides' within the millets themselves – particularly as certain Catholic and Orthodox Christians came under the protection of the French and Russian Empires. 298 This was, in many ways, the precursor to the growth of a national consciousness amongst these communities as they struggled for greater autonomy from the millet hierarchy. The intervention of Catholic missionaries and the protection granted to them by the Ottoman authorities also led to the splintering of the Orthodox millet, both because of conversions to Catholicism on religious grounds, and because of dissatisfaction with the nature of the Orthodox hierarchy. As a result, 'the Melkite Catholic Church split from the Greek Orthodox in the see of Antioch, the Chaldean Catholic Church grew out of the Nestorians, the Armenian Catholic Church

295. Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine.", 79
296. Kark, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and Its Congregation: Dissent over Real Estate.", 515-16
297. Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Community in Jerusalem and the West Bank 1948-1978: A Profile of Religious Minority in a National State.", 282
from the Apostolic Church and so on.\textsuperscript{299} The Ecumenical Patriarchate responded by furthering its control over the appointment of higher clergy across the various Patriarchates, which further alienated indigenous clergy who resented the changing status quo.\textsuperscript{300} With the emergence of European missionary schools and the Arabic-language printing press in the 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} centuries, both clergy and laity began to express their discontent with the Patriarchate and the Ottoman Empire in nationalistic terms.

\textit{Greek Nationalism:}

As Arab national consciousness began to develop amongst the Arab Orthodox in the Ottoman Empire, a parallel Greek nationalism also developed, based largely in the Ionian peninsula. Through trade relationships developed with other European countries, the Greek middle class were exposed to nationalist ideals growing throughout Europe at the time.\textsuperscript{301} Inspired by these movements, the Greek intelligentsia began the process of reinvigorating, and in some cases, reinventing the Greek language and culture. Part of this reinvigoration of culture and history included an emphasis on the distant and glorious past, in which the Byzantine Empire spanned much of the Mediterranean basin. This led to the development of the \textit{Megali Idea}, which sought to reclaim historically Greek lands in Anatolia and the Levant and redeem their 'enslaved compatriots abroad.'\textsuperscript{302}

This struggle for Greek self-determination came to a head in the 1821 Greek War of Independence in which the Greeks liberated a small amount of territory on the Ionian Peninsula from Ottoman control. As a direct result of this growing Greek \textit{Megali Idea}, from the 1920s onwards, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem experienced a growing nationalism, in which their historic rights to property in the Holy Land began to be viewed in terms of its relevance to Greek cultural and national heritage,\textsuperscript{303} satisfying an important part of the ancient and remote history required for nationalism to be successful.\textsuperscript{304} Whilst there had always been a Hellenic identity at the core of the Patriarchate, 'after the Greek War of Independence in 1821 (and due to the penetration of the Latin church into the region) the members of the confraternity [Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre]

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{299} Masters, "Christians in a Changing World.", 277
\item \textsuperscript{300} Ibid., 278
\item \textsuperscript{301} Ibid., 278
\item \textsuperscript{302} Ibid., 292
\item \textsuperscript{303} Kark, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and Its Congregation: Dissent over Real Estate.", 516
\item \textsuperscript{304} Anderson, \textit{Imagined Communities}.
\end{itemize}
developed a Greek national hyper-consciousness. This "hyper-consciousness" was expressed through the continued Greek monopoly over the Patriarchate and also, as the next section will discuss, in opposition to Russian and Arab Orthodox interests.

**Arab Nationalism and Russian Interests**

Towards the latter half of the 19th century, the Arab subjects of the Empire also began to express their desire for a greater say within the Ottoman bureaucracy. The Arab Orthodox, partly because of their tendency to be well educated, were often at the forefront of the burgeoning Arab and Palestinian nationalist movements. Since the early 19th century, European missionaries – first French and British – began to establish a number of educational institutions across the Levant. As Hourani notes, a major impact of this European influence on the development of Arab Nationalism was an emphasis on the importance of national unity or ‘the willingness of all who share the same country to co-operate on a level of equality.’ National Arab unity was first articulated through the concept of *al-umma al-arabiyya*, “the Arab Nation”, which conceptualized membership in the national community based upon shared culture, ethnicity, and language rather than religion – thus incorporating both Christian and Muslim Arabs, whilst excluding the Ottoman Turks. Early iterations of Arab Nationalism were therefore heavily influenced by European notions of secularism and egalitarianism, whilst ‘Christians in Palestine as in other parts of the region, saw a promise of equality and a way out of their status as ‘dhimmi’ under Ottoman rule.’

Although the Catholic and Protestant-run missions were the first to have a significant impact on education in the Levant, by the mid-19th century, the Russian Empire had followed suit. Their activities were greatly increased after the establishment of the Imperial Orthodox Palestinian Society in 1882. By the end of the 19th century, more than 6,500 students attended schools run by the Society. However, unlike their Catholic and Protestant counterparts, the schools, ‘fostered the

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305. Roussos, "How Greek, How Palestinian? The Patriarchate of Jerusalem in the Mid-War Years.", 10
306. Protestant and Latin educational institutions were numerous in this period. For a comprehensive look at education in the Mandate period see e.g. Robson, *Colonialism and Christianity in Mandate Palestine*.
310. Roussos, "How Greek, How Palestinian? The Patriarchate of Jerusalem in the Mid-War Years.", 43
common consciousness of their students with their Arab Muslim countrymen', many of whom were also educated in the Society's schools.\footnote{311. Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine.", 81}

Many of these young and educated Arab Orthodox students went on to found Palestine's first nationalist newspapers, such as Filastin, and Karmil, and also to author several nationalist books, some of which were funded by the Russian Consulate.\footnote{312. Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine.", 82} In this period, Arab Orthodox solidarity with the Muslims – often in opposition to the growing threat of Zionism – provided a considerable front within which to spread nationalist sentiments. The tone of Arab Orthodox in the late 19th century became directed towards the ejection of foreign interests from Palestine – whether they were Greek, Jewish or otherwise – often communicated in Filastin and Karmil.\footnote{313. O'Mahony, The Christian Communities of Jerusalem and the Holy Land: Studies in History, Religion and Politics., 45} The movement was also encouraged by the Arabisation of the Patriarchate of Antioch in 1899.\footnote{314. Roussos, "Eastern Orthodox Christianity in the Middle East.", 108}

Although the primary language of instruction in the Russian schools was Arabic, students also studied the Russian language and culture – in some cases students from wealthier backgrounds travelled to study in Russian universities.\footnote{315. Khildani, Modern Christianity in the Holy Land.} These Russian educational institutions – despite their origins in pre-Bolshevik Russia -- came to influence the development of socialist politics amongst the Palestinian Christian communities, as many of the students who grew up within these schools in the late 19th century could read and write in Russian and were undoubtedly influenced by the works of Marx and Lenin.\footnote{316. Vatikiotis, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem between Hellenism and Arabism.", 926} This was furthered by the support that the USSR gave to the Palestinians throughout the early 20th century.\footnote{317. Joel Beinen, "The Palestine Communist Party 1919 - 1948," The Palestine Communist Party 1919 - 1948 55 (1977).}

Russian interests in the Middle East were twofold. Firstly, the Russians wanted to secure access to Black Sea trade routes to the Mediterranean, which had been monopolised by the Ottomans prior to the 19th century. Secondly, after Russia was granted guardianship over the Orthodox Christians of the Ottoman Empire in 1774, they had dreamed of 'becoming the new centre of the Orthodox
faith'. From a political perspective, the Russian Empire also saw Orthodoxy as a way to more subtly influence Middle Eastern politics. As the Foreign Secretary to the Russian Tsar Nicholas I argued,

\[\text{We must establish our presence in the east not politically but through the church. Neither the Turks nor the Europeans, who have their patriarchs and bishops in the Holy City, can refuse us this. While our influence was still strong we could afford to conceal our activities and thus avoid envy, but now that our influence in the east was weakened we, on the contrary, must try to display ourselves so that we do not sink in the estimation of the Orthodox population who still believe in us as of old. ...Jerusalem is the center of the world and our mission must be there.}\]

However the newly independent Greeks, who had maintained a monopoly over the Orthodox faith for centuries, also maintained interests in preserving the Hellenic nature of the ancient Patriarchates. The Patriarchate of Jerusalem was also cautious of Russian activities in the Levant because they feared that the nationalisation of churches, which was then becoming widespread in the Balkans and western parts of the Empire, would spread to churches in the Levant, cutting them off from the influence of the Greek hierarchy, purging themselves of foreign clergy and, perhaps most importantly, cutting off funding from land revenues.

The conflict between the interests of the Greek, Russian, and Arab Orthodox entered a new phase in the wake of the deposition of Patriarch Cyril II in 1872. Patriarch Cyril had been elected Patriarch in 1845, despite opposition from the Phanariotes and Ecumenical Patriarchate, who viewed him as pro-Russian and too concerned with pastoral and educational enterprises. Unlike previous Patriarchs, Cyril sought to improve the education of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre, and also addressed many of the pastoral concerns of the local Arab Orthodox community. In 1870 the Sultan Abdulaziz issued a firman creating a semi-autonomous Bulgarian Exarchate, which the Patriarchates of Constantinople, Antioch, and Alexandria strongly opposed because they feared that this could cause other churches to seek nationalisation. Patriarch Cyril, however, did not support the other three Patriarchates in their designation of the Bulgarian church as schismatic and was deposed by the Synod as a result. The Arab Orthodox, who saw the pastoral work of Cyril as beneficial to their community and also identified with the struggle for the self-determination of the Bulgarian

321. Ibid., 41
322. Vatikiotis, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem between Hellenism and Arabism."
Church, rallied in support of Cyril. As a result they suspended relations with the Patriarchate and staged a series of protests supported by the Russians. Cyril was quickly replaced by Patriarch Procopius – a staunch supporter of Greek hegemony in the Brotherhood – who was deposed two years later because of mass protests by the Arab Orthodox and Russian pressures. Within a few decades, the conflict over the identity of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem had transformed into a proxy for much larger national and regional conflicts.

**The Tanzimat Reforms:**

Beginning in the mid 19th century, the Ottoman Empire, now facing the growing threat of European incursions into its territory (Crimean War, Greek War of Independence, French and British capitulations), began to issue a series of modernising institutional reforms, known collectively as the Tanzimat. The first major reform, the Hatt-ı şerif in 1839, broadly sought to reform the tax system, court, and military organisations in order to guarantee equal rights to all Ottoman citizens, regardless of religious affiliation. It was ultimately less important that later reforms but began the process of liberalising the state. The second such reform, the Hatt-ı hümayun in 1856, went much farther towards granting equal rights to non-Muslims in the empire. Its aim was to reform 'the position of the non-Muslims in their relationship with the State, as well as in the internal situation of their communities.'

Most importantly, these reforms helped to introduce the concepts of equal rights and self-determination to the Arab Orthodox communities, as well as open up the intellectual space necessary for the community to begin to debate these issues. After significant lobbying from the Arab Orthodox community, these reforms paved the way for the authoring of a new, more inclusive constitution within the Rum Orthodox Millet in 1862, which attempted to 'diminish the influence of the higher clergy' by stipulating that 'a general assembly with two councils: one to deal with religious and clerical matters and the other with the education and welfare of the flocks.' These mixed councils were managed by a combination of clergy and lay members of the community and were the first among many more attempts to grant equal rights to the Arab Orthodox community.

However, these reforms were never fully implemented in the Jerusalem Patriarchate because of

323. Ibid., 923.
324. Faroqhi, ed.
325. Tsimhoni, "The Status of the Arab Christians under the British Mandate in Palestine.", 164
326. Ibid., 1647
resistance from the Greek clergy and ongoing Russian, Greek and Ottoman conflict over the nature of the Patriarchate.\footnote{Kark, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and Its Congregation: Dissent over Real Estate.", 517}

In 1872, with the encouragement of the Imperial Orthodox Society, the first communal demonstrations of Arab Orthodox against Greek control over both the higher clergy and the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre occurred, with a renewed demand for the formation of a mixed council.\footnote{Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine.", 151} Owing to Russian support and pressure, the Patriarchate drafted a new constitution (\textit{Katstatikon}) in 1875,\footnote{Denis Vovchenko, "Creating Arab Nationalism? Russia and Greece in Ottoman Syria and Palestine, (1840–1909)," \textit{Middle Eastern Studies} 49, no. 6 (2013).} which recognised the 'right of' the local community to a mixed council composed of clerics and lay members for the administration of education and welfare; the establishment of local councils in local centres; the admission of local members to the Brotherhood, and a certain participation of the indigenous priests in the election of the patriarch.\footnote{Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Community in Jerusalem and the West Bank 1948-1978: A Profile of Religious Minority in a National State."} Although the \textit{Katstatikon} was never implemented, its demands highlight the fact that the primary concern of the Arab Orthodox in this period was the role of the Patriarchate in the development of social welfare institutions, particularly in light of the growing development seen under Latin and Protestant patronage. The lack of social welfare provided by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate relative to the Latin and nascent Protestant churches in the area drew many Arab Orthodox students to Latin and Protestant schools, leading to the perception amongst Arab Orthodox that the Greek clergy were partly to blame for conversions to these other faiths.\footnote{Khildani, \textit{Modern Christianity in the Holy Land.}, 151}

The next major step towards reform occurred in 1908 in the wake of the Young Turk Revolt. The new Turkish constitution, drafted in July 1908, called for communal councils to control communal properties and affairs, as opposed to Patriarchal monopoly over control.\footnote{Masters, "Christians in a Changing World."} The Arab Orthodox, in cooperation with their Muslim and Russian allies, staged a number of protests in Jerusalem drawing the attention of the Ottoman government.\footnote{Tsimhoni, "The Status of the Arab Christians under the British Mandate in Palestine."} By 1910, these protests had grown and the Ottoman government was forced to take action. A new law was drafted that accepted Arab demands for a mixed council which would receive one-third of the Patriarchate's annual income for use in

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327. Kark, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and Its Congregation: Dissent over Real Estate.", 517
328. Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine."; Kark, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and Its Congregation: Dissent over Real Estate."
331. Khildani, \textit{Modern Christianity in the Holy Land.}, 151
333. Tsimhoni, "The Status of the Arab Christians under the British Mandate in Palestine."
education and social welfare projects.\textsuperscript{334} Their demands for greater participation in the administration of the Patriarchate and election of the Patriarch, as well as inclusion of Arab clergy into the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre were, however, not granted. However, this new law proved unsuccessful as the outbreak of the First World War disrupted the council from ever functioning.\textsuperscript{335} Consequently, the Ottoman period came to a close without the Arab Orthodox gaining any lasting concessions to their demands. One crucial development to come out of the Ottoman period was the development of an Arab Orthodox national consciousness, which continued to develop as an important part of the larger pan-Arab movement and, eventually, Palestinian nationalism. This movement was, in some ways modelled after the 'nationalist church movements in the Balkans' and drew strong inspiration from the successful Arabisation of the Patriarchate of Antioch in 1899. The election of the first Arab Patriarch in Antioch was 'hailed by the Arab nationalist intellectual Sati' al-Husri as 'the first real victory for Arab nationalism'.\textsuperscript{336}

\textit{Latin Community:}
Just as the Orthodox Church began to be strongly influenced by the machinations of European colonialism in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, the eastern Catholic communities, though significantly smaller in number, came under the influence and protection of the French Empire from the 17\textsuperscript{th} century onwards. Capitulations between the French and Ottoman Empires date back to the mid-16\textsuperscript{th} century when French citizens living within the Ottoman Empire were granted the right to practice their own religion in Ottoman lands. In 1740 France was granted the right to protect all Latin-rite Christians, and subsequently all Eastern-rite Catholics in the Empire.\textsuperscript{337} The 1740 capitulations also gave France the authority to represent the Vatican in diplomatic affairs with the Ottoman Empire; however, the Vatican did not recognise these rights officially until 1888.\textsuperscript{338}

Although France had made significant diplomatic inroads with the Ottomans in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, growing Russia aggression in the Black Sea, the Caucasus, and the northern Mediterranean, combined with growing Russian diplomatic pressure, lead the Ottomans to issue a \textit{firman} in 1757,
which granted the Orthodox control over the administration of holy sites in Palestine, despite the fact that these rights had been held exclusively by the Latins since 1690.\textsuperscript{339} Following the Russian victory in the Russo-Turkish War of 1768-74, Russia was granted the right to protect Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire in exchange for the return of the Ottoman provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia.\textsuperscript{340} Importantly, this gave the Russians increased diplomatic leverage over the Ottomans throughout the 18\textsuperscript{th} and early 19\textsuperscript{th} centuries.

The French Revolution in 1789 briefly turned France's attention away from the Holy Land. However, the political philosophy that emerged from the Revolution came to influence France's policy towards the Ottoman Empire, as they increasingly saw notions of liberty and democracy as being key to awakening the 'dormant civilisations of the east'.\textsuperscript{341} Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 was couched in these same revolutionary philosophical terms – of course with the more pronounced intention of countering British and Russian naval power in the Mediterranean.\textsuperscript{342}

However, France's diplomatic position in the Ottoman Empire was further diminished due to their ongoing relationship with Egypt. During the 1821 Greek War of Independence, the Egyptian military, under the leadership of Pasha Muhammad Ali, assisted the Ottomans in retaking parts of the Ionian peninsula under the condition that Egypt would be granted increased autonomy from the Ottoman Empire. When these promises were not delivered, Egypt invaded parts of Syria and Palestine in 1831, which they would retain until an Ottoman counter-offensive in 1840. The subsequent conflict again saw the intervention of European powers, with the British, Austrian, Prussian, and Russian Empires supporting the Ottoman military and France initially supporting Egypt.\textsuperscript{343} Although France changed its position nearing the end of the crisis, their relationship with the Ottomans became strained. As a result, the position of the Latin-rite Christians in the Empire also declined. In 1847, the silver star on the Church of the Nativity, a symbol of the Latin presence

\textsuperscript{339} Heacock in Anthony O'Mahony et al., \textit{The Christian Heritage in the Holy Land} (London, England: Scorpion Cavendish, 1995), 201
\textsuperscript{340} Heacock in ibid., 201
\textsuperscript{341} Heacock in ibid., 202
\textsuperscript{342} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{343} Despite the rivalry between the French and British in this period, both feared the collapse of the Ottoman Empire because it would allow the Russian Empire to fill the power vacuum thus increasing their influence in the Middle East and cutting off important trade routes in the Mediterranean.
in the holy sites, was stolen. In reaction to these events, the Vatican decided to re-establish the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem in 1847, in order to help reassert Latin rights to holy sites.

The conflict over the rights to holy places in Palestine in this period was, in many ways, a proxy for larger international conflicts between France, Britain, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire, which ultimately led to the Crimean War in 1853. In order to help ease the conflict over holy sites, the Ottomans issue a firman in 1852, which became the definitive legal ruling on the issue of Greek, Latin and Armenian control over holy sites. This firman, commonly referred to as the Status Quo Agreement was ratified internationally by the Treaty of Berlin in 1878 and is upheld to this day.

Re-Establishment of the Latin Patriarchate: the Latin-rite in an eastern context:

By 1847, there were some 4,000 Latin-rite Catholics living in the Holy Land, many of whom had been drawn to the Latin-rite because they identified with the relatively "modern" European liturgy and because of the growing presence of Latin social welfare initiatives. Given the relatively small size of the Latin community, the establishment of a Latin-rite Patriarchate in Jerusalem was viewed with suspicion by the much larger indigenous Melkite Catholic community. This was due to its unclear vocation, but also because of the ongoing influx of Latin-rite and other European missionaries who initially sought to Latinise eastern Catholicism. This crisis deepened during the First Vatican Council, which 'was undertaken in the absence of the oriental prelates', leading the Melkite Catholic Church to believe that the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem intended to marginalise eastern Catholic leadership and liturgical traditions. Although this was partly true of the Latin missionaries to the Holy Land, the first Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Msr Valegera believed that 'all the eastern churches should comply with the canon law followed in the Catholic Church, provided that freedom is left to each church vis-à-vis its heritage and liturgy.' Therefore, despite the lack of input from eastern clergy in Vatican I, it did seem as if the Jerusalem Patriarchate had taken the fears of the Melkite Catholic Church into consideration.

344. O'Mahony, "The Vatican, Jerusalem, the State of Israel, and Christianity in the Holy Land."
347. O'Mahony, "The Vatican, Jerusalem, the State of Israel, and Christianity in the Holy Land."
348. Ibid.
350. Khildani, Modern Christianity in the Holy Land, 348
These fears were ameliorated during Pope Leo XIII's pontificate when he made efforts to foster dialogue between eastern-rite and Latin Catholicism. The papacy was well aware of the Latinising tendency of Catholic missionaries to the Holy Land, despite an earlier ruling in Pope Benedict XIV's 1755 encyclical *Allatae Sunt*, which forbade Greek Catholics from passing to the Latin Rite. However, despite the efforts of subsequent popes to stem Latinisation, by the end of the 19th century it had 'become so systematic in the Eastern Churches that after the International Eucharistic Congress of Jerusalem in 1893' Pope Leo XIII issued an encyclical *Orientalium Dignitas* in 1894 in which he warned:

*Any Latin rite missionary, including secular or religious clergy, who induces with his advice or assistance any eastern rite faithful to transfer to the Latin rite, will be deposed and excluded from his benefice in addition to the ipso facto suspension a divinis and other punishments that he will incur as imposed in the aforesaid Constitution Demandatam.*

Under Pope Pius XI, the de-Latinisation of the Holy Land was treated with such seriousness that he considered abolishing the Patriarchate entirely – an idea that was ultimately abandoned due to diplomatic reasons, which included fears of disrupting the 1852 Status Quo.

**Local or missionary church?**

From the moment of its re-establishment in 1847, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem began to encourage the growth of a local clergy to serve the needs of the growing Latin community. Under the authority of Patriarch Valegera, the Patriarchate began to recruit members of the local community into the seminary in order to begin the growth of an indigenous clergy, who 'could understand the mentality of the country and speak its languages.' To that end, in 1852 a Latin seminary was established first in Jerusalem and then moving to Beit Jala in 1857. This seminary became a centre for the growth of an indigenous Arab clergy who went on to fill the highest ranks of the Patriarchate. As one high ranking Palestinian Latin priest related,

> When the Latin patriarchate was restored in 1848, the Pope sent the Patriarch and he came here alone with no clergy at all and he was received by the Franciscans. Then he went to Europe to ask for more help to come. And immediately he began to look for local seminarians, and he found four at that time and he sent them to Lebanon to the Jesuit seminary there. And in a few years there were a few priests who came to join the Latin patriarchate -- they were 4 or 5 -- from Europe still to help. So immediately he sent them to Beit Jala here to begin the seminary. They said 'we came for the parishes' and he said 'the parishes can wait, first

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352. Ibid., 16
the seminary'. And he called back those four seminarians in Lebanon to come join the seminary here in Beit Jala and that was in 1852.

So immediately he thought about having local clergy. He continued to go to Europe to ask the help – not of priests, but of young people. In the 1970s, the last Italians were ordained by the Latin Patriarchate. But slowly you can see that we have more and more Arab clergy. It took until the Second Vatican council to be open to having Arabs in the Patriarchal hierarchy.\(^355\)

The Latin seminary was important, not just because of its role in training local clergy, but also as a symbol of the Latin Church's commitment the local community. Through the Latin seminary in Beit Jala, the hierarchy of the Latin Patriarchate transformed, over the course of the 20\(^{th}\) century, from a foreign to a largely indigenous institution; one that is viewed as understanding and responding to the needs of the Latin community quite well.

\*The British Mandate:

\*Orthodox Community:

During the British mandate, the question of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem took on a new dimension. Despite the fact that the Ottoman millet system formed, 'the backbone of the legal system the British inherited', the protection that non-Muslim communities received under the Mandate was expanded – often exacerbating sectarianism at the expense of Arab solidarity, as political participation was tied to membership within confessional communities.\(^356\) However, it was these factors that ultimately transformed both the Arab Orthodox movement and Palestinian national movements from loosely organised ad hoc organisations, to an organised and politically relevant force in opposition to both the Greek hierarchy and the emerging Zionist movement.

Within this context, the Patriarchate itself was facing financial difficulties – both due to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the Bolshevik Revolution. Consequently, revenue streams from Bessarabia, the Balkans, and other parts of Russia, as well as the income generated from pilgrimage from these regions diminished.\(^357\) When these incomes dried up at the end of the First World War, the Patriarchate took on high interest loans in order to sustain itself. When the British arrived in 1917, 'they found the Patriarchate bankrupt and saddled with an enormous debt of over £E

\(^355\). Latin Priest 1, "Personal Interview."
\(^356\). Robson, "Communalism and Nationalism in the Mandate: The Greek Orthodox Controversy and the National Movement.", 8
\(^357\). Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine.", 84-85
500,000', mainly accrued during the tenure of Patriarch Damianos. However, by November 1917, Damianos had retreated, along with the Ottomans to Damascus, bringing the Holy Synod of bishops with him. This left only a handful of Brotherhood members in Jerusalem to handle Patriarchal affairs. Given their lack of options in the face of changing post-millet political climate, the Brotherhood in 1918 appealed to the Greek government for financial assistance. This shift away from the authority of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and towards the Greek State characterised the Mandate period, as the Greek state became 'the centre of the Hellenic world', heavily influenced by Greek nationalism and the Megali Idea, which added a new diplomatic dimension to the affairs of the Patriarchate.

The Greek government, who had been on the allied side during the First World War, sent a delegation to Jerusalem in 1918 to assess the financial situation of the Patriarchate. The delegation delivered a report to General Allenby that denounced Patriarch Damianos, requesting both that he be deposed because of his pro-Turkish stance, and that the Greeks be allowed to intervene in the financial and administrative affairs of the Patriarchate. However, the British Mandate authorities remained unconvinced. They too viewed Damianos as unacceptably pro-Turkish, but were cautious of giving the Greek State too much influence over the Patriarchate because they calculated that this would exacerbate tensions between the Arab Orthodox and Greek hierarchy. In the interim, the Brotherhood elected Archbishop Porphyrios as locum tenens in 1918 primarily because he was the highest ranking bishop in Palestine at that time, and requested that the British allow for the deposition of Damianos. The Arab Orthodox protested this move because, whilst they were not particularly fond of Damianos, they objected to the unconstitutional manner of Porphyrios' appointment.

