

Lettres de Byblos
Letters from Byblos

No. 8

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In co-operation with
Salim Nasr

Democrats Waiting to Prove Themselves

**Social and political attitudes
of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon**

Centre International des Sciences de l'Homme
International Centre for Human Sciences
(Arabic)

Byblos 2005

Contents

Educated and nowhere to work - The social statistics of refugee reality	5
Fear of the future, cautiousness and powerlessness: Psychosocial sensitivities	7
Risk tolerance and realism: Attitudes to the economy and society	12
Religion, homeland and family: Identity patterns	17
Political orientations in exile	23
Wishes, refusals, resistance. Opinions on the route to Palestine and Jerusalem	33
Democrats waiting to prove themselves	41
Reason for hope in the future	49
Information on the survey	50

Democrats Waiting to Prove Themselves

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Educated and nowhere to work - The social statistics of refugee reality

Half a century after the first Palestine War, nearly three fifths of the refugees still live in camps. It is not a decree of the Lebanese state that condemns them to this existence, but the lack of alternatives. Of those who still live where they arrived in 1948 or were born, a good quarter live in the camps around Tripoli, Tyre and Sidon and in the Bekaa Valley, and another fifth live in the camps around Beirut, even after the events of war. The breakdown of those who have managed to start a new life in one of the Lebanese cities is different: Tyre and Sidon are home to a little less than one quarter each, Tripoli, the Bekaa and the mountains together account for a good quarter, and the capital for almost a third. Among these refugees, the share of woman and elderly respondents is disproportionately high - often wives of men who have found work outside Lebanon to pay for a flat for their spouses.

Of the respondents, a minority of 44% are men, and just 39% in the 35-49 age group.

Palestinian refugees are a well-educated group. Only five percent of them have no formal schooling at all, among whom woman and respondents over the age of 50 are overrepresented. Just under one fifth have only primary-school education, one third

have completed middle school, one quarter secondary or technical school, and no less than one fifth university.

But there is little demand for their skills in the Lebanese labour market: more than half of the respondents are unemployed. This figure excludes the ten percent who are students, and thus not yet, and the three percent are pensioners and may once have been. However, 34% are housewives and ten percent are officially unemployed, with twice as many men as women.

Just under half of the respondents have jobs, which break down as follows:

Manual workers and craftsmen	8
Retail and wholesale	7
Office workers	7
Service workers	4
Farm workers	4
Teachers	4
UNRWA personnel	3
Liberal professions, incl. medicine	3
Transport workers	2
Other	2

Figures in %, rounded

A substantial proportion of available jobs are in the camps, where unemployment is above average. On the other hand, a disproportionately high percentage of teachers live outside the camps.

In view of their work, the breakdown of respondents' replies on income is not surprising: 23% did not reply and 22% said they had no income - which agrees closely with the proportion of housewives and unemployed. Seventeen percent earn between USD 16 and 183 a month, just under a fifth between USD 200 and 293, and another fifth more than USD 300 a month. Men are overrepresented in the two highest income quintiles; more than half of all professionals and three quarters of UNRWA personnel are in the highest quintile.

Not surprisingly, income correlates directly with the level of education. But about half of secondary-school and, surprisingly, university graduates provided no details, earn nothing or earn less than USD 183 a month. While education improves the chance of employment, it does not guarantee a job.

Fear of the future, cautiousness and powerlessness: Psychosocial sensitivities

This sub-heading was used to classify findings in a survey of Lebanese attitudes conducted almost a year earlier:¹ comparable findings for Palestinians in Lebanon are higher for all three factors.

	Lebanese 2002	Palestinians in Lebanon 2003
<i>When I think of the future, I feel uncertain and afraid.</i>	81	88
<i>Before you start something, you should know whether it will work or not.</i>	81	82
<i>When you start changing things, they usually get worse.</i>	43	53

Agreement in %, rounded

Fear of what the future may bring usually goes hand in hand with great reserve towards anything new. Four in five Lebanese and an even higher proportion of Palestinians are afraid and as a result extremely conservative. A large minority of Lebanese and a small majority of Palestinians share the pessimistic attitude that changes, as a rule, are for the worse.

Fear of the future is deeply rooted in both societies; there are no significant differences by gender, age, education, income, occupation, religious affiliation or place of residence. Among the Palestinians there is a distinction between those living in camps and those living outside inasmuch as the latter are significantly less likely to agree with the view that you must be certain of the result before you initiate anything. Those who have left the camps have voted with their feet in favour of uncertainty. Among Palestinian respondents, fear of change correlates inversely with education and income. It is also less widespread among students, office workers, teachers and professionals than among people in other occupations. Educational and professional success motivates people to take risks and reduces pessimism.

¹ Theodor Hanf, *The Sceptical Nation*, in: idem & Nawaf Salam (eds), *Lebanon in Limbo. Postwar Society and State in an Uncertain Regional Environment*, Baden-Baden 2003, p. 198.

Whether successful or not, Palestinians in Lebanon mistrust their social environment.

You should always be careful. You cannot trust the people you live or work with.

A full 87% of Palestinians agree - compared with 78% of Lebanese respondents. Although mistrust correlates inversely with education, is still reported by 82% of university graduates. Mistrust is greater outside the camps than inside, reaching 97% among Palestinians living in Beirut.