The British issued a moratorium on the outstanding debt, and continued to decline Greek offers of financial assistance, due both to scepticism about Greece's intentions and Arab objections to such a loan. In 1918 the British allowed for the return of the exiled Synod of Bishops, but did not allow...
Damianos to return until 1919, and only then after pressure from the Arab Orthodox and Muslim associations. However, with Damianos reinstated in his position as patriarch, he ‘began a struggle for the preservation of the Greek privileges and character of the Brotherhood and for the granting of a Greek loan’, much to the dismay of the Arab Orthodox.\footnote{365} Simultaneously, the growing presence of Jewish immigrants in Palestine had helped to crystallise the burgeoning Arab and Palestinian nationalist movements – firstly through the development of Muslim-Christian Associations and then the Palestinian Arab Congress. These two associations were partly spurred on by the controversial relationship between the Orthodox Patriarchate and the Zionist Palestinian Land Development Company, who had entered into negotiations for the sale of Patriarchate land beginning in 1919.\footnote{366} In response to the growing threat of Zionism and apparent complacency of the Orthodox Patriarchate, in 1923 the First Arab Orthodox Congress was held in Haifa. In total, 54 delegates from all of the dioceses participated in the Congress and elected executive committee to represent the Orthodox community. Importantly, the Arab Orthodox Congress represented the first real synthesis of nationalistic and religious aims through its borrowing of the Arab and Palestinian national movements’ ‘modern structures of representation and authority’, which had the effect of ‘ politicizing the Orthodox movement’.\footnote{367} Although the Congress repeated many of the same demands the Arab Orthodox community had made for decades – such as a mixed council and greater Arab say in Patriarchal finances – a major aim of the Congress was to redefine the identity of the Patriarchate itself. As Robson notes,

\begin{quote}
To this end, it called for: renaming the patriarchate "The Jerusalem Orthodox Patriarchate"; admitting Arabs to the Brotherhood and clerical hierarchy; Arab participation in patriarchal financial administration; Arab control of church schools and orphanages; a majority-Arab mixed lay-clerical council with powers over administration, patriarchal elections, and admitting non-Arab members to the Brotherhood; and mandating Arabic as the liturgical and administrative language of the church, the bishops, and the religious courts.\footnote{368}
\end{quote}

Emerging nationalist sentiments were clearly at the core of these demands, as both the Greek and Jewish community were painted as foreign entities whose aim was to dominate and displace the indigenous Arab Muslim and Christian communities. In response, the Mandate authorities

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365. Ibid.
366. Ibid.
367. Robson, “Communalism and Nationalism in the Mandate: The Greek Orthodox Controversy and the National Movement.”, 9
368. Ibid., 10
organised the Bertram-Young Commission in 1926 to review the long-standing conflict between Arab Orthodox and Greek clergy, as well as the financial issues of the Patriarchate. In the end, the Commission’s report recommended that Arab Orthodox be admitted to the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre, with greater lay participation in the administration.\(^{369}\)

Although the progress for Arabisation of the Patriarchate was marginal in this period, the Arab Orthodox Congresses emerged as important platforms for ‘a developing national consciousness’, both for the Arab Orthodox and Muslim communities.\(^{370}\) The British Mandate ended without the Arab Orthodox making significant gains and the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948 once again transformed the social and political dynamics between the Greek clergy and Arab laity. However, in the intervening years between the Mandate and the 1948 War, the position of the Arab Orthodox within the Palestinian nationalist movement grew increasingly important, as priorities shifted from communal to national concerns (and also towards secularism).

*Latin Community:*
The end of the Ottoman period significantly improved the freedom of Palestine's Christian communities, which experienced an average growth of around 2.7% in the years between 1920 and 1948 – the largest period of growth in the 20\(^{th}\) century.\(^{371}\) However, the influx of Jewish immigrants to Palestine in this period posed a challenge to the Palestinian community as a whole – particularly in light of the favourable position the Jewish community held with the British authorities.\(^{372}\) In the 1920s, Latin rights to holy places were again contested as the growing Jewish community began to challenge the status quo, particularly in the Old City of Jerusalem. This led Latin Patriarch Barlassina 'to adopt an openly anti-Zionist stance', which the Patriarch tried, unsuccessfully, to convey to both the Mandate authorities and Catholic European states.\(^{373}\) Indeed this stance proved unsuccessful throughout the Mandate period, which came to affect Vatican policy towards the city of Jerusalem, as will be discussed in the next section.

\(^{369}\) Roussos, "How Greek, How Palestinian? The Patriarchate of Jerusalem in the Mid-War Years.", 14-15
\(^{370}\) Marsh, "The Orthodox Church and Its Palestinian-Christian Identity.", 263
\(^{371}\) Author's own calculation based on data from: Romell Soudah and Bernard Sabella, "The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel.", (Jerusalem: Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, 2006); Sabella, "The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel.", 41
\(^{372}\) Balfour Declaration, etc.
\(^{373}\) O'Mahony, The Christian Communities of Jerusalem and the Holy Land: Studies in History, Religion and Politics., 102
Although Christian communities grew substantially under the British Mandate, the 1948 War with Israel and subsequent refugee crisis caused a significant decline in the Latin community: 'of the 10,000 Latins who were found in Jerusalem and the neighbouring towns after the 1948 War, only 3,000 remained in the early 1970s.' However, the experience of the 1948 War, the increasingly uncertain status of Jerusalem, and the growing number of Arab clergy transformed the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem into an institution rooted in the Palestinian experience by the middle of the 20th century.

Jordanian and Israeli Rule:
Orthodox Community:
Following the 1948 War and subsequent refugee crisis, tensions between the Greek hierarchy and Arab laity briefly subsided as efforts were directed towards the growing refugee crisis. The Patriarchate attempted to restore relations with the Arab Orthodox community by aiding in the refugee crisis and expanding parishes. However, the conflict was resumed in 1955 with the death of Patriarch Timotheos. The Arab congregation, who had as of yet, not made lasting progress towards its demands, again pushed for greater rights, including the reestablishment of the mixed council, granting of one-third of the Patriarchate's income for social welfare projects and a role in the management of Patriarchal finances and properties. The Arab Orthodox leadership pressed the Jordanian government to suspend the election of a new patriarch until some of their demands had been granted. In 1956 a fourth Arab Orthodox Congress was convened in Jerusalem to address the above demands, in addition to demands for foreign (non-Arab) members of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre to acquire a good level of Arabic language and to establish an Orthodox theological seminary in Palestine. These demands were brought forward to the Jordanian government, but were never implemented. In June of 1956, a government order to allow for patriarchal elections was issued. Prominent Arab Orthodox leaders protested the move in highly nationalistic language – referring to the Arab Orthodox struggle in terms of a wider post-colonial

374. Ibid., 101
376. Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine.", 283
377. Kark, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and Its Congregation: Dissent over Real Estate.", 520
378. Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine.", 285
struggle to expel foreign rulers. Although the 1957 constitution was partly implemented, it stopped short of granting any power over the Patriarchate's finances and land holdings to the Arab Orthodox community.

Despite this fact, the first Arab Bishop was appointed to the Synod of Bishops in 1960, along with the appointment of an Arab monk to the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre. The mixed council was established and held several meetings prior to the 1967 War, but was never granted funding. As such, the new constitution was never fully implemented within the Patriarchate, and the disruption of the 1967 War once again created a setback for the Arab Orthodox. Although the Arab Orthodox began to gain minor concessions that allowed for the expansion of the Patriarchate's role in pastoral affairs, control over the Patriarchate's assets became a major focus of the post-1967 period. The Patriarchate's policy of cooperation with governing authorities in order to maintain the status quo of Greek leadership and control over holy sites was slightly disrupted by Jordanian rule, however it resumed when Israel gained full control over Jerusalem in the aftermath of the 1967 War.

With the Israeli occupation of the West Bank in the wake of the 1967 War, the mixed council was suspended. The Greek hierarchy was able to recover its position of dominance by establishing good contacts with Israeli authorities. Following the War, Patriarch Benedictos drafted a letter to the Israeli authorities in which he described the assets of the Patriarchate along with a detailed historical survey of legal precedent in relation to Greek control over assets, requesting that the status quo be maintained. The Israeli authorities honoured the status quo, and decided against making any changes to the rules governing church assets.

For their part, the Rum Orthodox community was deeply affected by the 1967 War, which not only prompted a renewed refugee crisis, but also mass emigration out of Israel and Palestine. It was also clear in this period that many Arab Orthodox organisations now identified themselves as 'Palestinian nationalist institutions' and being supported by their sister organisations in Amman. In fact, as Roussos notes, the period after 1967 was similar to the Mandate period for the Arab Orthodox, in

379. Ibid.
380. Kark, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and Its Congregation: Dissent over Real Estate.", 520
382. Kark, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and Its Congregation: Dissent over Real Estate."
383. Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine.", 290
that they began to prioritise national versus communal identifications and concerns. The Arab Orthodox community, because of its pan-Arab and Palestinian nationalist sentiments, did not establish contacts with the Israeli authorities, unlike their Greek counterparts. Along with the growth of nationalist sentiment amongst the Palestinian Christian communities more generally, expressions of political and national solidarity were increasingly secular — with the advent of groups like the PFLP, DFLP, PPP, Ba'ath party, etc. — all left-leaning, secular or atheistic political groups. Indeed, many of the middle-class Palestinian Christian leadership became 'leading advocates of nationalism, secularisation and radicalisation of the Palestinian national struggle' within their communities and the Palestinian community in general. The Arab Orthodox played a major role in the establishment of leftist political parties, who traced their roots in the Arab Orthodox Congresses throughout the early 20th century and Russian influence.

In 1977 the dynamic changed yet again with the election of the Likud coalition in Israel, who, many argued, prioritised the Judiasation of Jerusalem and further facilitated Israeli settlement activity in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Despite the good relations between the Patriarchate's leadership and the Israeli authorities, the election of Likud placed a strain on the relationship because, as Dumper notes, the appointment of many ultra-nationalist Israelis to the Ministries of Justice, Religious Affairs, Housing, and the Israeli Lands Administration had the effect of undermining the relationship between Israel and many within the Church leadership. However, Patriarchal land sales and leases to Israel continued throughout this period and the intensified Palestinian nationalist struggle furthered the perception that land sales were in fact facilitating Israeli settlement projects in East Jerusalem, thereby further exacerbating the contentious relationship between Greek clergy and the Arab Orthodox.

**Latin Community:**

Although the Palestinian Latin community did not face many of the internal challenges that their Orthodox compatriots faced during this period, they were similarly affected by the political and social turmoil of the mid-20th century. However, the 1948 War and subsequent refugee crisis

385. Ibid., 50
386. Roussos, "Eastern Orthodox Christianity in the Middle East."
prompted the Vatican to play an enhanced role in the lives of the Palestinian Latin community. In addition to the 'massive relief effort' undertaken to aid Palestinian refugees, the Vatican began to seek political and diplomatic solutions to resettle or return refugees to the Holy Land – seeking 'in particular the return of Palestinian Christians to Jerusalem, Bethlehem and its surrounding Christian villages.'\(^\text{389}\) From 1948 onwards, Vatican diplomacy has focused on the right of return for Palestinian refugees, resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict, and a host of other 'wide-ranging diplomatic and ecclesial' support networks to help sustain the Christian presence in the Holy Land in addition to calls for the internationalisation of Jerusalem.\(^\text{390}\)

The 1967 War and Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem renewed the Vatican's call for internationalisation of the city. However, the Vatican's policy no longer called for the creation of a special territorial delineation, corpus separatum, for the city. Rather, it lobbied to preserve the pluralistic nature of the city, in which the three major monotheistic religions should be granted equal and fair access to shared holy sites within the city. Pope Paul VI also called for the 'free enjoyment of the legitimate civil and religious rights of persons, residences and activities of all communities present on the territory of Palestine' – a hereto unprecedented level of diplomatic pressure to assure the rights of Palestinians.\(^\text{391}\)

Although the Vatican under Pope Paul VI showed increased concern for the Palestinian Christian communities, and Palestine more generally, it must be further contextualised within its larger policy to seek a viable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, in which Palestinian and Israeli rights are balanced.\(^\text{392}\) It is also important to note that the Vatican was not immune from diplomatic pressures from other states and actors:

> The Holy See has been subjected to contrasting pressures during this time: the United States insisted on the opening of diplomatic relations between the Vatican and Israel; Israel periodically accused the Holy See of a pro-Arab bias, connecting this stance to religious prejudices which in reality had by then been overcome; and the Arab countries of the Middle East, with the tacit consent of their respective Roman Catholic communities, expressed dissatisfaction with Vatican policy and asked for more decisive support for the Palestinian cause. Despite all this, the Holy See has continued to adhere strictly to its position.\(^\text{393}\)

\(^\text{389. Ibid., 124}\)
\(^\text{390. Ibid., 124}\)
\(^\text{391. Silvio Ferrari, "The Vatican, Israel and the Jerusalem Question (1943-1984)," Middle Eastern Journal 39, no. 2 (1985)., 325}\)
\(^\text{392. O'Mahony, "The Vatican, Jerusalem, the State of Israel, and Christianity in the Holy Land.", 131}\)
\(^\text{393. Ibid., 131}\)
The First Intifada:

Orthodox community:

The outbreak of the First Intifada in 1987 again shifted the dynamic between Greek and Arab Orthodox. The progression of the Palestinian nationalist movement and its eruption into the mass movement of the Intifada had the effect of further nationalising church issues. As stated in the introduction, the struggle of the Arab Orthodox against the foreign Greek clergy became, in some ways, a proxy for the struggle between the foreign occupying force and the Palestinians, just as the sale of Patriarchal land to the Israelis became akin to a treasonous offence – the land was no longer just part of the church, but now it was part of the Palestinian homeland. However, the period of the Intifada also saw the Patriarchal authorities breaking with their tradition of full cooperation with the governing authority of the state, due to pressures from both the Palestinian Christian community and support from other Jerusalem churches. Between 1987 and 1992, Patriarch Diodoros joined the heads of other Jerusalem churches in signing the Statements by the Heads of Christian Communities in Jerusalem, which condemned Israel's activities in the Occupied Territories, along with engaging in a series of boycotts and strikes.

In 1990, St. John's Hospice was occupied by radical Israeli settlers, which briefly increased solidarity between the Greek clergy and Arab Orthodox Community. Following the occupation, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the holiest Christian site in Jerusalem, was closed for 24 hours, and between 1987 and 1989 the Christmas celebrations were halted and public services suspended. As Dumper discusses, 'these were significant steps not only in terms of expressing solidarity with the Palestinian national movement and the suffering of the people, but also in demonstrating the degree of intra-church coordination.'

Since 1990, as Katz and Kark note, the Arab Orthodox community's activism has intensified. The issue of land sales to Israel has become a major point of contention, with the congregation demanding inclusion in the management of Patriarchal assets. Since the Arab Orthodox Initiative Committee conference in 1992, three additional conferences addressing land sales and asset management have been held. The 1992 conference was also significant in that it had the support of

394. Roussos, "Eastern Orthodox Christianity in the Middle East.", 111
396. Ibid., 56
both the Jordanian government and the PLO, who also pressured the Patriarchate to halt land sales.\textsuperscript{397}

\textit{Latin community:}

The Latin community also faced considerable challenges during the Intifada years. However, unlike the \textit{Rum Orthodox} community who continued to struggle for greater Arab rights throughout these troubled years, the 1987 appointment of a Palestinian priest to the office of the Patriarch represented a shift towards the needs of the local community. Indeed, Patriarch Michel Sabbah's appointment was symbolic not only of the Vatican's changing stance towards the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict, but also of the evolution of the Latin Patriarchate into a truly indigenous institution.\textsuperscript{398} As such, Patriarch Sabbah became, in many ways, a powerful symbol of the Palestinian struggle for national self-determination, supporting non-violent resistance during the Intifada and Christian and Muslim solidarity.\textsuperscript{399} Additionally, he has been in the forefront of political and theological struggles regarding the future of Jerusalem, becoming, in many ways, 'the Vatican's point man...initially favouring a special status for the Holy City, and then later quietly abandoning this policy in favour of a more pro-Palestinian stand' in regards to the Old City of Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{400} In this sense, Sabbah has followed closely with Vatican policy regarding both Jerusalem and the Palestinian question, and he has used his limited autonomy to take an even stronger stance in support of the Palestinians.

However, the institution of the Patriarchate itself is constrained to the extent that their authority is not limited to Palestine, but also Israel and Jordan. Therefore, any political stance must take into consideration their special relationship with these three states. Despite these limitations, the institution of the Patriarchate joined other Christian churches in Jerusalem in a boycott of official ceremonies associated with religious holidays.\textsuperscript{401}

At the grassroots level, a number of respondents related the important role that parish priests played during the Intifada. During the siege of Beit Sahour in August of 1989, priests 'brought supplies to people and took them to hospitals when 24 hour curfews were in place.'\textsuperscript{402} This is despite the fact

\textsuperscript{397} Ibid., 55
\textsuperscript{398} O'Mahony, "The Vatican, Jerusalem, the State of Israel, and Christianity in the Holy Land.", 140
\textsuperscript{399} Pacini, \textit{Christian Communities in the Arab Middle East: The Challenge of the Future}, 275-6
\textsuperscript{401} Dumper, "The Christian Churches of Jerusalem in the Post-Oslo Period.", 56
\textsuperscript{402} Latin Priest 1, "Personal Interview."
that a number of parish priests were Jordanian, Italian, and from other Catholic countries. In this way respondents indicated that these Latin priest were "just as Palestinian as us." 403 In many ways, the Latin Patriarchate in this period enhanced its grassroots support as an institution that had "proven itself" to be a strong supporter of Palestinian rights.

**Oslo Period:**

**Orthodox Community:**

The Oslo Accords also had an impact on the relationship between clergy and laity in the Greek Orthodox community in Palestine. When the Palestinian Authority was established, a new Ministry of Religious Affairs was also established, which, along with the Minister for Christian Affairs, managed Christian administration in the West Bank and Gaza. Due to the fact that the institution of the Patriarchate is now under Israeli authority, a majority of the issues between Arab Orthodox and Greek clergy, particularly those involving land sales and asset management, are carried out in the Israeli courts. In 2001, the Orthodox National Council requested that the Israeli Supreme Court review the reestablishment of the mixed council, in addition to numerous petitions to the Patriarchate itself. 404

**Latin Community:**

As with the First Intifada, the Oslo Period saw the Latin community increasingly affected by the diplomatic relations of the Vatican with Israel and the newly established Palestinian Authority. Although the Vatican was not directly involved with the 1991 Madrid Conference, which set the stage for the Oslo Process two years later, it became more deeply involved in diplomatic negotiations between Israel, the PLO, and neighbouring Arab states during this period, whilst also establishing official diplomatic relations with Israel, Jordan and the PLO in 1993 and 1994. 405 Vatican relations with Israel, although progressing positively throughout the early 1990s, were damaged with the 1995 assassination of Yitzak Rabin, who many viewed as a partner for peace, and the subsequent election of a right wing coalition to the Israeli Knesset, who proposed 'Jerusalem as the capital of Israel'. 406 This change in policy towards Jerusalem affected the implementation of the Vatican-Israeli Fundamental Agreement, in regards to the Latin Patriarchate's property rights and tax

403 Ibid.
404 Kark, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and Its Congregation: Dissent over Real Estate.", 522
405 O'Mahony, "The Vatican, Jerusalem, the State of Israel, and Christianity in the Holy Land.", 131
406 Pacini, Christian Communities in the Arab Middle East: The Challenge of the Future, 281
exemption status in Jerusalem. This obviously dampened the prospects of the peace process throughout the early 2000s. Pope John Paul II's visit to Israel in March of 2000, during the beginning of the Second Intifada, was framed in his wish for mutual recognition and rights for the three monotheistic faiths. This visit was also symbolically important towards repairing the Vatican's relationship with Israel and the PLO. Indeed, John Paul II saw the resolution of the contested status of Jerusalem as being key to resolving the conflict in the Middle East.

During John Paul II's papacy, he cited his disapproval for unilateral decisions about the future of Jerusalem, such as Israel's declaration of Jerusalem as its capital, and the ongoing development of Jewish sections of the Old City of Jerusalem, which might endanger the fragile demography of the city, and hence its Christian population. This concern for the changing demography of the city goes back to at least 1971, when the Vatican newspaper, the Osservatore Romano, published an article criticising the development of the Jewish quarter of the Old City, calling it a move to imprint 'Jerusalem with a particular character prejudicial to non-Jewish members of the population, both Christian and Muslim', which ultimately forced these communities, 'in the name of city planning, to retreat into smaller confines, and ultimately to seek elsewhere a future which the climate of their homeland no longer makes available to them.' In other words, it endangered the already precarious balance between the three monotheistic religions in the city, causing the most demographically insignificant amongst them, the Christians, to continue to emigrate.

**Contemporary Context:**

**Orthodox community:**

In the contemporary context, many of the issues that the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate faces are related to the competing nationalisms of these two communities. In 2005, former Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, Ireneos I, was deposed by the Jerusalem Patriarchate's Holy Synod after he was allegedly implicated in a controversy over the sale of the Patriarchate's real estate, in which the Patriarchate allegedly entered into a 'multimillion-dollar transaction involving the sale or long-term lease of prime land holdings owned by the Greek Orthodox church near Jaffa Gate in the Old City.
of Jerusalem to Jewish investors'. Although Patriarch Ireneos I was eventually exonerated by a Palestinian Authority Commission report, whose opinion it was that the Patriarch was victim of 'a very well calculated plan...schemed by a number of clerics opposing Ireneos in collaboration with Israeli Extreme Right Wingers', popular public sentiment within the Arab Orthodox community – largely spearheaded by the highest ranking Palestinian member of the Orthodox clergy then Archimandrite Atallah Hanna – suspected that the sale of land by the Patriarchate was part of a larger conspiracy to "Judiaise" Jerusalem, or, at the very least, part of the ongoing policy of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate to maintain its position as the primary guardian of the holy sites through cooperation with the governing power.

The identity and vocation of the Patriarchate continues to be a point of contention between the Greek hierarchy and Arab laity. Whilst the Greek clergy cite the early role of the Patriarchate – as the guardian of the region's holy sites -- as historical precedent for its actions in the present, the Arab laity continue to petition for greater access to positions of power within the Patriarchate, particularly in relation to the management of property and finances, citing discrimination and racism as the root of the issue. However, the Greek clergy argues that its barriers to greater access to positions of power for the Arab clergy and lack of sufficient pastoral care is not a result of racism or nationalism, but rather because pastoral care was never part of the Patriarchate's raison d'être. Therefore, they argue, any social welfare provided by the Patriarchate throughout history was 'was coincidental and in addition to its major and primary function and duty of looking after the Shrines for the benefit of all the Orthodox Christians everywhere.' It seems, therefore, that significant changes to the identity of the Patriarchate are not forthcoming, despite the fact that the community is rapidly decreasing in size.

Latin community:

Following the failure of the Oslo Process to grant any change in the status of Jerusalem, and the worsening of conditions for the Palestinians living under Israeli occupation, in 2000 the Vatican signed the Basic Agreement between itself and the PLO, which recognised the PLO as the legitimate

411. Kark, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and Its Congregation: Dissent over Real Estate.", 511
414. Vatikiotis, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem between Hellenism and Arabism.", 920
representative of the Palestinian people and also recognised the right of the Palestinians to statehood. This document also highlights a shift in the Vatican's diplomatic priorities from a focus on the status of Jerusalem, towards greater concern for the Palestinian people, as well as the beginnings of diplomatic recognition of the Palestinian state. The Basic Agreement reiterated the Vatican's stance that Jerusalem has significance for the three monotheistic faiths, calling the city ‘inter alia a privileged space for inter-religious dialogue’.

The Basic Agreement also framed the just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in terms that recognise ‘the inalienable national legitimate rights and aspirations of the Palestinian People’ – a clear statement in support of the Palestinians – whilst calling any unilateral decisions about Jerusalem --a subtle reference to the Israeli right -- ‘morally and legally unacceptable’. Importantly for the future of the Palestinian Christian population, the Vatican made its diplomatic agreement contingent on the PLO agreeing to preserve equal rights and duties of all Palestinian citizens – regardless of their religion.

Citing growing international support for the recognition of Palestinian statehood, in particular the United Nations General Assembly's 2012 recognition of the state of Palestine, the Vatican finalised recognition of Palestinian statehood in June of 2015 in the Comprehensive Agreement with the PLO. Although faced with staunch opposition from the Israeli side who said that this recognition would cause set backs for the peace process, the Vatican believed that it would provide a 'stimulus to bringing a definitive end to the long-standing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which continues to cause suffering for both Parties'. This move towards recognition of the Palestinian state followed a much-anticipated 2014 visit to Jordan, Palestine and Israel by Pope Francis. After a mass attended by 30,000 worshippers in the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem, the Pope remarked, 'I wish to invite you, President Mahmoud Abbas, together with [Israeli] President Shimon Peres, to join me in heartfelt prayer to God for the gift of peace. I offer my home in the Vatican as a place for this encounter of prayer', which again highlighted the important role that the Vatican hopes to play in the resolution of the Conflict.

416. Ibid.
The Vatican now takes a more direct role in the peace process – either by offering to mediate any peace agreement or through its recognition of Palestinian statehood, which it hopes will pressure the Israeli government to take the peace process seriously. For the Palestinian population, the Pope’s visit and the Vatican's recognition of Palestinian statehood reinforced the important role that the Palestinian Christian community plays – both as a connection to allies in the West and through their contributions to Palestinian culture and politics.

**Conclusion:**

As this chapter has discussed, the historical trajectories of both the Latin and Orthodox communities in Palestine have been marked by their interaction with European colonialism and the growth of a national consciousness. The evolving nature of the identity and vocation of the Patriarchates diverged in the early 20th century, when the Latin Patriarchate began to take the concerns of the indigenous community to heart, whilst the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate continues to struggle in defining itself as both a relevant actor in the local context and honouring its ancient identity and vocation. In the case of the Rum Orthodox community, these struggles have been manifested in a number different ways over the course of the 20th century. Namely, Arab demands for greater access to positions of authority within the Patriarchate, participation in the management of Patriarchal finances, and the much larger conflict over the identity and vocation of the Patriarchate itself. In this way, the Palestinian Orthodox community, whilst extremely devout and proud of their heritage as Orthodox Christians, struggles to see either the material or psychological benefits of membership in the church.

In contrast, the considerably newer Latin Patriarchate has taken a different historical trajectory, in which early efforts to train local priests and provide significant financial and institutional development in Christian communities has generally received a positive reception within the community. These historical struggles over the identity of these communities have had a tangible impact on how the lay communities experience and communicate their identity as Palestinian Christians. This, in turn, affects the level of attachment individuals feel towards their confessional communities, the influence of religious leadership, and levels of religiosity, which, as the next chapter discusses, can impact upon social and political action in a significant way.
Chapter Five -- Navigating Communal and Political Identities:

The previous chapters have provided historical context to the development of national and religious identities in the Palestinian Christian communities. These identities have developed in parallel to and in concert with Palestinian identity as a whole – with the Palestinian Christians providing not only significant intellectual contributions to Palestinian and Arab nationalism, but also significant economic and social contributions to Palestinian society. However, the ongoing issues of emigration, demographic decline, the Israeli Occupation, and Islamisation have created a crisis of identity in the Palestinian Christian community, as it seeks to redefine its role in an increasingly fragmented Palestinian society. In this context, the negotiation between religiosity, communalism, and nationalism can have a significant effect on social and political action, as individuals navigate between loyalty to the state and to their confessional communities. However the fluidity and multiplicity of identity(s) suggests that these are not two mutually exclusive forces. Rather, sufficiently broad and inclusive nationalisms can more easily incorporate religious pluralism without necessarily undermining the authority of the state – particularly if there is a separation between religion and politics at the state level. In situations of statelessness, as discussed in Chapter Three, the paradigm changes because the lack of an effective state apparatus opens the field to other political actors defining the nation – both rhetorically and structurally. In this context, if religious minorities feel alienated from the national identity because it is increasingly defined by a religious majority, then they will naturally begin to retreat towards their communal identities. If they feel alienated from both their political and communal identities, they may seek to emigrate in search of economic, social, and political freedoms. As such, the level of attachment individuals feel towards both their national and their communal identities is extremely consequential to their social and political actions.

This chapter explores the interplay of religious, communal, and national identities in order to determine their effect on social and political action in the Palestinian Christian communities. The first section, which focuses on the Rum Orthodox and Latin communities in Palestine, examines the role of communal identity in political decision making, Palestinian Christian perspectives on the role of their church in their political life, and finally how the history of these denominations affects

419. This duality has been explored by, e.g., Lybarger, and Roussos
421. These communities were chosen because they are the two largest in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, representing 45 and 35% of the total Christian population respectively.
political action and national belonging in the contemporary context. The second section of this chapter explores notions of political identity, examining how Arabism, political affiliation, and notions of citizenship affect national belonging and state attachment in the Palestinian Christian communities.

Communal Identity in the Palestinian Christian Communities:

The Contemporary Imagining of the Rum Orthodox Community:

Last December was the celebration of Saint Saba’s day and we went to the monastery of Mar Saba to celebrate—it’s a big day. When the Patriarch came we were waiting in the front door to greet him. And when he came into the church he gave his speech and prayers in Greek. And most of us there were Palestinians. We were thinking, “Who are you speaking to?” Honestly. There were some few Greek and Russian visitors and maybe some others—all of those are minorities in comparison to the Palestinians who were there and who are living locally.  

- Lay member of the Greek Orthodox Church, late-20s, Beit Sahour

What the above quotation illustrates is that the perceived disconnect between the Greek higher clergy and the Palestinian laity continues to centre on issues of language, culture, and identity. These issues also have a strong impact on the function of the Orthodox parishes at the local level as respondents indicated a growing disconnect between the realities of their social/political lives and the guidance they receive from their religious leadership. A 2006 survey of Palestinian Christians, conducted by the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Centre, found that 78% of Palestinian Orthodox Christians said that there was not a close relationship between the church and most adults.  

Further, 72% of respondents indicated that parish priests and nuns should strengthen their pastoral efforts, whilst 61% thought that there was little cooperation between parish priests and the laity on pastoral issues. Similarly only 36% of respondents indicated that church-related development and charitable organisations were actively fulfilling the needs of society, compared to 45% amongst the Latin community. This suggests that there is a correlation between the perceived value of church institutions and attachment to the church.

422. Orthodox Community Member, interview by Quinn Coffey, May, 2014, Beit Sahour.
423. Sabeel, "The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel.", 86
424. Ibid., 86
425. Ibid.
Without devaluing the significance of spirituality, belief and faith more generally, this data also suggests that the utility of religious identity – both in terms of the material benefits gained from membership in a confessional community, and the psychological benefits of self-esteem generated from membership in a social group, are important factors in the choice between ecclesiastical, communal or national identities. If either the material or psychological elements are lacking, identification with the group begins to lose its value. In the case of the Rum Orthodox community, a perceived lack of pastoral care, combined with a negative perception of Patriarchate itself, has unsurprisingly lead to a decline in individual attachment to the confessional community. This was reflected in narrations of identity amongst Orthodox respondents, who were far more likely to identify with either the communal identity "Christian" or political/ethnic identities "Arab" or "Palestinian", than to identify as Rum Orthodox.

This is indicative of several trends within the community. Firstly, there is either a real or perceived detachment between church life and the daily realities of the Arab Orthodox Community – this is particularly true amongst the younger generation who were comparatively less likely to characterise themselves as either "religious" or "very religious". This is due, in part, to the dissatisfaction that respondents felt with the level of spiritual and pastoral guidance gained from their clergy, but also because many respondents felt that the Orthodox Church was increasingly disconnected from their social reality. This was particularly true in terms of ecumenical relations. As one respondent indicated,

"What I have noticed in the past three or four decades is that the Christian laypeople feel closer to each other. One important aspect of this is mixed marriage, which we don't even call mixed. But these mixed marriages make people feel closer to each other. My two sisters are Orthodox, you know married to Orthodox people -- so yes we can talk about a mosaic of churches if we look at laypeople -- how they work with each other, etc. But still for the hierarchy, no, we don't have an ecumenical movement -- we don't discuss important issues amongst ourselves. Ok we may have a statement about the future of Jerusalem or something like this but nothing ecumenical to get closer."  

-- Palestinian Latin Priest, mid-50s, Beit Jala

The church, in this way, is lagging behind the changing social dynamics of a community that is increasingly characterised by its relative openness to the other Christian denominations.

426. Francisco, "Rational Choice, Social Identity, and Beliefs About Oneself.", 548
427. Tajfel, "Social Comparison and Group Interest in Ingroup Favouritism."
428. Sabeel, "The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel."
429. Latin Priest 1, "Personal Interview."
Although there was little evidence that this has led to mass conversions away from Orthodoxy, younger respondents indicated that they were drawn to the relative openness of the other denominations. As one Orthodox university student suggested, 'Although I'm Orthodox, I'm more into Catholicism because I think the Orthodox are more into rules and commitment than the Catholics.' University-aged respondents frequently expressed the desire for more solidarity amongst the Christian community as a whole, 'We are Christians first, not Catholic or Orthodox.'

From the perspective of the Arab Orthodox clergy, ecumenical relations were good, but there was an indication that the ethnic Greek clergy were less open to ecumenism.

There is a good relationship between Arab [Orthodox] clergy and other denominations, but sometimes we find discrimination from some of the Greeks. They are stuck to the Greek Orthodox – "we are Orthodox, we just love Orthodox" or "we just deal with Orthodox" but for the Arabs here in Bethlehem, they deal with many different denominations because they get married between Orthodox and Catholics so they are mixed.

-- Arab Orthodox Priest, mid-30s, Bethlehem

Similarly, several respondents indicated that they did not feel that non-Orthodox were able to easily attend Orthodox services:

QC: Do you face any issues if you try to attend mass at other churches?

I: No, no not at all. But we have problems in the churches that are run by the Greeks, but not with the Palestinians.

-- NGO leader, mid-50s, Beit Sahour

Although Arab Orthodox parish priests were highly regarded amongst the community, the perception of the Greek clergy, both from the perspective of the laity and Arab clergy, was relatively low. This negative perception was rooted in two sentiments. The first is that the Greek clergy is not concerned with the welfare of the Palestinian laity: 'the main problem with the Greeks all over Palestine, is that they do not care about the problems of the Palestinians'. The second is that the Arab Orthodox felt that the Greeks did not trust them to govern the affairs of the Patriarchate: 'The Greeks believe that they are the only ones capable of preserving the church'. This was connected

430. Focus Group Bethlehem University Students, "Personal Interview.", respondent #1
431. Ibid., respondent #1
432. Rum Orthodox Priest, interview by Quinn Coffey 2014, Bethlehem.
433. CRO Employee 2, "Personal Interview.
434. Orthodox Community Member, "Personal Interview.
435. Ibid.
to the perception that the Greek hierarchy's actions and motives were governed primarily by a desire to maintain the Status Quo in holy sites, rather than address the needs of the community in the present. Respondents indicated that this was partly accomplished through the rules concerning the appointment of Bishops:

The highest authority is the Patriarch of Jerusalem – the largest church here – which has a lot of real estate, power, holy places – so who’s in command? The Greek Patriarch with Greek Bishops who form this fraternity or Synod or Brotherhood. I think they don’t trust local people – they want only married priests, so they encourage them to get married before ordination. But Bishops cannot be married.436

The bishops can’t be married. Basically if you’re a monk, you can become a bishop. You can’t become a bishop unless you’re not nominally a monk. So there’s two parts. And the Greek clergy won’t allow the local Arab clergy to choose the celibate monastic path. That’s the point and that’s what happens here. Plus there is a lot of disparagement from the monastics towards the secular clergy here.437

The dominance of Hellenism over the hierarchy, and the perceived lack of concern towards the indigenous community, is then telegraphed into the practice of the liturgy itself. Although respondents viewed the Orthodox liturgy as being integral to their Rum Orthodox identity, they also expressed the desire for a greater flexibility in the church sermons themselves to allow for a theological contextualisation of social and political issues – an issue common to Orthodox and Latin communities. Whilst this is partly up to the discretion of the parish priests, some of whom are highly political, the inconsistency in social and political guidance from the church leadership has led to a decline in their influence relative to other actors. A majority of respondents indicated that their parish priests infrequently discussed social and political concerns in church and connected this to their feelings of hopelessness about their daily life. Unsurprisingly therefore, respondents indicated that they rarely look to their religious leadership for guidance on political and social issues.438 Further, respondents indicated that they most often discussed social and political issues with friends, without guidance from religious leadership.439

For their part, the Arab Orthodox clergy continue to petition for greater rights within the Patriarchate of Jerusalem often with the support of Palestinian Bishop Atallah Hanna. During the 2014 Gaza War, the Orthodox Club of Amman issued a Statement of the Arab Orthodox Clergy of

436. Latin Priest 1, "Personal Interview."
437. Lutheran Priest, interview by Quinn Coffey 2014.
439. Ibid.
Jerusalem on Reforming the Patriarchate in which they denounced Israel's role in the Gaza War and renewed demands for greater Arab participation in the Jerusalem Patriarchate:

“Out of our zeal for our Church of Jerusalem, the Mother of Churches, and our unshakeable faith in the unity of our Orthodox, Catholic and Apostolic Church, our confidence in the justness of our demands as clergy and laity, we reject the racist domination over our Church of Jerusalem that has been in a state of decline for more than five centuries, caused by the lack of pastoral care of her children; the squandering of her endowments given to her by our ancestors in order to prop up Greek hegemony over our Church of Jerusalem; the non-application of the Church’s pastoral regulations in their canonical, pastoral and administrative dimensions; the replacement of pastoral bishops of dioceses with patriarchal vicars; the prohibition on Arab clergy entering the monastic life; the cancellation of their salaries; their being banished from their parishes and monasteries as an act of revenge and personal score-settling simply because they are calling for spiritual revival and setting things right in our national church. This is all to say nothing of the neglect and marginalization of the Arab Orthodox flock who just a short time ago were the only Christian significant community in this country but who now because of the practices of the Church’s leadership do not even number half of the Christians.”

This statement highlights the connection between issues of identity at the level of the Patriarchate and problems at the parish level – including the growing distance between the lay community and the church, which the Arab clergy felt would be remedied by refocusing the efforts of the Patriarchate away from its position in holy sites and towards the community that they feel it is meant to serve. This is why issues like land sales to the Israelis and the relative lack of support given by the Orthodox hierarchy to Palestine have 'lead so many people to lose faith in the church', because, in the opinion of the Arab clergy, Greek dominance has pushed 'away any efforts to bring indigenous concerns and make them central.'

When asked about the conflict over the identity of the Patriarchate in recent interviews, Orthodox Patriarch Theophilos III, replied:

“There is a bigger question here. The name of the patriarchate and all Eastern Orthodox Christians locally here is "Rum." This is how they are recognised and identified by the Muslim Arabs and Palestinians, in general. It is a matter of cultural identity or identity crisis that many people have difficulties understanding the meaning of "Rum." The West has also brought them confusion about their identity, which could be remedied with education and [an] understanding [of] history. And you have to refer back to your roots. You cannot disregard the Byzantine presence that was here. The stones are talking -- everything is talking.”

440. Arab Orthodox Clergy, "Statement of the Arab Orthodox Clergy of Jerusalem on Reforming the Patriarchate," news release, 2014.
441. Palestinian Academic, "Personal Interview."
As Patriarch Theophilos III's comment suggests, the Patriarchate continues to view itself as an essentially Byzantine institution, with an ancient and unchanged vocation. Interestingly, although the Patriarch admits to there being an identity crisis within the Orthodox Patriarchate, he suggests that this is due to a misunderstanding of history on the part of the Arab Orthodox community, not the Greek hierarchies' steadfast rejection of any changes to the status quo. Therefore, it would appear that any significant changes to the nature of the Orthodox Patriarchate are not forthcoming, despite the impact of this struggle on the declining Palestinian Christian community.

Contemporary imagining of the Palestinian Latin Community:

As the previous chapter discussed, although the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem initially had struggled to define its vocation, and hence its identity as a European-rite church in an eastern context, over the course of the 20th century it has evolved into an important local institution -- one that is responsible for the largest share of social welfare in the West Bank and Gaza Strip out of any other religious organisation. Additionally, despite the initial strife between the Greek Catholic and Latin hierarchies, the ongoing struggle against the Israeli Occupation, the existential threat to Christians across the Middle East, and the shift towards Islamism in Palestinian politics has allowed a certain rapprochement between Latins and Greek Catholics, which has been facilitated by both sides renouncing proselytism as well as by the increased Arabisation of the Latin Church.443 In this sense, although the identity of the Latin Church in the Holy Land is marred by the history of the Crusades and Latinisation in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the local community has not faced the same uncertainty over its identity as their Orthodox compatriots. This is owing to the fact that it has, since its re-establishment in the 19th century, sought to ground itself in local traditions, language, and culture -- regardless of the ethnicity of the clergy.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the perceived utility of particular social identities (e.g. Latin, Christian, Palestinian, Catholic, Orthodox, etc.), combined with self-esteem generated from membership in the social group affects whether or not individuals choose to identify with them. This affects the relative influence of these social identities on political, social, and other issues. In the case of the Palestinian Latin community, the combination of the "Arabisation" of the Patriarchate and the development of pastoral institutions is positively correlated with levels of religiosity and self-

443. O'Mahony, "The Vatican, Jerusalem, the State of Israel, and Christianity in the Holy Land.", 139
identification with the communal identity. Additionally, respondents indicated that ecumenical relations between the Latins and other denominations were viewed positively, which affected individuals’ perception that their church reflected the demographic and social trends within the increasingly interfaith Palestinian Christian community.

However these positive trends within the Latin community have not been sufficient to counter the ongoing issue of emigration, which, as this study shows in Chapter Seven, are partly dependent upon how the church addresses or contextualises social and political issues in a religious context. As one Latin priest related,

I: The question that’s always important — and this is part of the tension between being a Palestinian and being a Christian — is how to be involved in public life as a Palestinian and a Christian. I think priests need to work harder to answer the questions of young people. And of course they discuss this in youth groups, meetings, etc. But this is an important question for everyone. So, if you want to be a Christian, ok, that’s good. You come to church, you’re involved in church activities, but being a Christian also means being a good citizen. What does it mean to be a good citizen? These kinds of questions are important to answer — many young people will ask this and not find the answers.

QC: And does this cause people to leave the church?

I: To leave the country — because what’s the meaning of my presence here? What does it mean to be in Palestine — let me go to the States where I’ll have a better future.**444**

In this passage you see that in the opinion of the clergy there is not sufficient discussion of social and political issues within the context of the Latin faith and the result is the disappearance of the community. When asked what the Latin Patriarchate was doing to stem emigration, Latin Bishop William Shomali replied:

**What we do to fight this emigration? The best medicine is to give antibiotic to the virus. So if the sickness — the disease is a bad economy because of insecurity and lack of peace, peace would be the medicine — the solution. If there was peace here the situation would improve, the Christians would remain — willingly. So lack of peace is one of the problems and peace would be the solution.**

But also, even if peace is not there we should help our people in giving them faith that their presence here is important — it’s crucial — it’s our vocation from the Lord — it’s a blessing, it’s a privilege. So we need spiritual motivation because people can be rich and leave. So we cannot say it’s only an economic problem or political problem — those difficulties are there — but people can have a spiritual strength to say, ok it’s difficult, but I will remain.**445**

444. Latin Priest 1, “Personal Interview.”
There was also the perception that social issues were addressed, but political issues were avoided. This was also reflected in survey data, which indicated a high level of discussion in relation to social issues in both the Orthodox and Latin communities and a relatively low level of discussion of political issues in both communities. As one NGO leader described:

QC: Are political issues discussed very often in church?

I: No, more social issues. In many of our churches we don’t – some priests don’t prefer to talk openly about politics.

QC: I have heard others say that this is dependent on the background of the priest?

I: Very, very few do this.

QC: Do you think they should talk about politics more often?

I: Of course because it’s part of our life here. You should, as a priest, always be with the people. If they are worried, you should try to pray and address their worries and how to overcome them. Ok, you will not end the Occupation, but they need your guidance.

And this lack of spiritual guidance on political issues was seen as directly contributing to a lack of resolve when faced with the opportunity to emigrate. Again, this is suggestive of the desire for religious contextualisation of political and social issues – and the potentially problematic exclusion of such contextualisation. This also suggests that the religious leadership could potentially have a far greater impact on the political stance of their communities if they were more willing to engage with these issues. Despite this fact, the Latin leadership is cautious not to paint itself as a political institution:

We are a church; we are not a political body… I cannot deny that we have some political role – but it is an indirect role… We publish statements continuously about the situation. Today, for example, there will be a statement in Arabic about our request for immediate ceasefire in the Gaza War. So we express our position.

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446 Sabeel, "The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel."; Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, "Adapted Data from the Pepsr Surveys." 447 CRO Employee 1, interview by Quinn Coffey 2014, Beit Sahour.
especially when politics intersects with ethics, because religion has an ethical impact on society. So we can’t say the state is free to do whatever it wants — no the state should be ethical and we should help the state by publishing ethical statements.  

Despite the relatively high levels of religiosity in the Latin communities and levels of satisfaction with pastoral and other social welfare initiatives, self-identification with ecclesiastical identity was relatively low, with political (Palestinian, Arab) and communal (Christian, Arab Christian, Middle Eastern Christian) identities typically taking priority. This suggests that, although ecclesiastical identity was an important part of the overall construction of identity for respondents, there was a far greater shared sense of community amongst Christians and Palestinians more generally.

**Contextualising the Faith: Liturgical Issues:**

In the case of both the Catholic and Orthodox communities, the rigidity of the liturgies themselves may be a factor in the leadership’s difficulty with contextualisation. As one respondent noted:

> It’s very difficult to change the liturgy in other denominations. To change liturgies it takes dozens of years to change one small thing — and a lot of people and decisions. This is one of the, forgive me for using this word, but “advantages” of the Free Evangelical Churches who are able to write something and advocate for it. A Catholic person can write something and advocate it to the people, but for the church to adopt it it’s a different story.

--Palestinian Academic, mid-40s, Bethlehem

This may also explain the steady growth of the various Protestant communities in Palestine over the past several decades. These communities are small in number, but their leadership have become some of the most outspoken Christian activists for Palestine, advocating, for example, for a Christian liberation theology which contextualises the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in the Christian faith. As Robson notes, ‘the concept of ‘liberation theology’ first arose in Latin America in the 1960s, when the Latin American Episcopal Conference began to engage with questions of poverty and political activism from a new, Marxist-influenced perspective. This theology was further developed by the Peruvian Catholic priest Gustavo Gutierrez who, in his 1971 book *A Theology of Liberation*, called on Latin Catholics to combat issues of economic, social and class injustice through

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448 Latin Bishop, “Personal Interview.”
449 This data is based off of the identity card exercises.
450 Palestinian Academic, "Personal Interview."
451 E.g. Father Naim Ateek (Anglican); Father Mitri Rabeb (Lutheran); Geries Khoury
452 http://www.sabeel.org/ourstory.php
453 Laura Robson, "Palestinian Liberation Theology, Muslim–Christian Relations and the Arab–Israeli Conflict," *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations* 21, no. 1 (2010), 40
social and political action. In this way Liberation Theology positioned itself as an anti-colonialist indigenous grassroots Christian movement, with certain parallels to the types of political and social actions taking place in Palestine.

However, the difference in context between the Latin American and Palestinian experiences of oppression, and consequently their solutions to it, were different enough to necessitate a new approach. In 1989 the Palestinian Anglican priest Naim Ateek published his Justice, and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation, which set out a number of goals of the movement and its basic theology. As related by Ateek, the goals of liberation theology were to:

- ‘Analyze the context of injustice and oppression as realistically and faithful as possible;’
- ‘To be anchored in both the Bible and in the reality on the ground;’
- ‘Empower Christians and encourage them to strengthen their faith in the God of justice and love so that they do not lose faith in god in spite of the oppressive occupation;’
- ‘Give the people hope for the future and inspire them to resist the evil through tools that are authentically true to their faith, i.e. through nonviolence;’
- ‘Emphasize that faithfulness to God and to Jesus Christ means critiquing and condemning violence from whichever source.’

Ateek situated Liberation Theology in an Arab and Middle Eastern cultural context; positioning Christianity as an ‘authentically Palestinian Arab religion standing alongside Islam in the fight for political justice’, while also supporting non-violent resistance. Ateek went on to help found the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem, which became important not only for the further development of Palestinian Liberation Theology, but also as a resource for ecumenical relations and international outreach that continues to this day.

However, Palestinian Liberation Theology is by no means a monolithic trend. Indeed the notion of “contextualized theology” was introduced several years prior to Sabeel by the al-Liqa’ in Bethlehem.

456 Robson, “Palestinian Liberation Theology, Muslim–Christian Relations and the Arab–Israeli Conflict.”, 41
Al-Liqa’ was founded as a centre for Christian-Muslim interfaith dialogue in 1982 as part of the Tantur Ecumenical Institute in Jerusalem, whose focus was international ecumenical outreach. In 1987 al-Liqa’ split from Tantur in order to focus on issues more central to Palestinian daily life. To support those aims, in 1987 al-Liqa’ published *Theology and the Local Church in the Holy Land: Palestinian Contextualized Theology*, in which it calls for the development of a contextualized theology that aims to ‘live and interact with events so as to interpret them and assist the Palestinian Church in discovering her identity and real mission at this stage of her earthly life.’

As part of this goal of contextualisation and internal activism, al-Liqa’ has made the education of Palestinian Christian youth a primary goal. As one respondent involved with this work relayed, ‘we are not aware of our history and identity as Palestinian Christians and the churches and leadership have not done enough to fix these issues in the curriculum.’ Therefore, the Centre sees the need, not only for contextualisation of the faith, but also the Christian identity itself.

The question is whether Palestinian Liberation Theology has made an impact on the issues of identity that have adversely impacted church membership. Although these two examples illustrate intellectually and spiritually rigorous resources for those in the Palestinian Christian community looking for answers, empirical data suggests that neither movement has been able to gain widespread support amongst the lay community. As Robson notes, this is partly because ‘nearly all of the material on the Palestinian liberation theology movement has been written in European languages.’ Therefore, the Palestinian Liberation Theology movement has been directed primarily at western-oriented elite Palestinians and the western Christian world, which explains the disconnect between church and NGO leadership who praise the work being done by documents like the Kairos, and the perspectives of the lay community who continue to struggle with how to be Palestinian and Christian.

**Political identity:**

As the previous section discussed, there is a strong correlation between the perceived utility of membership in confessional communities and the relative influence of church leadership in political and social life. This was affected by several factors:

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458 NGO Employee 3, interview by Quinn Coffey 2014, Bethlehem.

459 Robson, "Palestinian Liberation Theology, Muslim–Christian Relations and the Arab–Israeli Conflict.", 47.

460 Ibid., 48
1. The level of material utility a confessional community provides
2. Contextualisation of daily life within the faith
3. The identity of the church – Greek; Arab; Palestinian; ecumenical

Apart from the limits that communal identity places on political choice, church leadership seems to have an insignificant effect on political action within the Palestinian Christian communities. There are, of course, counterexamples such as former Patriarch Michel Sabbah and Bishop Atallah Hanna, both of whom frequently make political statements and have made a strong impact Palestinian nationalism more generally. But in terms of impacting political action and choice, data indicates that pragmatism is a far more salient factor than the influence of the religious leadership. Given this relative lack of influence from the religious leadership, this section explores how Palestinian Christians negotiate their political role in Palestinian society.

As discussed in the introduction, the lack of a strong, and more importantly, popular state apparatus in Palestine has meant that loyalty and nationalism are both more open to interpretation and more easily manipulated by political, religious or cultural movements – each with their own particular brand of Palestinian nationalism. Consequently, while there are certain core elements of Palestinian nationalism, its particular iteration by political actors and the interpretation at the popular level can be wildly different. Consequently, the lack of a codified national identity, coupled with the ability of political groups to promote their own ideological programmes, creates a landscape in which the narrative of national identity can be adjusted to fit a group’s own beliefs. This is why it is possible to have a simultaneous vision of the Palestinian nation as an Islamic Waqf (Hamas), as quasi-secular (Fatah), or as part of a wider and largely secular Arab world (pan-Arabism).

This is significant to the case of the Palestinian Christians for several reasons. Firstly, the increasingly public displays of Islamic religious piety – including dress, gender segregation, and public protests – has meant that the public sphere is increasingly defined within an Islamic religio-cultural milieu. Secondly, this has impacted significantly upon political choice, in that Palestinian Christians may vote defensively or pragmatically, rather than for the candidate they feel is the most suitable. As one respondent noted: 'If I vote Fatah it is only to vote against Hamas because I don't believe in the ideology of Hamas – but I don't believe in Fatah either and you have many, many, many people like me. You know we lost our faith – confidence, trust in political leaders in those two
Finally, it impacts on Palestinian Christians' feelings of being part of the nation; influencing the decision to emigrate, vote, run for political office, and a host of other issues. As noted by one responded, 'there are some Palestinian Christians that, because they're so disenchanted with current status and identity, they don't affiliate themselves with the current identity.' This section explores the relationship of the Palestinian Christian community to this changing social and political landscape, addressing issues of nationalism, citizenship, and political affiliation in the context of statelessness.

Relationship with Arabism:

As discussed in the introductory chapter, Palestinian Christians have a long history with Arabism going back to the late Ottoman period. They were crucial in the establishment of Arab nationalism and continue to have a strong connection with the larger Arab identity, despite the failure of pan-Arabism to resolve the Israel/Palestinian Conflict. This relationship with Arabism is somewhat unique amongst Middle Eastern Christian communities – the majority of whom eschew the label "Arab" (Copts, Assyrians, Syriacs, and Armenians in particular). As noted by Corbon, these historic relationships with Arabism respond to a number of different factors including the ecclesiastical identity of the church itself, its history, and the political successes (and failures) of the communities themselves.

From a social and political perspective, the close relationship of Palestinian Christians to Arabism is related to the history of these communities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when the combination of European influence, Turkish nationalism, and the disenfranchisement of indigenous Orthodox communities from their ethnic-Greek dominated patriarchates. This led to the development of an Arab Orthodox consciousness, which developed alongside a largely secular vision of pan-Arab and Palestinian nationalisms throughout the first half of the 20th century. Pan-Arabism, as a largely secular phenomenon, theoretically allowed Christians to participate in the growing nationalist discourse as equal partners to their Muslim peers. In contrast, the Oriental Orthodox communities not only had a stronger sense of having distinctive national identities that

461. Latin Priest 1, "Personal Interview."
462. CRO Employee 3, "Personal Interview."
predated the Arab invasions of the 7th century, but they also had their own cultures and languages (e.g. the various Assyrian dialects and Coptic). Therefore, they have tended to portray themselves as ethnically and culturally different from the Arab Muslim majority.

In the contemporary Palestinian context, the relationship with Arabism is also affected, to a large degree, by generational difference, in that those who have grown up in the post-1974 era, i.e. after the decline in popularity of pan-Arabism, have tended to have less of a relationship with pan-Arabism because of its decline as a popular ideology following the humiliating defeats of Arab forces in the 1967 and 1974 Wars with Israel. Whilst a majority of the younger generation continue to have a relationship with more general aspects of Arab culture – language, music, dance -- they tend to prioritise either Palestinian nationalism, communal or regional affiliations over the prospects of a united Arab nation. These relationships have also crucially affected political choice for these individuals. In an interview with a Palestinian Christian born before the establishment of the State of Israel, we see how the relationship with Arabism has changed over time, and also why it has changed:

*I used to argue that I am more comfortable with being an Arab nationalist, so my identity then is basically Arab. So I put aside my identity as a Christian. Or I’d say: I’m an Arab Christian – a Palestinian Christian. And I see no conflict between the two. And there aren’t conflicts necessarily. Where the problem lies is not in developing your identity – it’s really in how your identity affects the way you look at others...There are the family identities and then there are the national identities, there are the human identities -- the problem we are having in the Middle East is that religious identity has become a way of looking at others.*


466. Ibid.

In this instance, he reflects upon the initial difficulties of being an Arab nationalist, whilst also maintaining his public identity of being Christian. This reflects the largely secular origins of pan-Arabism. In an attempt to unite the highly diverse Arab world, religious distinctions were avoided. But, as he explained, the breakdown of Arabism from the late 1960s onwards has shattered the illusion of Arab unity – most particularly for Christians, who may feel uneasy about their relationship with territorial nationalism, as religion has started to play a greater role in its iteration:

*When I was growing up, we were more involved in the Arab nationalist movement. We were seeing the Arabs as one nation. But now it has been proven that the Arabs are not one nation because you are talking about different states. And also the question of identity is not simply a Christian / Muslim identity it’s also a question of identity also within the society. Am I a true Jordanian? Am I a true Palestinian? And what does it take to be a true Palestinian?*

466. Ibid.
This disillusionment with Arabism was also expressed by a Latin priest in his 50s, who related the feeling of being excluded from the wider Arab identity because he is not a Muslim. He distinguishes between Arab culture – language, food, dance, etc. -- and membership in a larger Arab national community:

*I: The concept of Arabism is confusing because if you speak of it as a culture, it means much more to me personally, but if you mean Arabism as belonging to the Arab world -- no I don't want to belong to the Arab world.

QC: Why is that?

*I: Because I don't feel that there is such a thing as the Arab world -- those are Arab countries fighting each other, killing each other. I don't believe in the Arab world, there is no such thing in the political sense. The cultural sense yes, but it's much easier for me to visit Europe, USA -- any country in the world -- than it is for me to visit Syria -- they don't want me as a Palestinian to go there you know. And I was refused a visa to Saudi Arabia when I was dean of faculty of arts [at a local university] and there was a meeting for deans of faculties of arts in the Arab world. I was denied a visa. I was never denied a visa to Schengen states in Europe. So what does it mean to belong to the Arab world? Nothing for me. I don't feel -- I feel much more welcome in Italy or France or the UK."

This highlights the fact that, even with the older generation who may have been personally involved in the Arab nationalist movement, the increasingly religious tone of the Arab world has created disillusionment within the Arab Christian communities. Despite the lack of belief in a wider Arab nation, there is nevertheless a strong sense of belonging to a wider Arab culture.

The self-identification as "Arab" is also related quite closely to political affiliation and the level of political participation. For respondents who identified as either supporters of Fatah or the PFLP (or the left more generally), self-identification as "Arab" in the identity card exercise is in the top two identifiers nearly 100% of the time. For those who do not support any political party, "Arab" is either absent or given much lower priority. This may relate to the view that identifying as "Arab" is relating to a specific political philosophy or affiliation as in the following: "When I have to take a stand for the Palestinian situation I would say that I am Arab." In this case this individual uses the Arab affiliation to unite behind a particular political struggle or to contextualise his/her argument. Whereas when respondents identified as either moderate or very religious, they infrequently identified with broader political identities, suggesting that religious identifications took priority over

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467. Latin Priest 1, "Personal Interview."
468. Orthodox Community Member, "Personal Interview."
what they view as being political issues: 'I identify with religion first over regional or political issues.'

Political Affiliation:
Although a majority of respondents identified with either the Arab or Palestinian identities, self-identification with specific political parties was very low. Simultaneously, identification with specific political leaders or movements within the Christian community was largely contingent upon the leader or party's perceived efficacy to a much larger degree than the population as a whole. As Sabella notes,

> Christians in Palestine are certain that leaders will have a difficult time managing Palestinian affairs, but are likely to withdraw their support if leader(s) they admire do not act properly. Thus their support is conditional on performance to a greater extent than that of the overall population, about half of which would give unconditional support.

This is reflective of Palestinian Christians' high levels of support for democratic processes, over, for example, authoritarianism: 42% of Muslims wished for a system in which in the largest political group rules – without power sharing amongst smaller parties, whereas 86% of Christians preferred a coalition style government formed based upon the percentage of the total vote gained. This also reflects the pragmatism of Christian voters, who were less likely to make political choices based upon ideological considerations and were therefore also less likely to self-identify with political groups or to support them at all. According to PCPSR data, over the period between 2000 and 2010, close to 40% of Christians supported no party at all. This supports Sabella's findings that political choice in the Palestinian Christian communities is largely pragmatic, rather than ideological in that Christians' party affiliation may change with the development of new electoral platforms, changing social issues, and economics. This level of political pragmatism was also reflected, as the next chapter will show, in the electoral cycles; Fatah support declined in the early 2000s after the failure of the Oslo Process as the left increased in popularity, only to reverse in the 2012 municipal elections when the left failed to make sufficient economic improvements.

Despite the level of pragmatism shown by Christian voters, there are situations in which material utility is supplanted for group pride and the psychological utility of defensiveness and/or samud as

469. Focus Group Bethlehem University Students, "Personal Interview."
470. Sabella, "Comparing Palestinian Christians on Society and Politics: Context and Religion in Israel and Palestine.", 22
471. Ibid.
472. PCPSR Survey Data 2000-2010
discussed in Chapter Three. One rather instructive example of this was observed in the fieldwork during the 2014 Gaza War. A young Christian man sat and watched the images on Palestinian TV of the carnage in Gaza and lamented the horrific loss of life. As the image changed to a picture of a Hamas al-Qassam rocket brigade, the young man cheered and said, 'these guys are winning the war!' At this point in the war Palestinian causalities were upwards of 900, yet the popular opinion was that Palestine, and more critically Hamas, was winning. I asked the young man, 'do you support Hamas?' He responded, 'no as a Christian of course I cannot, but I respect what they are able to do against such a strong enemy. Abbas has acted like a coward and I cannot support him anymore'. He was referencing Abbas' initial call for calm in the first days of the war. Yet, even amongst Christians, who most certainly do not accept the ideology of Hamas, the legitimacy acquired from resistance can overtake their religious or pragmatic concerns. Another respondent explained Christian support for Hamas as follows: 'even some Christians they voted for Hamas in 2006. It was not an act of accepting the ideology of Hamas, but rather was against the failure of Fatah and the peace process'. This is supported by PCPSR data, which reveals a growth in the support for Hamas during periods of increased violence.

Hamas ran in 2006 as an opposition party. They focused on the corruption of the Fatah-led PA and the ineffectiveness of the Oslo Accords. They were able to gain popular support and challenge the rule of Fatah, who, through the Palestinian Authority, had begun to establish a state apparatus. As Fatah and the PA began to lose legitimacy, Hamas was able to challenge the very premises upon which the state has been built. In other words, just as the PFLP once chided the Arab bourgeoisie for being pro-western and anti-Arab, Hamas was able to challenge Fatah for being pro-western, anti-Islamic, and a failed resistance group. As such Hamas used the rhetorical value of *samud* to undermine the authority of Fatah. As Wedeen argues, there is no necessary connection between idioms of national solidarity and the likelihood of political stability, as such national imaginings can be used to challenge existing regimes as well as to naturalize them. This plays itself out in the contemporary context as a struggle between defining Palestine as a religio-national state versus a

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473. Latin Priest 1, "Personal Interview."
secular-nationalist state, which has obvious consequences for how Palestinian Christians view their place in society.477

**Notions of Citizenship in a Future State:**

The notion of citizenship and the shape of the future Palestinian state were also discussed with respondents. Within the context of the fieldwork in 2014, the Gaza War and the rise of Daesh (ISIL) had created a palpable sense of unease within the Christian community. Just as the Second Intifada saw a rise in the public expression of Christian symbols and communalism in reaction to Islamic fundamentalism, the 2014 Gaza War and rise of Daesh has again created a tense atmosphere in which Christians are uncertain of their future in the Holy Land:

There are neighbourhoods in Bethlehem where there are no Christians at all... they felt that their Christian presence is threatened in a way so they want to emphasise that 'we are Christians'. So, for example, 10 years ago you will see big crosses on Christian houses illuminated by night: "we are Christian", what do you mean you know? What do you want to prove? I can understand it in that context, but here we're talking about small minority community...

QC: But what was this in reaction to exactly?

I: It's against the increasing popularity of Islamic movements, and when Hamas, for example won the elections. But with the Islamisation of the society, some Christians feel threatened. They are asking "if they want an Islamic state, what does it mean for me?" I am here, I am struggling, I was here before the Muslims, and they want an Islamic state – of course it's different how they – what they mean by Islamic state, but regardless an Islamic state means a state where I will be second class citizen. No, you know, people don't want that. So in reaction to that Islamic movement you will see people who say "no we were here before the Muslims came, we are the Christians, the original inhabitants of this land, etc, etc." but again you know you will find it, I'm sure you know, but this is a small minority among Christians.478

--- Palestinian Latin Priest, mid-50s, Beit Jala

Whilst the interviewee insists that the Christians he speaks of are a minority -- the vast and silent majority are very much concerned with the shape that citizenship will take in a future state. This is expressed in a number of ways – at the voting booth, in daily conversations, and in their relationship with the Muslim community. And whilst relations with the Muslim community are generally stable, there is, at the same time, an underlying concern about the growing disconnect between how the Muslim and Christian communities view the Christian role in the society at its most fundamental level.

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478. Latin Priest 1, "Personal Interview."
Whilst the Fatah discourse and the PA discourse more generally maintains a notion of citizenship based upon the following: ‘Palestinians shall be equal before the law and the judiciary, without distinction based upon race, sex, colour, religion, political views or disability’, the Hamas discourse based, as it is, around the Islamic faith, presents an alternative understanding of the notion of citizenship for non-Muslim minorities, in which not all citizens are necessarily equal in all aspects of the law. The concern for Christians in a future state – regardless of which party is in control – is not whether or not the state is religious or secular, but merely that the Christian citizens maintain equal citizenship rights and duties. As expressed by one respondent:

> I was in a lecture or something at Najah University in Nablus. And a young man, very nice young man, said "yeah we know that we are brothers and sisters and for us Muslims we should care about Christians -- this is our duty and we should protect them". And I said "protect them from whom? Why should we be protected? Does he want to make us the weak part?" No I don't want to be protected. I want to share and to protect each other – to be equal. He was in good faith you know; he wanted to show you know that it’s our duty as Muslims, etc. But this is the view of Hamas -- that we should protect the Christians, etc.

The notion that Christians do not need added protection as minorities was expressed in a number of interviews and this notion covered not only their feeling that they did not need protection for their person and property, but also that they did not feel that they need, for example, a quota system to ensure their political representation. Rather, the vast majority were against any and all special treatment by the state because they felt that it set them apart from the rest of the nation:

> We hope that [a future state] will be a state where citizens are equal in front of the law. Where Christians are considered as full citizens – we don’t need protection as a minority – we want to be protected as citizens -- like any other. This is all what we need -- not more. To be full citizens with full rights and full duties without distinction.

And this issue of citizenship "without distinction" is a crucial one indeed. Following the March 2014 decision to remove religion from the Palestinian ID cards, respondents were asked whether they felt this decision benefited them:

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479. Although the 2006 Hamas electoral platform was perhaps a more pragmatic assertion of Islamic hegemony, in which it insisted that equal rights would be guaranteed under a Hamas government, it continued to frame religious tolerance in an Islamic context: ‘Our list [the change and reform list] adopts a number of invariables that stem from the Islamic frame of reference. We believe these invariable to be unanimously agreed upon not only by our Palestinian people but also by our Arab and Islamic umma’, echoing its 1988 statement ‘Only under the shadow of Islam could the members of all nations coexist in safety and security for their lives, properties and rights’, in which Islam is very much viewed as the primary source of truth and power (1988 Hamas Charter).


481. Latin Priest 1, "Personal Interview."

482. Latin Bishop, "Personal Interview."
This is beautiful. This is very important. And I don’t think that they mean something bad with this, but they mean that we are one people – you are a Palestinian, you are a citizen, which means that you share equal rights with others – you have equal rights and equal duties with others. I don’t need to know your religion. Maybe some people maybe say "we need to know"; no we don’t need to know. We are human beings and we live in this society that should give us equal rights.

And indeed, when delving more deeply into the roots of the contrasting notions of citizenship, nearly every respondent mentioned the fact that religion is part of the Palestinian national identity, regardless of whether or not they actually practiced their faith. Whilst respondents were hesitant or would outright refuse that they were not equal under the law within the context of the PA, they were often quick to point out that equality and citizenship held slightly different meanings within the context of the Middle East.

QC: Would you characterise the Christian community as second-class within the legal framework of the PA?

I: I wouldn’t. You know like when people hear sometimes expressions like "second-class" they have sometimes a baggage in their minds. So I would say that there is -- there isn't equality in every aspect of the law. Now you want to say ok that's a second-class citizen. But it's not like a second-class citizen. Let's say if I was applying for university. We will both be accepted regardless of our faith. But let's say, I gave an example about [religious] conversion, then it's not equal. So there are aspects that need to be challenged in the law.

Regarding aspects of the Basic Law relating to the treatment of minorities, respondents were asked about the quota system itself in relation to the concepts of equality, tolerance and citizenship. The vast majority of those asked about the quota system were ultimately against it – with the view that it set them apart from the rest of the nation. And indeed several respondents mentioned the fact that the quota districts do not match the realities of Christian demography, in which Christians are guaranteed the post of mayor in 10 municipalities, in addition to six seats on the Palestinian Legislative Council, despite making up less than one percent of the total population:

QC: Do you think things like having a certain number of reserved seats in parliament and municipalities is a good thing or necessary?

I: Yes and no because if we didn’t have the quota we wouldn’t have anybody in parliament – nobody would be elected of course because of our number. But from the other side, look at Bethlehem city for example; we are 20-22% of the community, why the mayor should be Christian? Is this democracy? No. But again

483. CRO Employee 2, "Personal Interview."
484. Palestinian Academic, "Personal Interview."
485 Raheb, Palestinian Christians in the West Bank: Facts, Figures and Trends.
Arafat wanted this to happen in 12 municipalities and village councils in the West Bank but again we need to do more as Christians.  

Respondents also indicated that they felt the quota system provided a short-term fix for the problem of an evolving government, as well as the public's understanding of citizenship. That is to say that they felt that with the current social context, issues like tribalism and religion often play a more significant role in electoral decisions than, say, the actual platform on which a candidate runs. Therefore, some felt that a Christian candidate would be defined primarily by his or her being Christian rather than their platform.

Q: You have reserved seats for Christians in the legislative council. Do you think this is good or necessary?

I: I look at it positively because I think it’s like sometimes with a female quota, if you don’t have one, not only here but abroad, women often will not be elected. And so quota is important until really perceptions of people are changed.

And indeed the feeling that, in order for a quota system to no longer be necessary a major change would have to take place in the way that people view their leadership, was expressed in this response to a question about Christians being able to attain high level positions in the PA:

I: I think it would be difficult to have a Prime Minister. We [Christians] are only half of one percent of the population. I think we could have maybe three or four ministers, but the Prime Minister would be difficult because his duties are different. And he has to do some things that Christians can’t do.

Q: Like what?

I: Like praying and official things like meeting Muslim leaders; it is important that he be a Muslim. We can understand this. But we have ministers.

Q: So there are certain duties for the PM that they must be Muslim for?

I: Yes it is not easy for the PM to be a Christian. It is difficult but I think maybe if we had a genius PM that is a Christian maybe...I don’t know...the identity of people will have to change. But at this moment I think it is difficult.

Those who have been elected under the quota system do ultimately represent the interests of the entire community – both Christian and Muslim alike. But again, there is a slight disconnect, perhaps, between the view of Christian MPs and community leaders who view equal rights and

486. CRO Employee 1, "Personal Interview."
487. Lutheran Priest, "Personal Interview."
488. Municipal Politician, interview by Quinn Coffey 2014, Bethlehem.
constitutionalism in a way that is more in line with international standards and others who perhaps view these issues within a different cultural framework – one that is informed both by historic hegemony of Islamic culture and the even older tribal systems that inform it.

However, the general impression given by Christian MPs was that they were treated with equal respect and dignity as their Muslim peers and even that religion was not a topic that came up within their time in the Legislative Council.

Well my experience is that a Palestinian who enters the parliament is representing all the people. Even though when I was elected – I was elected on the Christian quota seat for Jerusalem. But when you look at things really, and I remember from the year and a half in which we had sessions, when I was speaking, I was speaking on behalf of my people – all of them and not on behalf of the Christians. And the experience in the parliament was that I am accepted as a Palestinian representing other Palestinians and not as a Christian.  

When respondents were asked about the future Palestinian state, i.e. whether they preferred it to be secular or religious, one-state or two-state, etc., most were unable to give specific answers as to the shape they would like the state to take. Understandably, their main concern was with ending the Israeli Occupation and having the freedom to choose the shape of their government without the interference of the Israeli or international authorities. This is not to say that respondents did not have opinions on these topics, but rather that they had difficulty articulating specific desires for a future state because ending the Occupation was such a pressing concern. When asked more broadly about their main concerns for a future state, respondents mentioned equal rights and the economy most frequently. Equal rights, they thought, should be constitutionally guaranteed, but also reflected in the state’s definition of citizenship – which must guarantee equal rights and duties regardless of religious, ethnic, gender or other differences.

When asked about preferences for a one or two-state solution, respondents had more to say. One particular trend that emerged was that a far higher number of young respondents supported the one-state solution than those over 30. And the main reasons behind this were the lack of freedom of movement that they felt.

I-1: I think in my opinion that we need a one state solution and a one state solution is really hard to get because for two state solution it’s almost like how we are living right now and nowadays we don’t have anything – we don’t have lands. We can’t go to the beach, we can’t go to Haifa, we can’t go to Jerusalem...

489. Palestinian Politician 2, "Personal Interview."
I-3: We can't go to our lands.

I-1: And go and leave anywhere except with permits.

QC: Is the one state solution a popular idea here?

I-1: Yeah I think it is a popular idea because like we want to go without having permits. For you it's really easy to go.

I-3: When you want to go travel anywhere you just buy a ticket and go. Here we have to wait one month to have a visa, then we buy the ticket if we got it.⁴⁹⁰

Others viewed the two state solution as a prerequisite for the ultimate goal of a one state solution – but most recognised that at this point the two-state solution was no longer viable.

QC: Is the ultimate goal a one-state or two-state solution?

I: The two-state is not functioning. The one-state is still rejected, even by some Palestinians. By many in fact. Because people still need – they feel that they need to have their own national aspirations, they don't want to mix. At least for awhile – you never know. Many people say that the two-state solution is a prerequisite for the one-state. But the two state-solution is not viable – it's dead. Even Cameron a few days ago said it's not possible. Of course we said this 10 years ago. One of the British organisations said this 10 years ago in 2004 – Christian Aid. You know. They said this about the viability of the two-state and Cameron said this just yesterday. So this is not viable and of course the one-state I would say would bring justice to all. Especially it would give the chance to give Palestinian refugees a chance to return to where they belong. So you are attacking the root causes of the problem, which is the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people. The two-state solution will not solve the problem. We have 6.5, 6.7 million refugees. What about those people? If you believe in human rights, you have to support those rights.⁴⁹¹

Similarly, other respondents felt that, whilst the one-state solution is the ideal, both Israelis and Palestinians were simply not ready for it. Rather, they suggested that a protracted transitional period was needed before both sides could accept one another as equals.

QC: Do you have a preference for a one or two-state solution or maybe another alternative?

I: No. Until now I think we should opt just on the two-state solution. I would never live under a one-state solution now because even if we lived under a one-state solution we will be oppressed. Now. Look at the history of Europe after the First and Second World Wars, they closed their borders each small country because you need time after a problem to process it. And now it's open. So the two-state solution is better right now because I will not be able now... if I am always a Christian I will try to love this soldier that I meet every day. I love him as a person, but I hate what he is doing. Yeah? The Kairos no? But we are not prepared to live in one state now. So the two-state solution with boundaries and each party should prepare

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⁴⁹⁰ Focus Group Bethlehem University Students, "Personal Interview."
⁴⁹¹ CRO Employee 2, "Personal Interview."
Several respondents also indicated that their perspective has shifted somewhat dramatically on this issue over the past few years. As hope dwindled after the Oslo process and the violence of the Second Intifada, many had felt that their somewhat uncompromising position on the peace process had evolved out of anger in some cases, apathy in others, maturity, desperation or even exhaustion at the repeated disappointments.

QC: In terms of one-state or two-state, the role of Christians in the state, secularism, law, etc. What is your opinion on these issues?

I: The Oslo framework, the First Intifada framework -- what we grew up knowing is what brings peace to this holy land. In the last maybe five or seven years my own theology has shifted to see that it's much broader than this, it's bigger than this and much more important than just finding a political solution. It's about how can we create this space where the communities in this land begin to honour the equal rights of the others who live here in peace and dignity and respect and trust. And that is where my politics plays out. And so I don’t care one state or two-state, that is what I’m after, we restore relations between the Palestinians, Israelis, Jews, Christians, Muslims -- whatever identities that people want to affiliate themselves with. Because the way things work now, the one state and the two-state solutions are non-working solutions so how can you get any of these to work.

-- CRO Leader, mid 40s, Bethlehem

For most respondents, it ultimately matters very little how peace is achieved, just that it is achieved in the first place. The decades of non-action on the part of the peace process has created a sort of air of caution when discussing the future. And indeed for the Palestinian Christian and Muslim youth alike, there are very real issues with talking about the future in a context that is not entirely about the Occupation. Obviously, because the daily realities of Palestinian life are an almost continuous reminder of the Occupation, it will be a major rhetorical element, but there was concern amongst some respondents that they must seek to end the monopoly that Occupation rhetoric holds on the youth especially. This was mentioned as a factor contributing to the difficulties respondents had when conceptualising the future state.

QC: How do you define or discuss Palestinian identity and the future with youth in the context of the Occupation?

I: It's a good question because this is a question that we challenge people with. Part of one of our programmes is to define your identity, what does it mean to be a Palestinian. One of the programmes we do I called 'Melding your thinking'. It's about methodology and a lot of it is based on identity and understanding.

492. CRO Employee 1, "Personal Interview."
493. CRO Employee 3, "Personal Interview."
one's self. So with identity when we ask the same question [to the students] 'define yourself' and we get the whole identity linked with victimisation: refugee, occupied, suppressed, you know isolated, that whole understanding of Palestinian identity. And then what we ask them to do is to define identity from the future, what does it mean to be a Palestinian in the future, what does the future hope to create? And what does that identity look like? And of course it’s completely different than this. So for me defining myself as a Palestinian I define it as a culture, as social norms, as traditions, as social habits, as art that I want to be part of -- language, hospitality, because I've been through this process.'

Conclusion:
This chapter has explored how the interplay of religious, communal, and national identities comes to affect social and political action in the Palestinian Christian communities. The first section, which explored the experiences of communal identity in the Rum Orthodox and Latin communities, revealed the ways in which historical issues over the identity of the Patriarchates are manifested in the daily lives of community members. In the case of the Rum Orthodox community, it continues to face many of the same challenges over identity and the vocation of the church that it has faced historically. These issues are reflected in the perceived disconnect between the ethnic Greek leadership and the community it is meant to serve through conflicts over language (Greek or Arabic), the liturgy, and the pastoral efforts made by the institution of the Patriarchate. Consequently, the ethnic Greek leadership and parish priests were viewed in a somewhat negative light, whilst the Arab parish priests and leadership were generally well regarded. At the parish level, many respondents felt that the Orthodox church was insulating itself from the wider Palestinian Christian community with its strict rules on attendance for non-members and continued distaste for interdenominational marriage. In this regard, many felt that the church was neglecting the changing social reality of Palestinian Christians, in which intermarriage and ecumenism are becoming the norm. These ongoing conflicts effectively undermined the connection that many individuals felt to the church.

By contrast, the relatively positive perceptions of the Latin Patriarchate and its diverse clergy were due largely to the transformation of the Patriarchate into an essentially Arab institution, with Roman influences, combined with its significant social welfare and pastoral institutions. This positive relationship with the institutions of the Patriarchate was found to have a correspondingly positive effect on the experience of social identity, in that individuals derived both psychological and material utility from membership. This was furthered by the Latin Church’s relative openness to interdenominational marriage and attendees from other faiths.

494. Ibid.
In the case of both the Latin and Rum Orthodox communities, respondents expressed a desire for their priests to contextualise social and political issues in the Christian faith. The difficult daily realities of life under Occupation brought up a number of situations in which respondents were uncertain of how to react as a Palestinian and a Christian. These situations are particularly challenging when moral principles (e.g. non-violence) are confronted with violence, threats to the group or oppression. The relative lack of guidance in that respect contributed to a widening gap between individuals and their churches, and also limited the influence that religious leadership had on the social and political choices of their parishioners. In terms of identification with the ecclesiastical identity, both the Latin and Orthodox communities had a relatively low occurrence of self-identification as a Katholik or Rum. Rather, there was a strong association with the Christian community more broadly and the Palestinian nation as a whole, which suggests that most respondents consider their “in-group” to be quite broadly defined and inclusive.

Simultaneously, however, the challenges of statelessness and the increasing public salience of religious identification have affected how Palestinian Christians experience political identity and also how they participate politically. Through the examination of Arabism, citizenship, and political support, this chapter has shown that the political pragmatism of Palestinian Christians is grounded in a strong desire for equal rights. This desire proved so strong in fact that numerous respondents were against quotas for Christian seats in the PLC and municipal councils. This was explained both by their ideological commitment to egalitarian notions of citizenship, and also by their desire to be considered full citizens without special distinction as minorities. Unsurprisingly, therefore, equal rights are a top priority for a future state.

However, for those who feel alienated by the growing role of Islam in the public discourse, they may retreat to their communal identities – leading to a decline in overall national solidarity. If and when Palestinian Christians do retreat to their confessional communities, if they do not receive sufficient guidance in terms of how their faith can address ongoing social and political issues, then they have little incentive to remain in the country. Social welfare initiatives, whilst providing essential and otherwise absent services to these communities, have only provided a short-term solution to the more salient existential crises of demographic decline and identity politics. Whilst these trends do not mean that Palestinian Christians are not committed nationalists or pious Christians, they do
suggest that this community feels increasingly alienated by the changing social and political landscape. As the next two chapters discuss, these daily negotiations between communal and political identity have important implications for the ways in which Christians participate politically, as well as their future in the Holy Land.
As the previous chapter discussed, the impact of communal identity on political choice is significant. However, the relative influence of church leadership on political choice is increasingly insignificant, particularly as evolving social realities (e.g. intermarriage and ongoing conflict) continue to be neglected. Rather, the more salient impact of communalism on political choice is how individuals reconcile their faith and identity as Christians with their political identity as Arab Palestinians. Within this context, statelessness, as discussed in Chapter Three, is also a factor because political choices have the added weight of directly impacting the fundamental nature and structure of a future state. This impacts upon social and political action/choice in the Palestinian Christian community in several ways. Firstly, there is a tendency to vote defensively, e.g. voting for Fatah in order to prevent Hamas from taking power, despite disagreeing with Fatah's platform. Secondly, because communal identity shapes the social role that individuals take, it also shapes interest and determines which choices are socially acceptable, given the social role. Finally, when making political choices, Palestinian Christians weigh the past performance of political candidates against the political record of current candidates to a much greater degree than the population in general. This suggests that Christian voters prioritise the performance and utility of a party over ideological considerations.

Political choice then resembles the following hierarchy:

1. Choice is limited by communal identification – I am a Christian, I cannot vote for Hamas
2. Assessment of the past performance of a party – Has this party delivered on its promises?
3. Current material utility of a party – How capable is this party of economic and social development?
4. Ideological considerations – Does this party's platform match my own political ideology?

This hierarchy is further evidenced by the significant changes in voting trends over the course of 2000-2012 election cycles and also by the fact that close to 50% of Palestinian Christians surveyed do not support a political party, despite the fact that voter turnout is frequently close to 80% – suggesting that there is little commitment to specific parties. Rather, voters tend to change party affiliation based on the above considerations in each new election cycle. This is also affected by generational trends as party support falls to close to 30% amongst respondents under the age of 20, suggesting that either the youth are less involved politically or that they are exploring modes of

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495. Sen, "The Fog of Identity.", 287
496. Sabella, "Comparing Palestinian Christians on Society and Politics: Context and Religion in Israel and Palestine."
political participation outside of the traditional political structures, whether this is online activism, street protests, or daily conversations with friends.\textsuperscript{498}

At present, national government in Palestine continues to operate, but is hindered by tax burdens, lack of foreign investment, internal corruption, divided government, and numerous other issues.\textsuperscript{499} Although it has not held a voting session since 2007, the Palestinian Legislative Council remains the nominal authority next to the President and Prime Minister. However national elections have not taken place since the controversial 2006 legislative elections, in which Hamas won a majority of parliamentary seats -- eventually leading to the split between a Hamas-governed Gaza Strip and Fatah-governed West Bank. With Hamas and Fatah now reunited, elections were expected to take place at some point during 2014, but have been suspended indefinitely due to non-cooperation between the national unity government and the 2014 Gaza War.\textsuperscript{500} In the period between the creation of the PA in 1994 and present, there have been six elections held in the Palestinian Authority:

\begin{itemize}
  \item 1996 presidential and legislative council elections
  \item 2004/05 municipal elections
  \item 2005 presidential elections
  \item 2006 legislative elections
  \item 2012 municipal elections
\end{itemize}

However, the ability of the PA to govern and provide basic services has declined sharply since the early 2000s. As a result, local government, non-governmental organisations, and church-related organisations have filled the gap; supplementing social welfare services like education and healthcare to Palestinians on a local level – and to a much greater degree in Christian areas.\textsuperscript{501} This contributes to the tendency for Palestinian Christians to be pragmatic voters, but has also led to a greater interest in local versus national politics as voters see their local government as more consequential to their daily lives.

These factors contribute to the belief that the central government does not, in fact, provide much in the way of tangible benefit to citizens in Christian areas. Rather, self-sufficiency and relationships

\textsuperscript{498} Sabella, "Comparing Palestinian Christians on Society and Politics: Context and Religion in Israel and Palestine."
\textsuperscript{499} Ilan Halevi, "Self-Government, Democracy, and Mismanagement under the Palestinian Authority" \textit{Journal of Palestine Studies} 27, no. 3 (1998).
\textsuperscript{501} Raheb, \textit{Palestinian Christians in the West Bank: Facts, Figures and Trends}. 
with foreign donors account for a sizeable amount of benefit, not only for the Christian communities themselves, but also for the wider Palestinian society. Therefore, as discussed in the previous chapter, numerous respondents were somewhat indifferent to the shape and nature of the government itself as long as it did not directly interfere with their safety, well being or material wealth. In contrast to the previous chapter, which explored how communal and political identities shape choice, this chapter focuses on Christian political trends themselves. Particular emphasis is given to local and student politics, which, as stated above, have a far greater impact on the daily lives of Palestinian Christians. In addition to exploring broad political trends, this chapter examines party support, electoral history, and factors contributing these political trends where discernible. In the first section factors affecting political participation are explored, relying on qualitative data obtained during fieldwork. In the second section electoral trends in legislative, local, and student elections are examined after a brief historical background on the evolution of electoral politics in Palestine.

Factors influencing Christian political participation:

Correlating religiosity and political participation:

Respondents were asked several questions regarding both their level of religiosity and level of political participation, including how they would characterise both from a scale of 'very religious' to 'not very religious' and 'very political' to 'not very political'. In all instances they were also asked about their family history of both religiosity and political participation (if they were aware of this history), what church they belonged to (if any), and which political party they supported (if any). Although this qualitative data was limited by its relatively low sample size of 20 semi-structured interviews, it was supported by ten years of survey data from the PCPSR, whose findings were suggestive of similar trends across the Palestinian Christian community.\textsuperscript{502}

As figure 1 (below) suggests, there was a negative correlation between reported levels of religiosity and political activism. Although politicisation was relatively low amongst respondents regardless of religiosity, it was considerably lower with respondents who self identified as moderately or very religious. This trend was explained by one respondent as follows:

\footnotesize\textsuperscript{502} PCPSR Survey Data 2000-2010
I think many Christians will find that their faith is their ideology. It's the resource with which to bring about society and change and so forth -- it's their motivation. Whereas if you become involved with a political party then you've got a competing set of ideologies often.

--Latin Priest, mid-50s, Bethlehem

This suggests that religion and politics were seen by some respondents as being mutually exclusive forces. For those respondents who did identify as being simultaneously religious and political, the process of negotiating exactly how to participate in political life as a Christian was difficult due to the perceived contradictions between Christian principles like non-violence and forgiveness, for example, and active resistance. As one Palestinian Catholic priest related:

Palestinian Christians try to combine – not always successfully of course – being Palestinian and being Christian. I say not always successfully because there are Palestinian Christians who do believe in violence or who have participated in violent acts. And they feel this is their duty as Palestinians, regardless of their faith, which preaches non-violence. And the question that's always important -- and this is a kind of tension between being a Palestinian and being a Christian -- is how can you be involved in public and political life

503. Latin Priest 2, interview by Quinn Coffey 2014.
here as a Palestinian AND a Christian. That is, how can you participate in political and public life not as a 'secular' Palestinian, as many of us have done, but rather fully as a Christian Palestinian.  

And indeed this notion that, in order for one to participate politically as a Palestinian Christian one must forgo the public expression of their Christian faith is backed up, to some degree, by the data, which suggests a relatively low level of pious nationalism amongst Christians. There are, of course, a few examples to the contrary, such as Mitri Raheb, Naim Ateek, Atallah Hanna, and former Patriarch Michel Sabaah — all highly political public figures who have integrated their religious belief into their political activism. However, the overwhelming majority of Christian Palestinian political figures of note have eschewed religion in exchange for leftist politics. The reasons behind this have varied over time, but, generally speaking, have had to do with issues of identity — whether this was a struggle to define pan-Arabism in secular terms or disillusionment with their confessional communities. At the grassroots level, the limited guidance that the lay community receives from their religious leadership on how to integrate their faith into their political lives fosters an environment in which Christians are increasingly either political or religious, but rarely both simultaneously.

The church leadership has, at times, published joint statements elucidating a Palestinian Christian response to the Conflict. The 2009 Kairos document was both a theological response and call to action for Palestinian Christians, which framed the current plight of Palestinians within a Christian moral framework. In this sense, the Palestinian Kairos attempted to fill the gap missing at the parish level as it simultaneously condemned violent resistance and affirmed the right of Palestinians to self-defence:

> Resistance to the evil of occupation is integrated, then, within this Christian love that refuses evil and corrects it. It resists evil in all its forms with methods that enter into the logic of love and draw on all energies to make peace. We can resist through civil disobedience. We do not resist with death but rather through respect of life. We respect and have a high esteem for all those who have given their life for our nation. And we affirm that every citizen must be ready to defend his or her life, freedom and land.

504. Latin Priest 1, "Personal Interview."
506. George Habash, Isa al-Isa, Michel Aflaq, etc.
507. This view is also supported by Lybarger who describes this as 'apolitical piety'. Lybarger, "For Church or Nation? : Islamism, Secular-Nationalism, and the Transformation of Christian Identities in Palestine."
In general, the Kairos document was well received by respondents who saw its value not only as an important statement against injustice, but also as a guide for Christian participation in political activism. As one of the authors of the Kairos explained:

> I remember when we presented the Kairos document here in Beit Jala, there was a young man from the PFLP, who's in engaged in politics, spent a few years in prison, doesn’t believe in violence but you know he is a Christian Palestinian who is engaged in Palestinian politics. And when we presented the Karios he said, “you know now I can see that I can be a Christian and a Palestinian at the same time; my engagement in politics, etc. -- my Christian faith gives me courage.”

-- Latin Priest, mid-50s, Beit Jala

Therefore, it is clear that the religious leadership is conscious of the often-difficult position occupied by Palestinian Christians in the political context. However, the inconsistency and infrequency of these messages, combined with the challenges that ecumenism presents for the church leadership, has dampened the effect that initiatives like Kairos have had on a Christian-based activism. The overall effect of religiosity on political participation is therefore a tendency towards what Lybarger termed, 'apolitical piety' or the tendency for religious individuals to remain somewhat detached from the political field. This does not mean that religious individuals did not engage rhetorically with Palestinian nationalism or support the right to self-determination, but rather that they often had difficulty reconciling their religious and political lives. This was also affected, as the next section discusses, by generational trends.

**Generational factors:**

Data has indicated that Palestinian Christians under the age of 40 are less inclined to become politically active than their parents – particularly when it comes to support for specific political parties. Whilst younger respondents indicated that they were hesitant to get involved primarily because of issues of personal safety, older respondents viewed Palestinian youth as increasingly self-interested and apathetic.

> The younger generation is apathetic about politics. Yes they do support their country but they don't see the value in getting involved in the parties. Most people that are younger than the Second Intifada age that are Christian are just trying to avoid anything that might harm their future and politics is seen as one of the things that might do that – there’s no value for it.

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509. Latin Priest 1, "Personal Interview."
510. Lybarger, "For Church or Nation?: Islamism, Secular-Nationalism, and the Transformation of Christian Identities in Palestine."
511. This observation was made based upon qualitative and quantitative data from the fieldwork and PCPSR survey data.
512. Orthodox Community Member, "Personal Interview."
Although they had political feelings and often privately supported one party or another, respondents often suggested that to do so publicly may endanger what they worked so hard for in school and at their workplaces.

You see that a majority -- the majority of people that you deal with on the Christian side get involved, but they get involved if it doesn't involve political affiliation -- some people would disagree with me and say look at Beit Sahour, Beit Jala, and Bethlehem where you have people on the Left. Yes, my research showed that more young Christians are really to the left of the political spectrum you know. Yes they are engaged and yes they get arrested and yes once in awhile you get someone who is killed by the Israeli authorities. But in general the tendency is to remain non-violent and work low-key for young people.\footnote{513}

-- Palestinian Christian MP, mid-60s, Jerusalem

And indeed the issue of personal safety greatly affects the youths' desire to make their political opinions known. And this is an important distinction, between having political opinions, which nearly all of the respondents had, and expressing them publicly:

I-1: We watch political issues and the news but we're not into that much of politics.

I-3: We don't care very much. Because if you give your opinion maybe you will be in danger.

QC: From who or what?

I-3: From the parties and everybody else.

QC: So you don't support any party?

I-1: No.

QC: Would you say that it is common with your peers not to support a specific party?

I-2: No we have some friends who are very political and interested. But not all of us.

I-1: It's almost 50-50, so people who are -- they go and participate with political issues. And people who don't are not interested in political issues.\footnote{514}

-- Focus group with Bethlehem University students aged 19-22

\footnote{513. Palestinian Politician 2, "Personal Interview."
514. Focus Group Bethlehem University Students, "Personal Interview."}
Safety is not the only issue. Indeed many respondents felt that joining a political party limited their freedom in terms of maintaining independent political and social opinions – i.e. if they join a party then they are wedded to the ideology of that party in the public sphere. Regardless of age, respondents indicated that they felt most of the major political parties had similar ideological perspectives and that political choices may also reflect tribal affiliation more than acceptance of party ideology; a fact which then affects one’s ability to hold opinions counter to the party, clan or family.

QC: Do you support any political party?
I: No I don’t. I like to be independent and I like to have the authority and the possibility to say what I like and so on.

QC: So are you saying that if you're a member of a party you don't have as much freedom to say things?
I: Yeah.

QC: Why do you think that is?
I: Because that’s part of the culture here if you belong to a party, you have to stick to their ideology. Anyhow if you look at all the political parties right now, there aren’t really great ideological differences so it becomes very tribal and I have problems with all tribal issues.515

-- CRO leader, mid-50s, Bethlehem

The tribal element516, both in the Christian and Muslim communities, was also expressed in interviews within the municipalities themselves, in which it was revealed that city council members

515. Lutheran Priest, "Personal Interview."
516 Tribalism remains a powerful, but subtle political force in Palestinian politics. Robinson distinguishes between three types of clan-like groups in Palestine: tribes, clans, and notable families. The tribal groups are descended from nomadic Bedouin tribes, whose importance has diminished with the increased urbanisation of the 19th and 20th centuries. In the contemporary context, the influence of the traditional tribes on politics is far less significant than it is in neighbouring Jordan where there continue to be large numbers of nomadic or semi-nomadic groups. Clans (hama’il), which consist of larger numbers of extended families with a shared ancestry, are a far more salient political force. This is particularly true when several clans unite against a political group, like Hamas in Gaza, or when elections are organised according to district. In the case of the latter, clans, who may demographically dominate a district, can shape the outcome of elections merely because of their number. Finally, notable families who typically trace their lineages to important administrative or economic roles in the Ottoman bureaucracy, have typically aligned themselves with the ruling authority in a mutually beneficial relationship. A majority of the most permanent families including the ‘Husayni, Nashashibi, Dajani, Abd al-Hadi, Tuqan, Nabulsi, Khoury, Tamimi, Khatib, Ja’bari, Masri, Kan’an, Shaq’a, Barghouthi, Shawwa, Rayyes’ and other families, have aligned with Fatah in recent decades because they have an economic interest in a stable state. However, the breakdown of the state in recent years has increased the relative importance of clans because, as Robinson notes, clans tend to be powerful when the state is weak, while notables benefit the most from a stronger
were "elected" from amongst the most prominent clans, who would take turns nominating tribal leaders for council seats with very little room for outsiders. Indeed, as noted by Signoles, "The formation of municipal staff in Palestine traditionally responds to two major stakes: first, ensuring the representation of families (hamay’il) in municipal bodies; and second the creation, preservation or strengthening of patronage networks for the competing actors in a system where proximity to the political centre guarantees financial income, the attainment of micro-agreements in the case of power struggles, and sometimes, a degree of social prestige."\(^{517}\) This is also reflected by Sabella who characterises the PLO policy of co-opting family elites, as 'mutually reinforcing', in that the PA needs these elites to secure support at the local level, whilst simultaneously helping to preserve the status of elites in society.\(^{518}\) In this sense, party affiliation becomes merged with clan and familial networks and comes to influence the way in which individuals make political choices. Choosing not to support a political party can then be a rejection of traditional power networks. However, the relative influence of the clan leadership has declined along with their economic and social role. As Robinson argues 'the claims of the hamula [clan] patriarchs to have the final say in the decision making process are now widely seen by Bayt Sahourians as anachronistic, and those people with nationalist credentials earned in the confrontation with Israel are seen as having a greater mandate for communal authority.'\(^{519}\) This was reflected by younger respondents in particular, who were vaguely aware of their clan membership and structure, but dismissed any significant pressure to adhere to clan authority.

An opposing perspective that does not explicitly cite the role of tribalism, is the declining role of group influence on the individual:

QC: You mentioned the rise of individualism with younger people – is there more of a focus on local versus national politics?

I: Yes I think the whole concept of loyalty and identity is becoming smaller. So if now you ask a young person 'who are you?' he will say 'I'm Quinn Coffey' – he used to say I'm a Palestinian or I'm a member of state'. In the Christian context, clans and notables continue to play a political role, but as Kårtveit notes, 'today hamula ties have little operational relevance in these communities, but each hamula consists of several extended families or sub-clans, and such families, referred to as 'aeeilah', still constitute one's primary base of social support', particularly in times of uncertainty or open conflict. See Glenn E. Robinson, "Palestinian Tribes, Clans, and Notable Families" Strategic Insights 7, no. 4 (2009); Kårtveit, Dilemmas of Attachment: Identity and Belonging among Palestinian Christians, 39; Glenn E. Robinson, Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997).

519. Robinson, Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution, 73
PFLP, or I'm a member of Fatah or...so the identity is shrinking. Or identifying with their denomination; who are you? I'm Christian or I'm Roman Catholic or I'm Lutheran.' And this has a lot to do with the fact that the group influence on the individual is waning.\(^{520}\)

-- CRO leader, mid 50s, Beit Sahour

A possible outcome of declining group influence and interest is a diminished willingness to engage in altruistic behaviour in the political sphere, e.g. not getting involved politically for fear of it affecting personal well being. Although this trend was observed to a limited extent, it appeared to be less influenced by an inherent self-interest of the youth, and rather the psychology of perpetual military occupation.

When I worked for [local NGO], there were Orthodox and Catholics who were very passionate politically, but the idea that they would go off and join a party like their parents is unheard of. There is a frustration, there is anger about Gaza and other parts of the country. But a) we've got problems of our own and b) we're not going to fall into the traps that our parents did of just blindly following parties without results.\(^{521}\)

-- CRO worker, late 30s, Jerusalem

In other words, decades of hopeless and fruitless political struggle have created a certain level of apathy that makes Palestinian Christian youth less likely to endanger their futures without a plausible positive outcome. Again this was particularly true of party affiliation, which held little utility for a number of respondents:

I think the younger generation within the Muslim and Christian community are less political. So even when you hear the demonstrations in Bethlehem, I remember if this happened years ago a thousand kids would be at Rachel's Tomb doing this night thing that they do. Now 50-100 show up. So people are in a place of yeah – it's the challenge of identity and who is leading us and why do we do the things that we do and why should we sacrifice if nothing is going to come out of the sacrifice.\(^{522}\)

-- CRO leader, mid-40s, Bethlehem

This again highlights the link between political activism and tangible benefit, as those who have grown up during the Intifada and Oslo eras have not necessarily seen how political activism can produce economic or social change. As discussed in the next chapter, this is also related to the tendency for Palestinian Christians to be wealthier and more socially mobile than a majority of their Muslim peers. The focus then becomes far more internal, as they pursue higher education and white-collar jobs, which may be endangered by political participation.

\(^{520}\) CRO Employee 2, "Personal Interview."

\(^{521}\) Orthodox Community Member, "Personal Interview."

\(^{522}\) CRO Employee 3, "Personal Interview."
For their part, young respondents primarily framed their hesitation towards political activism in terms of safety and freedom of movement.

QC: You don't participate in politics because of safety issues?

I-1: Yeah because it does affect us a lot. For me I think first of the permit because...

QC: The permit to travel to Jerusalem?

I-1: Jerusalem yes. If we are into any political party they would for example – or if we participated into any political demonstrations...

I-3: Even with the Palestinian police it may be a danger for you. If you are not with them, it makes problems.\(^{523}\)

Therefore, when making the decision whether or not to be politically active, youth weighed the relative costs of such a choice with their current and future well being. Again this reflects the pragmatism of the Palestinian Christian community in regards to political participation. As the next section explores, these factors, as well as those described in the previous chapter, have an important effect on political trends within the Palestinian Christian community.

**Political Trends:**
As discussed in the introduction, there is a relatively low level of confidence in national politics within the Palestinian Christian communities. This stems from the government's inability to provide basic services (e.g. economic development, infrastructure, and healthcare) to its citizens, but it is also related to history of national elections since the creation of the PA in 1994. These elections have seen the gradual splintering of the national political field, leading, in 2007, to a split between the Hamas-led Gaza Strip and the Fatah-led West Bank. As a consequence, the PLC, which was intended to be an institutional check on the power of the executive branch, has been suspended indefinitely.\(^{524}\) The President of the PA, Mahmoud Abbas, now claims legislative, judicial, and executive powers, with the Hamas-led Gaza government doing the same.

As a result, local elections have tended to be a more influential political force in the daily lives of Palestinians Christians, as they have the ability to more immediately and effectively reflect

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523. Focus Group Bethlehem University Students, "Personal Interview."
community-based needs. Unlike national politics, which hinge largely upon ideological concerns, local elections are more service oriented; they would respond to local community needs.\textsuperscript{525} Therefore electoral trends are shaped by pragmatic considerations like the past performance of political parties and their current ability to deliver economic development. This section explores major political trends that have emerged over the past decade, with an emphasis on local and student politics within the Palestinian Christian communities. Trends with the 2006 Legislative Elections are also briefly discussed for their relevance in gauging how Palestinian Christians have participated in national politics. The remaining sections give a detailed look at the 2004/05 and 2012 municipal elections and the 1994 – 2014 student elections in Birzeit and Bethlehem Universities, exploring how and why electoral trends have changed over time, and the implications of these trends on Palestinian Christian politics.

\textit{2004/05 Elections:}

\textit{Background:}

From the beginning of PA rule in 1994 until the first municipal elections in 2004-2005, city council members and mayors were directly appointed through the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), and only then after lengthy negotiations with the traditional elite in the electoral districts.\textsuperscript{526} In practice, this led to power struggles both at the local and national level between and within families as clan leaders protested or ousted those on the extreme left or right in preference for those more to the political and social centre.\textsuperscript{527} Consequently, this led to a stronger showing, prior to 2004, of centrist candidates who would, because of their relationship with the PA and Fatah, not directly "stir the pot". As such, a vast majority of mayoral and city council appointments in this period were in some way affiliated with Fatah, either as party members or maintaining a neutral stance towards Fatah. Naturally the public questioned the legitimacy of these unelected candidates, particularly in light of the declining popularity of Fatah in the early 2000s.\textsuperscript{528} It is therefore unsurprising that the 2004/05 elections produced significant changes to the political landscape that more accurately reflected popular political sentiment at the time.


\textsuperscript{526} Signoles, "Local Government in Palestine.", 30

\textsuperscript{527} Ibid., 30

In the 2004/05 elections 2,519 candidates competed for 906 seats in 84 municipal and village councils. 141 electoral lists were represented. Despite the decline in Fatah’s popularity at the time, they managed to win 56% of total council seats in coalition with the PPP. Hamas, who had boycotted the 2005 presidential elections, won 33% of total council seats with the PFLP and independent parties winning a majority of the remainder.529

### 2004/05 election results in Christian-Quota districts

Whilst Fatah and Fatah-affiliated independents gained the vast majority of municipal council seats in Christian quota districts, the PFLP performed reasonably well in Beit Sahour, Beit Jala, Bethlehem and Aboud. However, apart from the Bethlehem municipality, they were unable to gain a sufficient enough majority to win the mayoral appointments in these areas. Despite the relative popularity of the left in Christian quota districts, Fatah was able to gain a significant majority largely due to the fact that the three major left parties were unable to form coalition lists in opposition to Fatah. This was a somewhat surprising result considering both the perceived dominance of the left in Christian districts and the very low public opinion of Fatah at the time -- close to 85% of respondents to a 2004 survey by the PCPSR considered the Fatah-led PA to be corrupt.530

However the unique nature of the electoral process in Christian quota districts allowed the left to hold leadership positions in municipalities where Hamas has won a majority. This is because electoral law requires that Christian districts have a Christian mayor regardless of which party wins the election. Therefore the party with the largest majority in the municipal councils will almost always gain the position of mayor, who is selected by the councils themselves. In the 2004/05 elections, Hamas gained a majority of votes in the Bethlehem municipality, however, because of the Christian quota, were forced to choose a Christian mayor. Hamas opposed Fatah and therefore elected the PFLP-affiliated Victor Bartaseh as mayor, despite the fact that Fatah actually gained more votes than the PFLP.531 However, this had a disastrous effect on economic development in the Bethlehem region during this period because the PFLP and Hamas were both listed terrorist

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organisations by the US government at the time. As such, foreign aid to the city dwindled from 2004-2012. Respondents cited this and other similar examples as a major reason for their shift away from the left and towards Fatah in the 2012 elections – again reflecting the pragmatism of Christian voters.

2006 Legislative Elections:

Background:
The 2006 Legislative Elections marked a significant turning point in Palestinian politics, as they were the first national election in which Hamas and the political left participated. These parties had boycotted previous elections largely because of fundamental disagreements with the Oslo Accords and the peace process, including the right of return for refugees and commitment to a two-state solution. However, the strong performance of Hamas and leftist candidates in the 2004/05 Local Elections proved to their party leaderships that they could present a serious challenge to the hegemony of Fatah in the West Bank and Gaza. Ultimately seven major parties competed for 132 seats on the PLC, with the following table detailing the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hamas</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatah</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abu Ali Mustafa (PFLP)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Alternative (DFLP, FIDA, PPP)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Palestine (Mustafa Barghouti)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Way (Salam Fayyad)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following the Hamas victory and subsequent splintering of the West Bank and Gaza governments, the PLC was suspended indefinitely and no longer functions as a legislative body. As the deputy chairman of the PLC, Hassan Khreisheh described in an interview with al-Monitor:

The legislative branch [in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank] endures only in name. The legitimacy of the Legislative Council and its members has been battered since its marginalization in 2007, with President Abbas assuming the council’s powers. As a result, ours [the Legislative Council] now is more akin to a totalitarian regime ruled by one individual. The prevailing sentiment is that President Abbas does not want to convene the legislature, because its absence facilitates his job. He now has assumed the powers of the Legislative Council, the presidency, the premiership and the head of security. Consequently, the principle of separation of powers has been undermined in his favor.\(^{536}\)

This, consequently, has contributed to the lack of confidence most Palestinians have with the Palestinian Authority, and with President Abbas.\(^{537}\)

2006 Legislative Elections in Christian Quota Districts:

Palestinian Christians are granted six seats on the Legislative Council, in accordance with the 2005 Presidential Decree on the Allocation of PLC Seats to Electoral Districts.\(^{538}\) Christians elected Fatah candidates in all but one of their quota districts with the Gaza representative Husam Altaweel running as an independent. Although the Fatah-led PA was increasingly viewed as corrupt in PCPSR surveys leading up to the election, the dominance of Fatah shows that Christians continued to believe that they were the best available option in an election where Hamas was participating.\(^{539}\) This is also reflected in the local election data, where Fatah remains the most popular party, largely because of its relationship with foreign donors and positions in the peace process.

2012 Elections:

Background:

When the mandate of the municipal governments elected in 2004/05 expired in 2008, the MoLG extended their mandates for a period initially intended to be one year. This allowed the MoLG, 'through ratification of the cabinet to dissolve the elected councils whose mandates electoral periods have expired, and to appoint a transitional committee to run local council/communities...', which gave the ministry the authority to control both elections and the appointment of municipal councils.\(^{540}\) Although the PA’s initial aim in creating the MoLG was decentralisation, these measures had the opposite effect. The political climate following the 2007 Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip,\(^{536}\) Ahmed Melhem, "Palestine’s Crippled Legislative Authority," \textit{Al-Monitor} (2015).

\(^{537}\) PCPSR Survey Data 2000-2010

\(^{538}\) Raheb, \textit{Palestinian Christians in the West Bank: Facts, Figures and Trends.}, 40

\(^{539}\) Data from seven surveys conducted from March 2005 through December 2006. PCPSR Centre, "The Palestinian General National Plan: Summary of the Cross-Sectoral Strategy for Palestinian Local Government and Administration Sector."
followed by the removal of dozens of Hamas members from government posts in the West Bank created an environment in which municipal elections were low on the list of priorities for the PA. Local elections scheduled in both 2010 and 2011 were announced and then cancelled resulting in four of the electoral lists taking legal action against the MoLG's right to cancel elections. The Palestinian High Court ultimately decided in favour of the electoral lists stating that once elections had been announced, they could not be cancelled. However this did not prevent President Abbas from issuing a presidential decree in 2011 suspending elections until the situation on the ground (and presumably within his party) improved. West Bank municipal elections were announced finally in 2012.

Hamas boycotted the 2012 elections citing the lack of political reconciliation as a major factor. Similarly, a number of Fatah members split from their official lists and ran either as independents or as part of coalitions in a number of cities – despite apparent threats from the Fatah Central Committee that 'any party cadres who participated in alternate lists would be fired', which, according to the Carter Centre, happened to at least 27 candidates. Additionally, the changes in electoral procedures to a closed-list system spawned dozens of additional "independent" lists of candidates from quasi-independent and coalition parties.

This proliferation of lists was explained by one anonymous member of the PLC as follows, 'some political parties established affiliated "independent" lists in order to gain the most possible seats on the local councils.' In other words, because the closed-list system uses the Sainte-Laguë method, in which only the top names on each list are favoured and granted seats (if multiple lists run), larger political parties would increase their odds of gaining a majority in city councils if they split into several smaller lists. In a municipal council consisting of 13 seats, for example, the first five names on a given list will have a much higher chance of gaining a council seat because the first name is guaranteed a seat with each subsequent seat having a smaller chance of a seat. If three lists (A, B, C) are competing for 13 seats in this municipal council and list A gets 450 votes, B 350 and C 150, then list A gets six seats, B gets 5 seats and C gets 2 seats. If list A and list C are from the same larger party but running as "independents", they will gain a majority on the council and can then control

541. Centre, "Palestine Electoral Study Mission Urges Political Reconciliation."
542. Ibid.
543. Ibid.
544. Palestinian Politician 1, interview by Quinn Coffey 2014.
many of its policy making decisions – including the appointment of mayor. So in this sense the proliferation of "independent" candidates in 2012 should be taken with a grain of salt, as it often reflected political manoeuvring within the national party than any real independence in terms of ideology or platform.

As a PLC council member explained, 'often the independent lists reflect the family affiliation where one family couldn't have any seats in the top of their usual list, they therefore create their own list with their names at the top to increase their chances of gaining a seat, which may happen in larger families." He also suggested that the opposite might be the case, where a small family may split up its members into different lists in order to increase its relative strength within a village where its actual material or demographic strength might be weak.

Results:
As a result of the change in electoral procedure and the Hamas boycott, 179 of 353 localities could only produce one electoral list, and 82 produced no list at all. In the case of localities that only produced one list, candidates were elected by acclimation. Fatah was able to gain majorities in 149 of the 179 single list localities along with 35 examples of Fatah-left coalition lists. In 93 localities multiple lists were given – including the largest urban areas – constituting around 53% of the total registered voters in the West Bank. The results were similar in Christian areas. Fatah, running under the name "Independence and Development" won a majority of seats in nearly all of the Christian quota localities, with the PFLP and independent parties taking the bulk of the remaining seats. However, the number of independent lists increased from 11 in 2004/05 to 18 in 2012 – owing again to the shift in electoral procedure, but also because of internal rifts within Fatah.

One important result of the 2012 elections was a shift back to Fatah mayors in a number of the Christian districts. Bethlehem city, whose city council had faced an economic downturn as a result of the composition of its council, elected Vera Baboun, from the Independence and Development (Fatah) party, who was not only the city's first female mayor, but also has crucially been able to resume foreign aid to the city. The left remained strong in a number of Palestinian cities, but failed

545. Ibid.
547. Ibid.
548. Ibid.
to gain a majority in any of the city councils. The strong showing by Fatah in Christian quota cities, regardless of the Hamas boycott and the changes to electoral procedures, has shown that public opinion of Fatah was on the upswing, particularly since its lowest point in the early 2000s.549 This again reflects the opinion of many that local elections are 'driven by pragmatic considerations' and are not typically framed within the national political dialogue.550 Therefore, whilst respondents continue to view Fatah critically, they saw on the local level how their political choices affected their material reality – to a much greater degree than they perhaps would at the national level. The next section explores respondents' views on major political parties, as well as the disconnect between perceived dominance of certain parties and the electoral realities.

Major Parties:

On average, close to 50% of Palestinian Christians do not support a specific political party when polled over the period between 2000 and 2010.551 The reasons behind this varied, but the most prevalent were security concerns and not being satisfied with the options. Of those who did support a political party, Fatah gained the most support, (see figure 9 appendix), with the PFLP gaining the second most. This is reflective of the electoral data from the 2012 municipal elections, but marks a shift from a 2000 survey of Palestinian Christians, in which 62% of respondents supported political parties and support for the PFLP and Fatah were close to equal.552

As noted above, there was a disconnect between the respondents' impression of which parties held localised political power and the electoral reality – particularly concerning the relative power of the left. Whilst Fatah has maintained a majority in nearly every Christian quota district since the establishment of the PA – including the seat of mayor – the left is still viewed as a significant political force. A number of respondents, when asked who the dominant parties were in their towns and cities would cite the PFLP, PPP or DFLP as the main political actors despite the fact that it was often the case that the majority of their city councils and indeed their mayors were Fatah. It would therefore seem that the PFLP and other major parties on the left have strong grassroots support despite the fact that they do not perform well in the elections. This is primarily because of their

549. Sabella, "Comparing Palestinian Christians on Society and Politics: Context and Religion in Israel and Palestine."
552. Sabella, "Comparing Palestinian Christians on Society and Politics: Context and Religion in Israel and Palestine."
work outside of the established political system. This was explained by one Bethlehem-area blogger as follows:

Like Hamas, the PFLP have gained the respect of the people on the ground by working at the grass roots levels to improve their situation. Institutions such as the Health Workers Committee’s Clinic in Beit Sahour, for example, which is the largest clinic of its kind in the West Bank; a well-equipped and effective community based institution, providing cheap services for the people independent of the inadequate PA services, was established with PFLP support and commitment. Other such centers are common around the region. The leftists have consequently built a social base in the Christian towns with a large professional community and student population. 553

However, a staunch Fatah supporter suggested that Fatah’s more centrist platform has attracted Christians over time:

QC: You had mentioned that in the 1960s and 70s the left parties were very popular within the Christian communities; it seems that now there is more interest in Fatah?

I: Yes, there is more support for Fatah now definitely.

QC: Why do you think this has changed?

I: In the 60s and 70s the founding figures of the PFLP and other left parties were very popular. But then Arafat knew how to win Christians to him. Arafat was brilliant in that.

QC: How so?

I: By giving them places, roles in the government. Then what happened also was that the Popular Front and the Democratic Front accepted violence sometimes – Fatah was less violent – more moderate – so Christians were drawn to Fatah. Slowly, slowly, it happened very slowly. 554

-- Latin Bishop, mid 60s, Jerusalem

The violence of the left was only partly to blame however, several respondents mentioned their lack of faith in all political parties generally, but also the failure of the left to transform its political platform along with the changing times – particularly during the Oslo period:

QC: Are the left parties becoming less popular in Christian communities and if so when did this start to change?

I: 30 or 40 years ago the communists were the most popular – they were the dominant party. However, they did not have a programme to continue, whereas Fatah has a program and they knew where they were going. So that’s why they took charge since the 1990s. They started negotiating with the Israelis and they became

554. Latin Bishop, ”Personal Interview.”
the main negotiating partner of Israel. Also, unlike the communists who aren’t religious, Fatah involves Muslims and Christians and is more open-minded.

In recent elections, Fatah has been more popular at the local level because the foreign donors approve of them, whereas in the 2004/05 elections Hamas were in the Bethlehem Municipality and the mayor was PFLP, so the foreign donors did not approve.\textsuperscript{555}

-- Municipal council member (Fatah), mid-50s, Beit Sahour

Respondents also mentioned the fact that the Palestinian political spectrum was lacking a moderate alternative to Fatah and Hamas. The strong support for Fatah, some mentioned, should not be taken as support for the ideology of Fatah as much as it is a rejection of the ideology and violence of the left and fundamentalism of Hamas. Similarly, within the context of fieldwork, during the 2014 Israeli invasion of Gaza, respondents were concerned that Fatah’s failure to present itself as a serious liberation party increased the popularity of fundamentalist groups – even amongst the Christians:

\begin{quote}
\textit{I: If we continue living under occupation in this situation with Israel attacking Gaza and the West Bank, the fundamentalists will emerge and win in the end. And people will say to be moderate does not serve anyone. You know Fatah failed – it failed we need to be strong, etc.}

\textit{QC: Is there a contemporary moderate voice that Christians support if they feel that Fatah has failed them?}

\textit{I: We have, you know, if we ask people ‘do you support Fatah or Hamas?’ you will find 20-30% for Fatah. You know these days you will find 40 for Hamas and 30 for Fatah, you know it used to be the opposite. And more than 50% would say they support neither of the parties.}

\textit{But the independent parties are not organised..You know we lost our faith, confidence, trust in political leaders in those two parties. So I hope that those people [independents] will have more voice, but they are not organised. And I saw it in 2006 in the last elections – those people were organised so many people said, I’m not going to vote Fatah, I’m going to vote against Fatah.}\textsuperscript{556}

-- Latin Priest, mid-50s, Beit Jala
\end{quote}

Similar trends were noted throughout the Second Intifada, when the popularity of Fatah decreases in exchange for the Hamas or parties on the left.

\textsuperscript{555} Municipality Employee, “Personal Interview.”
\textsuperscript{556} Latin Priest 1, “Personal Interview.”
It became clear in the interviews that, apart from those die-hard Fatah supporters whom either held political office or were invested in some way (materially or socially) in a Fatah-controlled government, the vast majority of respondents were acutely dissatisfied with Fatah and fearful of Hamas. Despite the fact that the left does not tend to perform well in national or local elections – owing largely to their inability to form coalitions – they are increasingly popular with university-aged Christians -- many of whom view Fatah as corrupt and old fashioned. This is reflected in the student elections where the left has seen an increase in support in the past two or three years, whilst Fatah has been on the decline. Numerous young respondents indicated their dissatisfaction with the Abbas government during the 2014 Gaza War as they felt that Fatah has shied away from directly supporting the resistance in Gaza. This, coupled with the fact that these young graduates will soon enter the stagnant job market will affect the outcome of future elections.

Student Elections:

Background:
Student politics in Palestine developed along with the establishment of Palestinian universities in the mid 1970s. During this early period, Palestinian students and teachers were heavily involved in both the articulation and organisation of the Palestinian nationalist movement, often acting as grassroots representatives of the larger, but exiled PLO constituent parties abroad. It is for this reason that student politics is held in high regard nationally. Student elections are also seen as a barometer for official national, and to a lesser degree, local elections. Apart from a two-year hiatus during the Second Intifada, student elections have taken place in Palestinian universities nearly every year since their establishment in the early 1980s. Therefore, student election results can be more easily tracked over time – with far more data points than either local or national elections.

However the relative autonomy of Palestinian universities and the ability of their student senates to freely express themselves was somewhat dampened, ironically, with the establishment of the PA. Due to changes in the funding schemes of most Palestinian universities, aid money was now to be funnelled through the PA and then towards the universities, who now became far more dependent on their relationship with the PA in order to secure funding. As Bruhn notes, ‘Palestinian universities found it increasingly difficult to operate in the shadows of a politically driven PA that limited their capacity to serve Palestinian communities as national institutions’. Added to this, the

Israeli Occupation has had a detrimental effect on student politics at Palestinian universities because arbitrary and frequent road closures, and closures of the universities themselves -- often as punishment for political activism -- has made certain universities more wary of political activism on campus.\textsuperscript{558}

Results:
Although respondents indicated that the leftist parties were more popular with the Palestinian Christian youth than with adults, the data indicates that Fatah continues to dominate student elections, despite the fact that, unlike municipal or national elections, the left are able to form strong coalitions. Fatah maintains a much stronger presence in Bethlehem than it does in the Ramallah area where the popularity of Hamas and Fatah are quite close. This is reflected both in the municipal and student elections.

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\textsuperscript{558} Ibid., 1130
Bethlehem University Student Elections

Number of Council Seats (out of 9 until 1998, then out of 31)

Year

- Fatah
- Hamas
- Left
- Other

Political Support (18-20)

PPP: 48%
PFLP: 0%
DFLP: 0%
Fateh: 12%
Hamas: 12%
Islamic Jihad: 4%
Independent Nationalist: 0%
Independent Islamist: 0%
None: 0%

559. Dean of Students, "Student Council Election Results - Birzeit," (Birzeit University, 2014).
560. Ibid.
Although the left is slightly more popular in the Bethlehem area, where there is also a higher concentration of Christian students, Fatah is significantly more popular in both Birzeit and Bethlehem Universities. There may continue to be strong grassroots support for the left in Christian districts, however both the student and local election results have shown that Christians tend to vote pragmatically. The strong showing of Fatah in student elections is also evidence of the fact that Christians may have begun to show stronger ideological support for Fatah as well, as the student elections have no tangible effect on the material well being of voters. However, the low voter turnout amongst Christians in student elections also signals the fact that the youth are increasingly less political.

Conclusion:
As this chapter has discussed, Palestinian Christians tend to be pragmatic voters whose political choices respond to the utility of a party, rather than ideological concerns. This has become particularly the case as the Palestinian political landscape has become increasingly fractured since the 2007 split between the Gaza and West Bank governments. Further, the inability of the PA to be able to consistently provide basic services like healthcare, security, education, and infrastructure has meant that community-based politics and pragmatic concerns have become more directly relevant in

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561 PCPSR Survey Data 2000-2010
people's daily lives. These concerns were reflected in the ways in which Christians made political choices, and the overall political trends within these communities.

The introduction presented a hierarchical paradigm for political choice within the Palestinian Christian communities, in which communal identity and utility were major factors:

1. **Choice is limited by communal identification – I am a Christian, I cannot vote for Hamas**

The salience of communal identity and perceived threat to the group had a strong impact on political choices. Although there was some low-level support for Hamas as a resistance group -- particularly during times of conflict -- Palestinian Christians generally rejected the Hamas platform as it contradicted their identity as Christians. This led voters to often make political choices defensively, i.e. voting for Fatah in opposition to Hamas, despite their ideological commitment to parties on the left.

2. **Assessment of the past performance of a party – Has this party delivered on its promises?**

3. **Current material utility of a party – How capable is this party of economic and social development?**

If a party does not contradict factor one (above), voters based their choices on the past performance of the party, and their current ability to provide basic services. This was seen in the 2012 municipal elections in Bethlehem, when the incumbent PFLP mayor lost the election to a Fatah candidate partly because of a halt in much needed foreign aid during the PFLP’s tenure. However, factor one can also override factors two and three in situations in which Hamas has a strong chance of winning an election. This was seen in the 2006 Legislative Elections in which large numbers of Christian voters voted for Fatah, despite the perceived corruption and ineffectiveness of the PA/Fatah.

4. **Ideological considerations – Does this party’s platform match my own political ideology?**

The final consideration, which falls lowest in the hierarchy, is that of the ideological stance of a particular party. As discussed in Chapters Three and Five, statelessness has made political choices potentially more consequential towards shaping the social reality for Palestinian Christians. Therefore, as long as a party’s platform did not endanger the position of the Christian community, voters tended to prioritise their ability to deliver services. This explains the disconnect between the perceived popularity of political parties like the PFLP, DFLP, and the PPP at the community level, and their poor electoral performance.
The shifting sands of political expression in Palestine and the increasing public role of religion have been reflected in a growing concern within the Christian community as to how they fit into society. This has been exacerbated by the popularity of Islamist parties regionally, the ongoing Israeli Occupation, and the existential threat faced by Christians in neighbouring states. However, the Christian leadership continues to strongly assert that it has good relations with the Muslim community. And indeed, respondents also indicated that this was the case. However, despite these assertions, the Palestinian Christian community continues to decrease in number. Many Israeli and American commentators have cited the so-called “Islamification” of Palestine as the primary cause. However, as the next chapter will show, issues of social identity, economics, and the Israeli Occupation have proved far more influential in the demographic decline of the Palestinian Christian communities.

562 Kårtveit, *Dilemmas of Attachment: Identity and Belonging among Palestinian Christians*.
As the previous chapters have discussed, the Palestinian national identity has shifted away from its secular-nationalist origins and has become fractured between several competing notions of the nation. As a result, there is a growing disconnect between a secular-nationalist vision of the Palestinian nation and one in which religion plays a much larger role. Palestinian Christians, who have traditionally supported secular-nationalist parties, are therefore increasingly concerned with how they fit into society. Those who are alienated by this changing social and political landscape may seek refuge in their communal identities, where they may find solace in their religion, community, and family. However, as discussed in Chapter Five, there are a number of potential issues within the communities themselves which may diminish the sense of psychological and material utility gained from communal membership. These issues include a lack of ecumenical relations, issues over the identity and vocation of the Patriarchates, and contextualisation of the Conflict in the Christian faith. Whilst the significant social welfare initiatives provided to the communities by the Church provide a short-term solution to some of the daily difficult of Palestinian life, the more pressing issues of identity and demographic decline remain largely unaddressed by the communal leadership. Apart from affecting the ways in which Palestinian Christians participate politically, these issues have contributed to the ongoing issue of demographic decline. The purpose of this chapter is to assess the current demographic realities of the Palestinian Christians, in light of the ongoing problem of emigration. It begins by addressing the problematic issue of "minority status", followed by a new calculation of the current demographic realities in the Palestinian Christian communities, and finally a qualitative and quantitative assessment of current emigration trends.

Palestinian Christians and "minority status":

There have only been three comprehensive demographic surveys of the Palestinian Christian community conducted over the past several decades – all three of which have been carried out by Palestinian church-related organisations (CROs). These studies based their findings on small to medium-scale surveys within Palestinian Christian communities and have relied heavily on the 1961

Jordanian and 1967 Israeli censuses, which were used to create projections about the size and shape of the current population. Whilst these studies have been invaluable in terms of their contribution to our understanding of social dynamics within this community, their results have failed to take into account subsequent censuses and other demographic data collected by the Palestinian Authority in 1997 and 2007. As a result, estimates of the Palestinian Christian population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in published literature have overestimated the Palestinian Christian population by anywhere from 10-50%.

The incontinences in the published CRO data are significant in and of themselves, not only because these population statistics are frequently cited as authoritative in both academic literature and the media, but also because they highlight the sensitivity of the Palestinian Christian community towards the issue of demographic decline. This is also reflective of the community's struggle to choose the way in which they are defined by the state and society, as well as the desire to be regarded as fully Palestinian, rather than being singled out as a minority group. It is therefore unsurprising that there is a great deal sensitivity to terms like "minority" – an issue common in identity narratives in Christian communities across the Middle East, where there is an ongoing struggle between sectarian notions of citizenship, in which rights and duties may differ according to religion or race, and secular notions of citizenship in which rights and duties are universal.⁵⁶⁵

Middle Eastern Christians have a complex history with the term "minority". During the late Ottoman period, non-Muslim ethno-religious communities were increasingly organized into broad confessional communities known as millets.⁵⁶⁶ Each millet was headed by its own 'highest ecclesiastical authority', which granted them some degree of autonomy under the patronage of the Sublime Porte.⁵⁶⁷ Whilst non-Muslims were largely barred from holding high political and social positions within the imperial bureaucracy because of their faith, they were not considered "minorities" by either the government or themselves.

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⁵⁶⁶ Shatzmiller, *Nationalism and Minority Identities in Islamic Societies / Edited by Maya Shatzmiller*, 3
⁵⁶⁷ Roussos, "Eastern Orthodox Christianity in the Middle East.", 107
Indeed, as White argues, the term "minority", as we understand it today, did not exist prior to the mid-19th century in either the European or Middle Eastern context. Rather, it only began to hold significance in the Middle East with the imposition of the French and British Mandates, which, for the first time, introduced the 'philosophical and geographical preconditions associated with modern states', which included the western conceptions of national identity, citizenship, etc. Whilst the Ottoman millet system differentiated rights and duties based upon a binary of Muslim or non-Muslim, this differentiation was not understood in terms of majority/minority. The authority of the Sultan came from God, not from the citizen; therefore religion and ethnicity were irrelevant to one's being a subject of the Empire. In this context, non-Muslims were not regarded as "minorities" in the sense of a demographic understanding of the word, but were rather from a subordinate religious confession.

With the imposition of a nation-state system in the inter-war period, newly created Middle Eastern states naturally began to define their national identities, and therefore what constituted a citizen. This transformed notions of legitimacy and authority, as the declining power of the "church" and reorganisation into a state system necessitated new ways for political actors to legitimize their authority in the eyes of an empowered public. Groups that held power, either because of numerical superiority, their patronage by the colonial authorities or wealth, unsurprisingly had the strongest influence on the definition of these national identities – thus becoming de facto "majorities", whilst groups that did not fit into these new categories became "minorities", often regardless of their physical size. In the Middle Eastern context, this process of "minoritisation" was aided, in large part, by the British and French Mandate authorities through religious demarcation in census taking, granting of reserved seats to demographic minority groups, and divide and rule tactics.

Early on, many Middle Eastern Christian communities embraced their categorisation as minorities by the British and French simply because it allowed them to share in power in places where their small number would have otherwise made this difficult. However, as the momentum of Arab

568. White, "The Emergence of Minorities in the Middle East: The Politics of Community in French Mandate Syria."
569. Ibid., 66
571. White, "The Emergence of Minorities in the Middle East: The Politics of Community in French Mandate Syria.", 66
572. Hurd, "Legitimacy."
573. White, "The Emergence of Minorities in the Middle East: The Politics of Community in French Mandate Syria.", 66
nationalism grew nearing the end of the French and British Mandates, a majority of Christians began to reject the term. Mitri suggests that this change of heart was partly due to the fact that Christians were gaining increased access to education through the numerous mission schools that had been established in the Levant from the mid-19th century.\textsuperscript{574} It was largely through these schools that Christians were exposed to secular nationalism and liberal ideas of governance and citizenship. As a result, the Christian influence on the Arab and Palestinian nationalist movements has been characterised by its calls for 'modern nationalist and universal ideologies', as well as an emphasis on the 'common ethno-cultural identity with Muslims as the basis for independence and modern nation building', rather than minority status.\textsuperscript{575} In the case of Palestine, the impact of Zionism in the region had a tremendous nationalizing and unifying effect on the Palestinian population. In the aftermath of the 1948 War with Israel, Christians and Muslims shared in their dispossession and suffering.\textsuperscript{576} Palestinian nationalism therefore reflected the collective struggle of both the Christians and Muslims of Palestine, with traditionally strong support for a secular-oriented national identity.

In the contemporary context, both the declining numbers of Palestinian Christians and the increased popularity of Hamas --and looming threat of Daesh (ISIL) -- have had an effect on how Palestinian Christians frame their demographic realities because many fear that the traditionally secular-oriented Palestinian nationalism -- one which is largely upheld by the PA\textsuperscript{577} -- could become increasingly defined in sectarian terms. Regardless of this growing tension, Palestinian Christians are extremely hesitant to publically frame their relationship with the Muslim community in a negative light.\textsuperscript{578} This is primarily because of the feeling that it may diminish Palestinian solidarity, but also because Christian leaders are well aware of the dangers of unnecessarily inflaming sectarian divisions -- divisions which, quite frankly, are not very apparent in Palestinian society. However, there is a clear concern that defining oneself as a minority or highlighting your community's demographic decline may exacerbate the feelings of isolation and communalism -- both from the perspective of the Christian communities themselves and from the Muslim community.

\textsuperscript{574} Tarek Mitri, "Christians in the Arab World: Minority Attitudes and Citizenship," \textit{The Ecumenical Review} 64, no. 1 (2012).
\textsuperscript{575} Ibid., 46
\textsuperscript{576} Bowman, "Constitutive Violence and Rhetorics of Identity."
\textsuperscript{577} The Palestinian Basic law defines citizenship as follows: 'Palestinians shall be equal before the law and the judiciary, without distinction based upon race, sex, colour, religion, political views or disability'. As of March 2014, the PA has also removed religion from the Palestinian ID cards -- a move largely supported by Palestinian Christians.
\textsuperscript{578} Kårtveit, \textit{Dilemmas of Attachment: Identity and Belonging among Palestinian Christians}. 
And indeed many respondents indicated that when the term "minority" is applied to their community, even when it is used as a means to ensure equal treatment at the government level – such as reserved parliamentary seats – it actually singles out the community in a way that they feel has the opposite effect. This has a tremendous impact on how the community views itself and its place within the state and society.

Assessing the demographic reality of the Palestinian Christians can therefore be seen as potentially threatening from the perspective of the Christian communities themselves, not only because it can potentially lead to what they view as unnecessary special treatment, but also because it can in some ways degrade the significant contribution that this community has made to Palestinian society. As the leader of the Bethlehem-based Diyar Consortium Mitri Raheb described it, 'Arab Christians are a minority, but only a quantitative, not a qualitative minority.' And indeed this highlights the struggle for Palestinian Christians to be regarded as possessing a uniquely Christian heritage and culture, while being fully committed to the Palestinian cause of self-determination. However, as the number of Palestinian Christians declines, the community has understandably grown more sensitive to engaging with the issue of emigration, and indeed the inconsistent data in self-assessments of the Palestinian Christian population seems to reflect the realities of this issue. This is the point of departure for the next section, which seeks to reconcile available CRO data with the most current PA census and health data in order to more accurately assess the current demographic realities of the Palestinian Christians.

**Assessing the contemporary demographic realities:**

If we were to approximate what the Palestinian Christian population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip would have been under normal growth, i.e. excluding emigration, we would have expected the 2007 population to be approximately 192,400 or approximately 400,000 in both Israel and Palestine. However, the numbers from the last available PA census in 2007 indicated that the Christian population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip was around 42,565, which indicates that tens of thousands have emigrated over the course of the 20th century. Indeed, the Sabeel Survey

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580. This figure comes from the 2006 Sabeel Survey and is their estimate of the Palestinian Christian growth rate (2.0%) before emigration is taken into account; i.e. the natural growth rate. Soudah and Sabella., 13.
estimates that roughly 240,000 Palestinian Christians or 60% of the total global population of Palestinian Christians currently reside outside of Israel and Palestine.\textsuperscript{582}

Estimates of population growth and decline in the Palestinian Christian community are somewhat difficult to ascertain because the data over the past 60 years has been both unreliable and infrequent. Apart from the total population numbers by governorate, there is no data tracking the crude birth or death rates or net migration rates specific to the Christian community. As such, it is not possible to use the standard method to calculate the crude growth rate. For this study, several methods were considered to resolve this issue, however, because this is a population that has undergone several significant and asymmetrical changes over the years, all linear methods were excluded. The exponential change method was deemed the most appropriate because 'it views change as occurring continuously rather than at discrete intervals'.\textsuperscript{583} Exponential change was calculated as follows:

\[ R = \frac{\ln \left( \frac{P_1}{P_0} \right)}{y} \]

\'Where \( r \) is the average annual exponential rate of change; \( \ln \) represents the natural logarithm; \( P_1 \) is the population in the launch year; \( P_0 \) is the population in the base year; and \( y \) is the number of years in the base period.\textsuperscript{584} In order to estimate current growth trends, data from the last available censuses in 1997 and 2007 is used to calculate the following:

\[ R = \frac{\ln \left( \frac{42,565}{40,055} \right)}{10} \]

\[ = 0.00607 \times 100 \]

\[ = 0.61\% \text{ growth rate in the period between 1997 and 2007} \]

We can then use this figure of exponential change to project a future population estimate as follows:

\[ P_t = P_1 e^{rz} \]

\'Where \( P_t \) is the population in the post-censal year, \( e \) is the base of the system of natural logarithms (approximately 2.71828), and \( z \) is the number of years in the post-censal period.\textsuperscript{585}

\textsuperscript{582} Soudah and Sabella, "The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel ", 48
\textsuperscript{584} Ibid., 119
\textsuperscript{585} Ibid., 119
\[ P_{2014} = [42,565 \times (e^{0.00607 \times 7})] \]

\[ P_{2014} = \text{a population of approximately 44,415 in 2014}^{586} \]

Applying this same method to the first and last major data points, the 1945/46 Anglo-American Survey and the 2007 PA census, we are able to estimate a 62 year growth rate of -0.5%. Meaning that the total growth in population from 1945 (57,950) to 2007 (42,565) was slightly negative, but quite close to zero. This indicates that a large number of Palestinian Christians have emigrated in the period between 1945 and 2007 and also that rate of natural increase of the Palestinian Christians was insufficient to counter the outflow of emigrants.

In order to determine current growth and decline trends, data from the periods around the 1948 and 1967 Wars was excluded because the large outflow of emigrants in these periods is not representative of the contemporary trends. However, data from these periods is very much relevant to the bigger picture of Palestinian Christian emigration in the 20th century and it is essential to note the significant decline in both periods: 1945-1961 (-1.18%) and 1961-1967 (-2.01%).^{587} For the purpose of this study, the 1997 and 2007 PA censuses were used to estimate a current growth rate of approximately 0.61%.^{588} For comparison, the growth rate of the Palestinian nation as a whole in the same time period was around 2.9%.^{589} We can see this drastic difference between the growth of the Palestinian population as a whole in Figure 1 (total population)^{590} and the Palestinian Christian communities in Figure 2 (Christian population), which are broken down by governorate.^{591} Using the estimated 0.61% growth rate, we can extrapolate that the population in 2014 was approximately 44,415, before taking into account emigration between 2007 and 2014.

The Palestinian Authority completed its first survey on migration in 2010. This survey offers one of the most comprehensive pictures of emigration for the Palestinian population within the past several decades. However, migration figures cannot be estimated with 100% accuracy in Palestine, and most developing countries, as both immigration and emigration records are not normally reported. Therefore, far from offering us a complete picture of emigration within the Palestinian

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586. Before adjustment for emigration  
587. Author's Calculations  
588. 1997 and 2007 censuses  
589. Calculated using the following: \( \frac{(\log (P_f / P_0))}{t} \times 100 \)  
590. All figures and tables are located in the appendix beginning on page 201  
591. Gaza is excluded from figures 1 and 2 because there are significant gaps in the data for Gaza over this 60 year period.
Christian community, this survey can give us a better idea of the general trends across the population as a whole. Of the thousands who have emigrated between 2000-2010, the PA migration report suggests that only 5.3% were Christian. That being said, it is difficult to fully ascertain the Christian-specific migration trends merely using this 5.3% figure cited in the PA report. A more scientific approach is possible using the survival rate method of calculating net migration rates. This method is particularly suitable where the vital statistics method is not possible – due either to poor reporting or, in this case, the fact that the PA does not track Christian-specific birth and death rates. The survival rate method uses survival rates calculated from census life tables in order to estimate the 'expected population' in each five-year age group at the end of each five or ten year period. This information can then be applied to the five-year census age groups over the period between censuses to adjust migration estimates against expected mortality rates in these periods.

Again because of poor reporting, survival rates are not available for Palestinians Christians specifically. However, age-specific death rates were available for the population as a whole. Life tables were then created using the standard method for life table calculation. Due to the non-cooperation of the Fatah-led West Bank and Hamas-led Gaza Strip governments in this period, these calculations apply to the West Bank only (see tables 2 and 3). Using these life tables and the age-specific population rates given for the Christian communities in the 1997 and 2007 censuses, we can then estimate both survival and emigration rates. The survival rate method can be represented as follows:

\[
\text{Net Migration} = nP_{x+y,l} - (x) (nP_{x,b})
\]

Where \(nP_{x,b}\) is the population age \(x\) to \(x + n\) in year \(b\), \(nP_{x+y,l}\) is the population age \(x + y\) to \(x + n + y\) in some later year \(l\), \(y\) is the number of years between \(b\) and \(l\), and \(S_{yn}\) is the \(y\)-year survival rate for age group \(x\) to \(x + n\). Net migration rates are estimated for each age group in tables 4 and 5. With this information we can estimate that roughly 2,384 West Bank Christians emigrated in the period between 1997 and 2007.

593. Swanson and Tayman, Subnational Population Estimates., 121-2
594. Ibid., 54
596. Swanson and Tayman, Subnational Population Estimates., 122
As mentioned above, estimates in the 2006 Sabeel Survey indicated that approximately 4.5% of the sample population were processing emigration papers.\textsuperscript{597} If the emigration trends from the previous decade continue we should expect at least an additional 1,700 emigrants in the period between 2007 and 2014. Taking all of these factors into consideration, it is estimated that the current Palestinian Christian population in the West Bank and Gaza strip is approximately 43,000 persons.\textsuperscript{598} The population is broken down by year and governorate in \textit{table 6}.

Apart from the differences in growth rates between Palestinian Christians and the population as a whole, there are also notable differences between the age make up of the Christian population \textit{vis-à-vis} the Muslim population, which can be seen in \textit{figures 3, 4, 5, and 6}. Whilst the population pyramid for the Muslim community reflects a fairly standard shape for developing nations – with high birth and death rates -- the Christian population has a relatively longer life expectancy and much lower birth rates, with emigration also being a major factor. This has also changed significantly from the 1997 census to 2007. The 2007 Christian population pyramid has a narrower base than the 1997 pyramid, suggesting that birth rates have dropped in this 10-year period. Additionally, the effects of emigration have been particularly profound over the past decade and have contributed to a substantial decline in population as seen in the concave portions of the pyramids above.

Whilst the Christian population pyramids are closer to that of a developed nation, with lower birth and death rates and more chimney than cone shape, they represent a population in transition from developing to developed, which is suggestive of several things. Firstly, the Christian community is waiting longer to have children than their Muslim peers and having fewer children once they do. Secondly, emigration rates are substantial. Finally, the relative wealth of the Christian community has meant greater access to healthcare and healthier lifestyles, which means that Christians tend to live longer than their Muslim peers. The Christian population pyramids also confirm periods of increased emigration – becoming concave in the 2007 pyramid around the ages of 50-60 (1967 War) 25-35 (First Intifada) and 0-10 (Second Intifada). These periods of growth and decline are also reflected in the growth rate table and associated infographic in \textit{table 7} and \textit{figure 7} and are broken down by governorate.

\textsuperscript{597}Soudah and Sabella, "The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel ", 32
\textsuperscript{598}This is based on a 0.61\% growth rate and the above emigration calculations.
When growth and decline are reflected as percentages of the total population, we can gain perspective as to the size of the Christian community relative to the total community over time. These changes in population percentage are reflected in table 8 and indicate that the Palestinian Christian population is now less than 1% of the total Palestinian population and roughly 10% in its largest concentration in the Bethlehem governorate. There are also significant communities in Ramallah (3.28%) and Jerusalem (2.92%), however due to emigration and low birth rates, the percentage of Christians relative to the total population has consistently declined in every governorate since the 1948 War.

*Why do Christians emigrate?*

Emigration has been an issue for the Palestinian Christian community going back at least until the late Ottoman period. Whilst Christians had been a majority across the Levant until the arrival of Islam in the 7th and 8th centuries – and indeed at least a century after the Islamic invasions – the decline of their political hegemony and population, and that of their imperial patrons had made them more susceptible to political upheaval and instability. But despite this instability and periods of unrest, throughout the period of Islamic rule, Middle Eastern Christians fared fairly well and prospered as a largely urban, merchant, middle class. Throughout this period, Middle Eastern Christians developed or sustained trade relationships with the West and were particularly adept at the languages of Mediterranean trade. These relationships would continue to benefit the Middle Eastern Christians throughout the various Islamic Caliphates, both materially and socially, and were put to their most robust use during the Ottoman period when large numbers of Greek Orthodox *phanariots* were placed in positions of prominence as diplomats and envoys to the West.599

As discussed in Chapter Four, as the Ottoman Empire's influence and interest turned increasingly westward in the 19th century, so too would Western interests turn East – first through trade and then through the church. Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, numerous church-related educational institutions were founded across the Levant by Western missionaries and were attended *en masse* by Christians.600 Whilst Christians had already established themselves through trade, they now had greater access to education relative to their Muslim peers, which crucially gave them a leg-

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599. Roussos, "How Greek, How Palestinian? The Patriarchate of Jerusalem in the Mid-War Years."
600. Mitri, "Christians in the Arab World: Minority Attitudes and Citizenship."
   Tsimhoni, "The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem During the Formative Years of the British Mandate in Palestine."
up towards attaining white-collar or skilled labour employment. As Sabella notes, "The advantages that the Palestinian Christians gained from earlier access to education enabled them to develop a middle-class socio-economic and occupational profile – and the preferences and limitations associated with it – well before other Palestinians."

It is no coincidence that this period of increased education and wealth corresponded to the first major waves of Palestinian Christian emigration – particularly as the Ottoman Empire entered into numerous conflicts throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. Christians emigrated not only to seek their fortunes abroad, but also to escape conscription into the Ottoman military when the Tanzimat reforms allowed for non-Muslim participation in the military. It is also clear from the Palestinian and Arab nationalist literature of the period – a great deal of which was written by Christians – that they were increasingly inspired by liberal Western ideas and nationalisms and began to question the ideology and motives of the Ottomans, as well as their place within the Ottoman political and social hierarchy. This, coupled with the fact that Middle Eastern Christians tended to be educated, wealthy and skilled in Western languages, allowed thousands to emigrate with relative ease during this period. Consequently, in the period prior to the First World War, population growth in the Palestinian Christian community dropped from approximately 2% to around 0.85%.

The history of this early period of emigration was explained by one respondent as follows:

_The emigration started at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. The reasons were mainly economic – but also coming from the fact of being a minority. Our people were afraid to serve in the Ottoman army because they knew they would die in the Balkan Wars or elsewhere because the Ottoman Empire was always in situation of war – against Russia, against Greece, other countries. So our young people didn’t want to go to the army, they preferred to leave – so they left._

--- Bishop William Shomali, Auxillary Bishop to the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem

A majority of the Palestinian emigrants who left in this period moved to the Americas, establishing themselves as successful merchants and craftspeople. However, they never severed contact with their extended families in Palestine and often moved back to Palestine after gaining wealth abroad.

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602. Ibid., 3

603. Nationalist literature with the greatest reach was published in the newspapers _al-Karmil_ (founded by Najib Nassar) and Filastin (founded by 'Isa al-'Isa). For a more in depth look at nationalist literature of the period see Robson, _Colonialism and Christianity in Mandate Palestine_; Khalidi, _Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness_.

604. Author's own calculations

605. Latin Bishop, "Personal Interview."
The relationship with Central and South America has become especially evident in recent years – as the Palestinians have found high-level political support amongst Latin American countries, which was particularly strong during and after the 2014 Gaza War.606

The trend of emigration continued and spiked during and after the First World War. From the period between 1914 and 1922, population growth dropped to 0.11%, rebounding significantly during the Mandate period (1920-1948), with an average growth of around 2.7%.607 Although Palestinian Christians fared well and significantly increased their numbers under the British Mandate, emigration would again experience a surge during and after the 1948 and 1967 Wars. And indeed this is reflected in the growth rates for the periods between 1945 and 1961 (-1.18%) and 1961-1967 (-2.01%).608 In fact, since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, the Palestinian Christian population would never again experience the levels of growth seen prior to and during the Mandate period.

Stories of forced migration during the 1948 and 1967 Wars are also common to the narrative of emigration:

70% of the Christian population were kicked out in 1948 by the Israeli Occupation. 23,000 Christians were kicked out from West Jerusalem. Many moved abroad to the US and South America, and some moved here as refugees. The Christians in 1948 were 22% of the population, now we are less than 1.5%.

-- NGO Leader, late 50s, Bethlehem

Although a significant portion of those Palestinian Christians currently living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are native to the historically Christian areas of Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Jenin etc., a substantial number of Christians living in cities that now fall within the boundaries of Israel fled the violence of the 1948 and 1967 Wars towards the West Bank, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and indeed further abroad to North and South America. Refugee stories are common within the Palestinian Christian narrative. As one respondent relayed:

You know when you ask Palestinians where they're from it's complicated actually. With Christians and Muslims alike. Maybe Christians in Bethlehem actually have more of a 'yes I am from Bethlehem' story than the Muslims. But my family are part of the population that came as refugees into Bethlehem. The

607. Author's own calculation based on data from: Soudah and Sabella., 41.
608. Author's calculations based on the 1945 Anglo American Survey and 1961 Census and the 1961 Jordanian census and 1967 Israeli Census. Using the mean annualised growth rate: $P_t = P_0 \cdot e^{rt}$
original family is from Jaffa. My grandfather moved to Jerusalem and in 1948 – the family became refugees and came to Bethlehem. My grandfather was killed in the War. So my grandmother and seven children moved to Bethlehem. So we are refugees from my father’s side.  

-- NGO Leader, mid 30s, Bethlehem

Similar surges in emigration are seen during all times of conflict in the region. The most recent surge has been associated with the rise of Daesh (ISIL) and the 2014 Gaza War, but is in many ways a continuation of the trends that began with the Second Intifada in the early 2000s in that it is a response to both the growing fears about the potential threat of Islamisation in the region and the ongoing violence of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.

However, interview and survey data conducted for this study indicated that the stagnant economy was the biggest factor contributing to emigration, with the Israeli Occupation as a close second – although the two are obviously intertwined. (See figure 8) The economic factor however is more complex than merely a lack of jobs – something that both Muslims and Christians share in equally. Rather, many respondents indicated that, because their community tends to be middle class, they have grown accustomed to a certain lifestyle – one that is impossible to sustain under the Occupation economy. As one respondent suggested:

They [Christians] are wealthier, and they tend to have higher standards of living. The investment in certain aspects – like education for example is higher. So when you look at the Christian population and they have slight economic challenges, it affects them much greater than the Muslim population that is able to adapt to these challenges. While many Christians just because of habit and culture and way of life it’s difficult for them...that’s the reason why people emigrate out.

-- Palestinian MP, late 60s, Jerusalem

This factor was also echoed by Sabella, who suggested that Christian’s social standing as well-educated, middle class citizens 'made them increasingly sensitive to the instability and uncertainty that accompanied Israeli military rule'. But this movement towards a middle class existence has also had trickle down effects on other aspects of Christian demography. Because of the pressure for young men and women to get white-collar jobs, Christians will tend to place more emphasis on attaining university and professional degrees, often foregoing marriage until later in life than Muslims. Indeed, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics indicated that the average marriage age

609. CRO Employee 3, "Personal Interview."
610. Ibid.
611. Sabella, "Comparing Palestinian Christians on Society and Politics: Context and Religion in Israel and Palestine."
for Christian men is 28 years old, versus 19-23 years old for Muslims.  
As one respondent indicated, it is very difficult for him to get married because he has spent a long time getting a good education and job, rather than going straight into work after high school. He is now unmarried at 25 and will need several years to save up the roughly 70,000 NIS needed for a wedding and a house.  
The relatively late marriage age also impacts the overall fertility rate of Christian women; 2.59 compared to an average of 5.5-6.3 for Muslim women because Christian women are waiting until later in life to have children.  
When taken together, these factors contribute to the small natural growth of the community, but also add to the reasons why a Palestinian Christian might choose to emigrate in search of greater economic opportunities and freedom.

The second major reason for emigration is the Israeli Occupation and overall political instability in the region, which the majority of respondents tied to social, economic, and a variety of other problems. In fact nearly all of those who listed the Occupation as the main reason for emigration also listed the economy as the second biggest factor. This relationship is illustrated quite clearly in the following statement from a respondent: "The main reason [for emigration] is the Occupation. Because of the occupation we have unemployment, lack of jobs and the economic situation very bad – there are many social problems because of it, etc. The main problem is that."  
This sentiment was echoed by a number of respondents who indicated that the Occupation was responsible for social strife on a number of levels: unemployment, communal violence, political violence, and domestic violence. – all factors leading to emigration.

Several respondents indicated that their political and religious leadership had fallen silent on social issues, choosing rather to focus on political issues, which many felt created a gap in legitimacy that could lead to youth feeling less responsible towards maintaining their presence in the Palestine. As one respondent argued:

I: Violence against children and women – things like that, these are not part of our religious discourses.

QC: Simply because it's not seen as being as important as political issues?

612. Soudah and Sabella, "The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel.", 14
613. Orthodox Community Member, "Personal Interview."
614. Soudah and Sabella, "The Sabeel Survey on Palestinian Christians in the West Bank and Israel.", 14
615. CRO Employee 1, "Personal Interview."
I: It is less visible. I mean the most visible things are – you see soldiers, tanks, but at the same time there is a lot of violence against women and children and other social problems in Gaza and the West Bank. And it's not visible; we are not challenging it. This is a part of the challenges we have to consider as local leaders.16

-- Academic, mid-40s, Bethlehem

This suggests that the common discourse from the leadership is most decidedly anti-Occupation, but lacking in the areas of self-criticism or self-examination. And whilst the anti-Occupation discourse is seen as necessary or even the cultural norm, many respondents indicated that emigration was partly caused by these ongoing social issues stemming from the pressures of life under Occupation, which they felt were not adequately dealt with at the leadership level. In other words, people are leaving because of the difficulties of their daily reality – whether it is caused by a soldier at a checkpoint or violence at home. As one respondent said: 'That is why you have people emigrating to all of the world. Just to find money and to be free and to live life as they should. Not with walls surrounding you and every day people coming inside Bethlehem shooting and taking people. This is what the people are mad about or tired of -- this situation. So that is why people are emigrating to other countries.'17

A related third factor mentioned by respondents is the situation of modern Christian identity in the holy land. As the population diminishes, many feel that it is becoming increasingly difficult to live and identify as a Christian in the Middle East – both because of the fear of persecution and because many of the youth are in some ways forgetting or not learning about their own history or identity. Many older respondents indicated that the youth were overly self-interested: in education, money, jobs, etc. and as a result they were more easily enticed to emigrate. As one respondent suggested:

People’s identity is becoming smaller nowadays and this is so much influenced by the concept of individualism and by globalisation – by globalised ideas and values that are being spread all over. Many of our people – young people -- now are starting to think individually about life and about everything. Sometimes they feel connected for a national or social cause or public issues, but sometimes they feel that they are only themselves, they are individuals they have this ego centric value or – and this makes many of them as a result of not finding the solution for their difficulties, finding their own way – sometimes religion is the inspiring issue for them so they go for only the church – also sometimes they get disconnected from the community.18

-- CRO Leader, mid 50s, Beit Sahour

616. Palestinian Academic, "Personal Interview."
617. Rum Orthodox Priest, "Personal Interview."
618. CRO Employee 2, "Personal Interview."
Some respondents indicated that it was becoming difficult to identify as a Christian in the Middle East, but also noted the culpability of their communities in not reaching out to the Muslim community in both an ecumenical and social sense. They suggested that some in the community had chosen to emigrate rather than reach out.

*My problem with that is that we as Palestinian Christians did nothing to help them [Muslims] to understand who we are. For example, three years ago in Bethlehem, we had a Christian conference and during my presentation there were three bishops – Catholic and Orthodox. I told them, "you need now to go to Gaza and start talking with Hamas – with their leaders, they need to see you. They need to see that there are Christians who are worried about their brothers and sisters in Gaza. You need to show solidarity." But they need to know us. So go there – don't wait for them. They will never ask you to come there and to chat with you – we need to take the initiative. We did almost nothing.*

-- CRO leader, mid 40s, Beit Sahour

However, regarding Christian and Muslim relations, very few respondents indicated that emigration was caused by tension between the two communities. Rather they were concerned with the future of Christians in the Middle East more generally. This theme was also explored in the qualitative interviews and a majority of respondents were quick to distinguish between moderate Muslims, including to a limited extent, Hamas, with whom they had good relations, and violent political Islamist groups like *Daesh*, whose ideology they feared was spreading to Palestine. In fact, during fieldwork at the height of the 2014 Gaza War, a number of respondents indicated that they supported Hamas as a legitimate resistance group, whilst being highly critical of what, in their view, was an ineffective and impotent response from Fatah. This was particularly true of younger respondents (under 30 years of age), who had perhaps less of a connection to the PLO as an active resistance group than those who had lived through the First Intifada and earlier. However, respondents remained critical of the overall social and political ideology of Hamas. But, in general, respondents felt that the small amount of tension that does exist between Christian and Muslim Palestinians was simply a matter of miscommunication between the two communities.

*Yes we [Palestinians] are well-educated people in general – but Muslims they don’t know much about us [Christians]. They know just very, very few things about Christians and our history, our culture, our faith. So we need to engage in cultural awareness because there is lack of awareness in Muslim communities – in some of the Muslim communities – the more poor communities – towards Christians.*

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619. CRO Employee 1, "Personal Interview."
620. Ibid.
By most accounts it would seem that emigration trends have continued to increase over the past few years. Whilst the number of émigrés per year has not reached the levels of either 1948 or 1967, the steady outflow of Palestinian Christian emigrants, coupled with the relatively low birth rates, and late marriage age have contributed to a consistent decline in numbers since 1948. Although it was not explicitly mentioned in the survey data, dissatisfaction with the shape and structure of the PA itself is also seen as a contributing factor towards emigration. These include notions of citizenship, equality, levels of political participation and party politics. A majority of respondents indicated that they did not feel that all Palestinians were equal under the law as it currently functions, however stopped short of describing themselves as second-class citizens. It is unsurprising then that close to 50% of respondents from 2000-2010 considered equal rights to be the most important issue for their community in a future Palestinian state.621

This data is significant not only because it helps to explain why a Palestinian Christian might choose to emigrate, but also because it highlights one significant grey area in the wider discussion of Christians in the Middle East, namely the role of the non-Muslim minority in Middle Eastern states. As post-revolution states across the Levant and North Africa struggle to reinvent or redefine the ways in which they govern and organise their societies, Middle Eastern Christians have also sought redefinition as small, but integral parts of these states. The Palestinian Authority, in contrast to the transition governments in many neighbouring states, has sought an inclusive path for its Christian minority -- from reserving seats in local governing councils and the Legislative Council, to the tradition of the President of the PA attending the Christmas Mass in Bethlehem. However at the societal level there continue to be numerous challenges to the overall social make-up of Palestinian society -- revolving particularly around issues of identity.

Institutional response to emigration:
The church leadership are aware of the detrimental effects of demographic decline on the cultural make up on the Holy Land. As such, they have attempted to address primarily the economic concerns of their communities by providing social welfare initiatives, education, health care, and affordable housing for newly married couples. As Latin Bishop William Shomali suggested,

> What do we do to stem emigration? The best medicine is to give antibiotic to the virus. So if the issue is a bad economy because of insecurity and lack of peace, peace would be the medicine – the solution. If there

621. Ibid.
was peace here the situation would improve, the Christians would remain – willingly. So lack of peace is one of the problems and peace would be the solution. But also, even if peace is not there we should help our people in giving them faith that their presence here is important – is crucial – it’s our vocation from the lord – it’s a blessing, it’s a privilege. So we need spiritual motivation because people can be rich and leave. So we cannot say it’s only an economic problem or political problem – difficulties are, but people can have a spiritual strength to say, ok it’s difficult, but I remain.\textsuperscript{622}

However, the broader issues of identity and integrating faith and activism remain elusive for church institutions. In 2013 the National Coalition of Christian Organisations in Palestine (NCCOP) issued a statement in which it reiterated the church’s role in indoctrinating Palestinian youth, not just in their faith, but in their identity as Christian Palestinians, "The Church sees her task as one of educating our young people to accept themselves as they are, giving them a balanced human, national and Christian education and an awareness of their history, their rootedness in the land and a sense of identity."\textsuperscript{623} The concept of "rootedness in the land" was reiterated continuously in field interviews, in which the Christian presence in the Holy Land was described variously as; "our Christian vocation"; "our cross to bear"; and "a unique privilege". In this way, respondents connected their presence in the land – including their difficult daily realities – to Christian notions of suffering and resilience. However, as Chapter Five discussed, respondents continue to feel a disconnect between their faith and their difficult daily realities. Consequently, the trend of emigration continues to present a challenge to religious leadership and institutions.

**Conclusion:**

As discussed throughout this study, the material and psychological utility gained from social identities are extremely consequential to individual's willingness to participate in groups. This chapter has shown how these issues of social identity impact upon the demographic realities of the Palestinian Christians, who now constituted less than one percent of the total Palestinian population. However, the demographic decline of the Palestinian Christian community is not a new phenomenon. But it has, since the earliest periods of emigration in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, revolved primarily along issues of economic underdevelopment and identity. This has also corresponded to the development of this community into an increasingly well-educated, wealthy, and socially mobile population, resulting in relatively low birth rates and population aging as the median age of

\textsuperscript{622} Latin Bishop, "Personal Interview."

Palestinian Christians continues to increase. In the contemporary context, efforts by the church leadership to stem emigration through investment in social welfare programmes have had limited success, whilst the larger issues of the ongoing Israeli Occupation, the economy, and identity continue to be insurmountable for many Palestinian Christians.

Christian-Muslim relations are also a factor in emigration, but a considerably muted one in that it is not typically expressed in terms of “persecution” or systematic discrimination. Rather, it revolves around differing opinions about the structural nature of the state itself. As the hegemony secular-nationalism becomes increasingly threatened by alternative political ideologies like Islamism, Palestinian Christians are understandably cautious about their position in society. However, despite the ongoing issue of demographic decline, many in the community continue to reject the term minority, as well as the special political concessions granted to their community as such. As Chapter Five discussed, this reflects the community’s positions on citizenship and equal rights, but may also lead the community leadership to underestimate the seriousness of the problem of emigration. Consequently, CRO and NGO studies, as well as community leadership, have often presented an overly optimistic picture of Palestinian Christian demography in which there is little room for self-reflection about many of the issues that the community faces. Therefore, ongoing issues of identity and the contextualisation of faith remain significant barriers.
Chapter Eight – Concluding remarks:

How do we understand ourselves, what is the reality of ethnic differences that have survived up until today in some countries? A Christian belongs to his people, to his country and to his society, just as every human being in each one’s country and society. We constitute a small number, but we are not minorities in the sense of being a foreign element in our countries. And we say: we are not numbers, neither are we proportions, we are human beings one hundred per cent. Each one is a creature of God, just like everyone else in the country, Muslim, Jew, Druze or Christian. We belong to our people, whatever the behaviour of our people might be, welcoming or persecuting as it happens to be now in Syria and Iraq. Moreover, as Christians, we are sent to our people: we are bearers of a mission, we have a message to our people, to adhere to its identity, and to contribute to the building up and defence of our society, in all circumstances, easy or difficult, as it is at present. Jesus told us: you are the salt, the light in your societies. That means we have to bring to our public life a taste of living, our Christian values and ways.  

-- Patriarch Emeritus, H.B. Michel Sabbah

This study has found that the complex dynamics of communal and political identity have a profound effect on the ways in which Palestinian Christians participate politically. It was argued that the situation of statelessness has created several competing notions of the nation, which are then defined, transmitted, and enforced by actors in competition with the state. The Palestinian Authority, as the nominal state, has attempted to foster a sense of civic universalism, but its unpopularity and ineffectiveness have not allowed for this narrative of the nation to dominate the cultural imagination. As a result, the actors with the most popular support have been able to effectively transform societal norms and nationalism to suit their own ideological perspectives. The ongoing issues of emigration, increased sense of communalism, and low levels of political interest and participation can therefore be explained, in part, by the alienation that some Palestinian Christians feel from this evolving and fractured national identity. Individuals are less willing to endure the difficult daily realities of life under Occupation if they do not derive some material or psychological utility from the social identity of the nation or find refuge in their communities. This has a number of important implications for the ways in which Palestinian Christians participate politically and can shed light on broader issues of political and social participation for minorities in the Middle East, as well as highlighting the need for on-the-ground qualitative research in these areas. The following sections present a thematic summary of the main findings of this study, highlighting potential areas for future research and discuss the limitations of "identity" as a theoretical framework.

1. The political influence of the church:

Although the church continues to play a vital role in the daily life and socialisation of Palestinian Christians, the growing disconnect between church leadership and the social reality had led to an overall decline in the influence of the church in the political field. This is due to a number of factors. The first factor is the church's views on ecumenical relations and intermarriage. Numerous respondents indicated that the growing openness to ecumenical relations amongst the lay community was a result of the increasingly common practice of intermarriage between different Christian denominations in Palestine. As discussed in Chapter Two, this has meant that the "in-group" expands beyond the confessional community and extends to other Christian denominations. Therefore, if the church leadership is unwilling to integrate these practices and values into their liturgical and pastoral practices, individuals are less likely to have a positive relationship with the confessional community, thereby decreasing the relative influence of the church leadership.

A second factor in the declining influence of church leadership in the political field has been the ongoing issues of the identity and vocation of the churches themselves. Within the Rum Orthodox community in particular, the identity of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem continues to be a highly contentious issue. As discussed in Chapter Four, although the history, ancient liturgy, and traditions of the Orthodox Church were seen as central to the identity of Rum Orthodox respondents, the material and psychological utility of the Orthodox identity was impaired by the ethnic Greek near-monopoly of the church hierarchy. Therefore, although Arab parish priests were highly regarded amongst community members and influential in certain social contexts, the influence of the higher clergy on social and political action was negligible. The situation in the Latin community was slightly different, with the Patriarchate having greater influence on the social lives of the lay community and providing considerable social welfare to the Palestinian people as a whole. However, when discussing how respondents made political choices and approached activism there was not a drastic difference between the Latin and Orthodox communities. This suggests that the lack of contextualisation of the faith was a more influential factor in determining the political role of the church leadership.

Contextualisation was particularly relevant in terms of determining whether or not respondents would turn to their church leadership for advice on social and political issues -- but was also a factor contributing to the psychological utility of confessional identity; that is: *Who can I turn to for advice*
when facing the choice to participate politically? Choose a political party? Attend a rally or protest? Emigrate? And also, how can I participate as both a Christian and a Palestinian? The rigidity of Catholic and Orthodox liturgies may also explain the conversion of a number of Palestinian Christians to various forms of Protestantism over the past several decades. Whilst these Protestant communities remain small in number, Palestinian Protestant priests and activists have been some of the most outspoken Christian activists in Palestine in recent decades, which they attribute partly to the greater amount of flexibility in the liturgy of Protestantism. They are therefore able to respond to the social and political context more fluidly than their Orthodox and Catholic peers. This contrasts the relative lack of contextualisation of social and political issues in the Orthodox and Latin liturgies, which contributed to feelings of isolation, despair and hopelessness in the lay community, as individuals are increasingly uncertain of how to respond to changing societal norms as both Palestinians and Christians. These three factors contributed to the limited role that the church leadership plays in influencing or inducing political participation and activism in the lay community.

2. Political Participation

Within the context of statelessness, as discussed in Chapter Six, a political choice is extremely consequential to the future nature and structure of a state because political actors have competing ideas about what the future state should look like: secular-nationalism, Islamism, quasi-secularism, etc. As Palestinian political parties have evolved over time, they have responded to the changing cultural context, in which Islamism had presented a major challenge to the secular-nationalist paradigm. For the Palestinian Christian communities, political choices and political participation were largely pragmatic, responding to the needs of the community rather than ideological concerns. Chapter Six proposed the following hierarchy for political choice, which responds both to the limitations placed on members of particular social groups, and the tendency for Christians to be pragmatic and defensive voters:

1. Choice is limited by communal identification – I am a Christian, I cannot vote for Hamas
2. Assessment of the past performance of a party – Has this party delivered on its promises?
3. Current material utility of a party – How capable is this party of economic and social development?
4. Ideological considerations – Does this party’s platform match my own political ideology?
This hierarchy explains the fact that there is very low long-term support for political parties (figure 9 appendix), but rather that voters continuously assess the effectiveness of a party based upon the context. What it is unable to explain, however, is the grassroots support shown for parties on the left and, far less frequently, Hamas and Islamic Jihad. As the hierarchy suggests, within the context of the voting booth, pragmatic considerations take priority over ideology and other factors. Therefore, even if an individual is a long-term member of the PFLP, attends their rallies, and supports their political ideology, it would be unlikely that he/she would vote for them unless they were able to significantly improve upon their ability to deliver economic development. Additionally, the notion of *samud* has a powerful effect on party support -- particularly in times of crisis. As Chapter Two discussed, when threat primes become activated during times of crisis, those groups who can show the most effective resistance against Israel gain popular support -- regardless of the fact that their ideology may be incompatible with other aspects of an individual's social identity. Whilst this does not translate into a significant amount of votes, it does show that there are situations in which pragmatism is subdued in exchange for national solidarity. However, in the absence of perpetual conflict, this may have an effect on the ways in which nationalism is imagined and performed.

Views on the proto-state and the perceived position of Christians within society were largely shaped by how individuals regarded citizenship and equality. Palestinian Christians were against the electoral quota system, in which Christians were guaranteed a number of parliamentary and local council seats. From their perspective, any efforts made by the state to single them out as minorities was detrimental to their overall situation in Palestine, regardless of the fact that these measures provided them with political power in situations where it would have been unlikely to have occurred naturally. This translated into views on citizenship, in which it was frequently reiterated that they simply want the same citizenship rights and duties as all other Palestinians. This is also reflective of the overwhelming tendency to support a secular-nationalist view of the state in which religion is not a factor in the electoral system. This has important implications for other Middle Eastern minority groups who may feel that quotas in their countries continue to reflect the hegemony of Islam rather than civic universalism. It may also be an important consideration for future state building efforts in Syria and Iraq, where attempts at federalism and proportional representation have largely failed to instil a unified sense of the nation amongst heterogeneous populations.
3. For church or nation?

Borrowing the above question from Lybarger, this section discusses the question of how Palestinian Christians reconcile their political and communal identities. As Chapter Five discussed, Lybarger proposes several typologies of identity in regards to this relationship: secular-nationalist, religion-communal, and apolitical piety. Whilst these typologies were most certainly identified in the fieldwork, this study has argued that the relationship between communal and political identity is far too complex and varied to synthesise into typologies. Rather, as discussed throughout this study, the fluidity of these notions necessitates a flexible approach.

What can be identified are trends within the social context that have shaped the relationship between these two aspects of social identity. The shift away from secular nationalism, for example, has created a crisis of identity for the Palestinian Christian community, who are increasingly concerned with how they fit into Palestinian society. For those who feel alienated by the growing role of Islam in the public discourse, they may retreat to their communal identities – leading to a decline in overall national solidarity. If and when Palestinian Christians do retreat to their confessional communities, if they do not receive sufficient guidance in terms of how their faith can address ongoing social and political issues, then they have little incentive to remain in the country. Social welfare initiatives, whilst providing essential and otherwise absent services to these communities, have only provided a short-term solution to the more salient existential crises of demographic decline and identity politics. Whilst these trends do not mean that Palestinian Christians are not committed nationalists or pious Christians, they do suggest that this community feels increasingly alienated by the changing social and political landscape.

In terms of the relevance of communal identity to state attachment, it was found that there is a correlation between feeling alienated from the national identity and the level of communalism individuals experienced. In other words, those who had negative feelings about the proto-state and did not see themselves reflected in the national identity were more likely to place a stronger emphasis on their being a Christian over being a Palestinian (whether they identified as religious or not). Simultaneously, it was found that the political role of the religious leadership was not normally a factor in individual's political lives. Rather, a majority of respondents indicated that the religious leadership fell short of their expectations when it came to contextualising social and political issues within a Christian worldview. These factors were connected to the high levels of emigration
amongst Palestinian Christians. Those who were against emigration were either committed nationalists (and typically not religious) or very pious, whereas those who hoped to emigrate felt disassociated from one or both of these levels of identity. These dynamics are crucial to understanding how non-Muslim minorities participate politically in the Middle East, and also how the erosion of post-colonial nationalism in the Middle East may be reconstituted. Gaining a clearer understanding of the impact of identity on politics is essential in moving beyond the overly simplistic assumptions made about religious minorities in international politics.

Theoretical implications and scope for future research:
As discussed above, these considerations may shed light on how non-Muslim minorities in the Middle East are integrated into their civil societies. Previous state building efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan have attempted to include ethnic and religious minorities in the political system through federalism, proportional representation, and devolved parliamentary powers. Whilst this may provide a short-term fix in the wake of national reconciliation, in the long-term it may have the opposite effect in terms of inducing a unified sense of nationalism. This is because, rather than integrating minority groups, these methods emphasise that the differences between sub-national groups are irreconcilable. They also clearly demarcate which groups are in the national majority and minority. The end result is a rather fractured sense of the nation, which has proven unsustainable in the long-term. The pragmatism of minority voters shows that they are perhaps less engaged and invested in a future state and therefore have little incentive to participate. These conclusions are supported by Elkins and Sides who have argued that federalism and proportional electoral systems have, 'at best mixed results' in terms of inducing attachment to the state.625

However, these studies give a rather superficial overview of minority participation, in that they can describe the fact that these state building initiatives have failed, but not why they have failed. It is hoped that this study will shed some light on the internal identity dynamics behind these failed initiatives, by making empirical contributions to the study of minority identity and politics in the Middle East. It is also hoped that this study contributes to a small, but growing body of research on the construction of national identity in stateless contexts, specifically by detailing how minority

communities are affected by populism and pious nationalism. However, there continues to be scope for further research.

One potentially insightful study into alternative state building models might be a case study involving political identity amongst the Iraqi and Syrian Christian communities -- both in the diaspora and in the homeland. This study could assess the ways in which these communities are politically involved, as well as their assessment of American efforts to rebuild Iraq, and prospects for the future (Iraq and Syria). Such a study could shed light on what went wrong, as well as how non-Muslim minorities achieved some measure of stability in the past. Along similar lines, a large scale comparative study of Christian communities in Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and Lebanon could shed some light into the modes of political involvement in these countries, how political involvement has changed over time, views of the nation, prospects for the future, etc. Such a study could also assess the role of the growing diaspora communities in the politics of the homeland, which was addressed, in part, by a recent DIMECCE study,626 which found that these relationships are substantial -- often going as far as to fund, help direct and coordinate opposition groups in the homeland -- as was the case with certain Coptic groups during the short-lived Morsi government in Egypt. In the case of all of these communities, there is scope for further analysis of their political trends and opinions. Such studies could be extremely relevant to future foreign policy to these states, as well as the integration of new Middle Eastern Christian immigrant communities into the European and North American contexts.

Limitations of identity as a theoretical framework:

As with any study of significant length, there are limitations to the approaches used in this thesis: firstly, the nature of qualitative research itself. Although the researcher is able to gain a far deeper understanding of the dynamics at work within a given context, the time consuming nature of qualitative work itself limits the potential sample size. As such broad trends can be revealed and assessed, but it is difficult to create predictive models about behaviour. Similarly, using "identity" as a theoretical framework, you are confronted with the enormous complexity of the ways in which we identify with the world and how this shapes our behaviour. This study has attempted to clearly define identity and its uses, as well as illustrate its depth. Whilst quantitative data is often overly descriptive and lacking analytical depth, qualitative data can be overwhelmingly complex. Therefore,

626 https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/dimecce/
the use of analytical software in this study was very beneficial in this regard, in order to help sort, quantify, and analyse hours of interview material. It is hoped that, despite these limitations, this study has presented a coherent synthesis of identity politics in Palestine.

**Conclusion:**

This study of the role that identity has played in the political lives of the Palestinian Christians has shown that the complex dynamics of identity choice have a significant effect on the level of attachment individuals have towards their nation, state, and community. Beyond shaping the political choices and participation of individuals, this study has shown the potential implications of identity issues on the demographic realities of this community. Although the Israeli Occupation, growing public role of Islam, and fractured political landscape continue to present significant challenges to Palestinians as whole, the identity of a future state and the role of minorities -- whether they are Christian, atheist or otherwise -- is a potentially contentious issue. When applied to other non-Muslim minorities in the Middle East, it is clear that identity politics will continue to play an important role in the foreseeable future. However, efforts within these communities and the international community must take into account the nuanced dynamics, history, and interests of these communities in order to instil a more long-term, stable, and inclusive narrative of the nation.
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Appendix:

List of political factions:

The political left:

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)

Founded: 1967

Ideological stance: Marxist-Leninist

Do they support armed struggle: Yes

One-state/two-state solution: rejects the Oslo Accords and a two-state solution

The PFLP was founded by Palestinian Christian George Habash, a Palestinian Christian, in the wake of the 1967 War and subsequent Israeli Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Its political ideology was initially based in Marxist-Leninist Arab Nationalism, but the collapse of the Soviet Union affected its funding and called into question the efficacy of Marxism in the Palestinian Territories. The PFLP has rejected the two state solution and adopted armed struggle as part of its resistance. Since joining the PLO in 1968, it has been its second largest political faction, but has faced internal ideological divisions regarding the role of diplomacy and armed struggle since the late 1960s. These divisions resulted into the formation of several splinter groups, most notably the DFLP.

With the rise of Hamas in the late 1980s, the PFLP lost ground as an opposition party to Fatah. The PFLP boycotted the 1996 PA elections, which further diminished their influence and popularity. As a result of their diminishing influence, the PFLP began to establish 'a network of party-affiliated civil society organisations in the West Bank and Gaza', which has contributed to their strong grassroots support. However, this has not necessarily influenced voting trends, as their inability to deliver economic development and uncompromising stance on peace negotiations has dampened their perceived efficacy as a political actor.

At present, the PFLP has struggled to transform its ideological platform to suit the political and social context. As Broning argues, 'The failure of the PFLP to mobilize larger parts of the electorate

627 Broning, Political Parties in Palestine: Leadership and Thought.
has often been attributed to the PFLP's ambiguous stance among theoretical rejection, practical accommodation, and radical socialism, which alienated not only the political establishment within the PNA but also the voters who felt that the PFLP's rhetoric of class struggle failed to address and was not in tune with the pressing issues of their daily lives. As a result, their traditionally strong support amongst Palestinian Christians has declined in recent years. They continue to have strong grassroots support, but have not managed to present a real challenge to Fatah or Hamas in terms of electoral votes.

Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)

**Founded:** 1969

**Ideological stance:** Marxist-Leninist (until 1991), now broadly socialist

**Do they support armed struggle:** initially yes, but not currently

**One-state/two-state solution:** rejects the Oslo Accords, but is warming to the two-state solution

The DFLP was initially founded as a splinter group from the PLFP in 1969. Unlike the PFLP, the DFLP pursued a parallel diplomatic process in addition to armed struggle. The DFLP initially received support from the Soviet Union and has a Marxist ideological perspective. It has been the third largest faction in the PLO since it joined in 1968. It has abandoned armed struggle and has become a more pragmatic institution, often entering into alliances with the PPP. However, it rejected the Oslo Accords. Despite its relatively strong support in the 1970s and early 1980s amongst the Palestinian Christian communities, it has declined in popularity in recent years, largely because of its inability to inspire popular support like the PFLP or provide material benefit like Fatah.

Palestinian People's Party (PPP)

**Founded:** in its present form 1982

**Ideological stance:** Socialist

**Do they support armed struggle:** No

**One-state/two-state solution:** supported the Oslo Accords, supports two-state solution

628. Ibid., 102

629. Ibid.
The PPP is the successor to the much older Palestinian Communist Party (PCP), which was founded by left wing Jews and Palestinians in 1919 as an anti-Zionist party. The two factions split in 1943 and the Palestinian faction formed the National Liberation League (NLL), which was dissolved after the 1948 War. It was the only Palestinian party to support the 1947 UN Partition Plan for Palestine. The NLL reestablished itself fully as the PCP in 1982, gaining independence from the Jordanian Communist Party. The PCP joined the PLO in 1987 and was the only member not actively engaged in armed resistance at the time. Similar to the aforementioned PFLP and DFLP, the PCP was greatly affected by the fall of the Soviet Union.  

From 1991, it sought to rebrand itself as the Palestinian People's Party (PPP), distancing itself from Marxism and Leninism. The PPP has marginal support amongst the Palestine Christian communities, but this support is primarily shown when the PPP runs in coalition with Fatah-associated lists.

The Political Centre:

Palestinian National Liberation Movement (Fatah)

**Founded:** in its present form 1959

**Ideological stance:** Democratic Socialism

**Do they support armed struggle:** formerly, but not currently

**One-state/two-state solution:** supported the Oslo Accords, supports two-state solution

Fatah is the largest faction of the PLO. Founded in 1959, Fatah has represented the ideological centre of Palestinian politics. Its popularity has decline somewhat since the death of Yassir Arafat and the failure of the Oslo Accords, but it remains a key player in Palestinian politics -- particularly in the West Bank. Fatah has largely abandoned armed resistance in exchange for diplomacy in recent decades, which has also contributed to its decline in popular support as opposed to Hamas. Fatah has the most electoral support amongst Palestinian Christians despite the fact that they are generally regarded as corrupt and have been largely ineffective in terms of providing services to these communities. But, given their ability to integrate Christians into its leadership and work towards peace -- and most importantly, to gain aid money -- it is often the most pragmatic choice for Christian voters.

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630. Ibid.
631. Ibid.
**The Political right:**

**Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)**

**Founded:** in its present form 1987

**Ideological stance:** Islamist -- Muslim Brotherhood affiliate

**Do they support armed struggle:** Yes

**One-state/two-state solution:** rejected Oslo Accords, rejects two-state solution

Hamas was founded in 1987 as an ideological offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. Hamas is the major opposition party to Fatah. It has also rejected the Oslo Accords and continues to support armed struggle against Israel. Hamas has largely been characterised as a terrorist organisation by a number of western states. However, since their formation in 1987, and election in 2006 (and subsequent rule of the Gaza Strip), Hamas has transformed itself into an actor capable of institution building and very limited diplomacy. Hamas' ideological stance, however, continues to be largely characterised by its close relationship with Islamism. Translated into policy, this means a stronger role of Islamic *shari'a* in governance and law, and a worldview in which religious pluralism is tolerated, but non-Muslim minorities are not given equal rights.

Unsurprisingly, Hamas has very low support amongst Palestinian Christians. However, as discussed in Chapter Six, there are certain conditions in which Palestinian Christians do support Hamas, for example, in times of conflict when Hamas is actively resisting Israel.

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632. Ibid.
Tables, figures, and graphs:

Figure 1: West Bank Population Graph: 1961-2014

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633 Based on data from the 1961, 1967, 1997 and 2007 censuses
Figure 2: West Bank Christian Population: 1945-2014

Table 1: Palestinian Migration Figures: 2005-2009

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Table 2: West Bank Male Life Table:

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Note: Palestinian National Authority Ministry of Health (MoH), *Health Annual Report* (Ramallah, 2007); Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), *Census 1997*.
### Table 3: West Bank Female Life Table:

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<th>( nQ_x )</th>
<th>( nL_x )</th>
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<th>( nF_{lx} )</th>
<th>( Ex )</th>
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Table 3\(^{637}\) (MoH); (PCBS), Census 1997.
Table 4: West Bank Male Survival Rates and Migration Estimates: 1997-2007

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<th>Migration</th>
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<tr>
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Table 5: West Bank Female Survival Rates and Migration Estimates: 1997-2007

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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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638 Author’s calculations based on the data from: (PCBS), Census; (PCBS), Census 2007; (MoH).

639 Author’s calculations based on the data from: (PCBS), Census; (PCBS), Census 2007; (MoH).
Table 6: Palestinian Christian Population: 1945-2014

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<td>1,377</td>
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Table 6

Figure 3: Palestinian Christian Population Pyramid: 1997

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645 Author's calculations; Mourad et al.
Figure 4: Palestinian Muslim Population Pyramid: 1997

Figure 5: Palestinian Christian Population Pyramid: 2007

646 (PCBS), Census, 1997.
647 Ibid.
Table 7: Palestinian Christian Population Growth Rates: 1945-2007

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649 Ibid.
650 These calculations are made using the data from table 6 and the exponential change method.
Figure 7: Palestinian Christian Population Growth and Decline: 1945-2007

This infographic was created by the author and is based on the data from tables 6 and 8.
Table 8: Percentage of Total Population:

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<td>0.02%</td>
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<td>5.94%</td>
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<td>0.72%</td>
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<td>34.49%</td>
<td>36.16%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramallah</td>
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<td>11.92%</td>
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<td>Nablus</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
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<td>0.01%</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>0.02%</td>
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<td>1.10%</td>
<td>0.96%</td>
<td>0.86%</td>
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Figure 8: Why Do Christians Emigrate?

![Why do Christians Emigrate?](image)

- The Occupation
- The Economy
- Safety
- Tension between Christians and Muslims
- The future of Christians in the Middle East
- Other

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652 Based on data from Table 6
653 Data obtained through 2014 fieldwork and a 2014/15 survey conducted for this research
Figure 9: Major Party Support Amongst Palestinian Christians (survey) 2000-2010

Figure 10: Is there corruption in the PA (2001-2010)?
Table 9: 2006 Legislative election results:\textsuperscript{654}

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Electoral District</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<td>Change and Reform (Hamas)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MOHAMMAD TOTAH</td>
<td>Change and Reform (Hamas)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WAIL AL-HUSSEINI</td>
<td>Change and Reform (Hamas)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AHMAD ATTOUN</td>
<td>Change and Reform (Hamas)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>EMIL JARJOU</td>
<td>Fateh</td>
<td>Christian Quota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>IVIVIAN SABELLA</td>
<td>Fateh</td>
<td>Christian Quota</td>
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<td>HASAN DAR KHALEIL</td>
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</tr>
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<td>FADEL FADEL HAMDAN</td>
<td>Change and Reform (Hamas)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>AHMAD MOBARAK</td>
<td>Change and Reform (Hamas)</td>
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<td>MAHMOUD MUSLEH</td>
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<td>Christian Quota</td>
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<td>KALID DWEIB</td>
<td>Change and Reform (Hamas)</td>
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<td>MAHMOUD ALKHATEEB</td>
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<td>FUAD KOKALY</td>
<td>Fatah</td>
<td>Christian Quota</td>
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<td>FAYEZ SAQQA</td>
<td>Fatah</td>
<td>Christian Quota</td>
</tr>
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<td>Gaza</td>
<td>SAID SEYAM</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>AHMED BAHAR</td>
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</tr>
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<td>KHALIL ELHYYA</td>
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<td>MOHAMMED FARAJ ELGHOUUL</td>
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<td>JAMAL SALEH</td>
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<td>6 JAMAL ELKHOUDDARY</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ZIAD ABU-AMR</td>
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<td></td>
<td>HUSAM ALTAWEEL</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Christian Quota</td>
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</table>

Table 9: 2004-2005 Local election results:\textsuperscript{655}

\textsuperscript{654} National Democratic Institute, "Final Report on the Palestinian Legislative Council Elections."

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<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Locale</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>No. of council seats</th>
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<td>Ihma' al-Balad</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Reform and Change</td>
<td>Hamas</td>
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<td>Fatah</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Hamas</td>
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Table 10: 2012 Local election results

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Notes: 656 elections.ps
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Figures 11-16: Political Party Support by Age group (2000-2010):