Are there differences between the groups that Palestinians and Lebanese trust?²

	Lebanese 2002	Palestinians in Lebanon 2003
<i>Family</i>	76	94
<i>People of my own religion</i>	20	77
<i>Friends</i>	52	63
<i>People with the same work and life conditions</i>	*	56
<i>People with the same political views</i>	*	54
<i>Colleagues</i>	24	53
<i>Other refugees</i>	*	52
<i>Neighbours</i>	16	49
<i>People of the area my family comes from</i>	17	47
<i>Religious persons such as sheikhs or priests</i>	32	46
<i>Employers</i>	24	39
<i>All Palestinians (all Lebanese)</i>	8	33

* Not asked or not applicable in Lebanon. Agreement in %, rounded

As shown above, Palestinians tend to be even more mistrustful of their social environment than Lebanese. However, their replies to the question of trust in specific social reference groups reveal a comparatively strong cohesion, which is typical of minorities.

The family is the core repository of trust. Among Christian Palestinians, a minority among the minority, this is true of every respondent. Ninety-five percent of those who classified themselves as Muslims agreed, as did 89% of those who said they had no

² About one quarter of the Lebanese respondents in 2002 refused to answer the question.

religious affiliation. Trust in coreligionists is almost four times as high among Palestinians as among Lebanese. It correlates directly with age and inversely with education. Among students, teachers and professionals the figure falls to 70%. It is stronger in the camps than among those living outside: 70% vs. 56% - and the latter figure is still higher than that for Lebanese. Among Palestinians in Beirut, however, it falls to 40%. Men are more likely to trust friends than women are.

Similar patterns of stronger or weaker trust are also found for other reference groups.³

	Gender	Age	Education	Income	Occupation	Camp dwellers	Living elsewhere	Living in Beirut
<i>People in the same situation</i> Ø 56				b. a.: highest income group	a. a.: unemployed; pensioners b. a.: teachers, professionals	64	47	35
<i>People with same political views</i> Ø 54	a. a.: men	a. a.: highest age group			a. a.: pensioners, unemployed, UNRWA	63	43	35
<i>Colleagues</i> Ø 53	a. a.: men		a. a.: technical school graduates	b. a.: no income	a. a.: pensioners; farm workers; family workshop	63	40	25
<i>Other refugees</i> Ø 52	a. a.: men	direct correlation with age	inverse correlation with education	b. a.: no income	a. a.: pensioners; farm workers b. a.: students, teachers, professionals	59	43	40

³ Only significant deviations from the average are recorded; a. a.: above average; b. a.: below average.

Continued:

<i>Neighbours</i> Ø 49	a. a.: men	direct correla- tion with age	b. a.: university graduates		a. a.: pensioners; farm workers, shopkeepers b. a.: students, office workers, transport, services	51	45	36
<i>Family members</i> Ø 47	a. a. men	a. a.: highest age group			a. a.: pensioners, family workshop	57	35	22
<i>Religious persons</i> Ø 46		a. a.: highest age group	b. a.: secondary and university graduates	inverse correla- tion with income	a. a.: pensioners, family business b. a.: office workers, teachers, professionals	56	33	19
<i>Employers</i> Ø 39	a. a.: men		b. a.: illiterates, university graduates	a. a.: :middle income group	a. a.: farm workers, transport, shops	49	25	15
<i>All Palestinians</i> Ø 33		direct correla- tion with age	inverse correla- tion with education		a. a.: pensioners, unemployed, farm workers; b. a.: students, UNRWA, teachers, professionals	37	28	20

Figures in %, rounded

Men and people who are older, less educated and less prosperous are more likely to trust all reference groups, whether close or more distant, than people who are better off in terms of education, income and occupation. Trust is noticeably stronger in the camps; outside, particularly in Beirut, it declines sharply.

It is also a trust between people who feel powerless.

People like me can't do anything to improve people's lives.

No fewer than 86% of Palestinian respondents agree with this statement, as did 78% of the Lebanese in the 2002 survey. When almost four fifths of the majority in a country feel powerless, it is hardly surprising that this feeling is even more pronounced among a minority with refugee status. It is shared by respondents inside and outside the camps, by men and women of all ages. Although it is correlated inversely with the level of education, even 80% of university graduates still agree.

Even ordinary people can make progress if they help each other.

Eighty-eight percent of the Lebanese believe in the efficacy of self-help, and 96% of Palestinians do. There are no significant differences by social variables. It appears almost as if people wanted to encourage each other in an otherwise pretty miserable social and psychological situation characterised by fear of the future, cautiousness, mistrust of change, trust focused on family, coreligionists and friends - and an incredible sense of powerlessness.

Risk tolerance and realism: Attitudes to the economy and society

The following question measured preferences for investment or consumption:

*Imagine you were lucky enough to win some money in the lottery.
What would you most likely do with it?*

	Lebanese 2002	Palestinians in Lebanon 2003
<i>Start my own business</i>	45	68
<i>Improve my house or replace my furniture⁴</i>	18	18
<i>Spend the money on myself or my family</i>	11	10
<i>Put the money in a high-yield bank investment</i>	25	4

Figures in %, rounded

Only a minority of both Lebanese and Palestinians would blow the money. Virtually the same proportion of both samples would like to improve their living environment, though the standards of living from which the respective respondents start is, of course, very different. The differences are greatest with respect to the investment alternatives of starting one's own business or putting the money in the bank. Whereas a relative majority of Lebanese favour economic independence, two thirds of Palestinians do. Fully one quarter of the former prefer interest income, compared with only a small minority of the latter.

The social composition of Palestinian groups supporting the above options clearly reflects their motives. Preference for founding a business is significantly skewed towards men, respondents in the 25-34 age group and technical-school graduates. There is a direct correlation between the willingness to start a business and income. This option is particularly popular among people in family workshops, and shop, transport and service workers. A better living environment is the choice particularly of women, older respondents and people with little education and a low income. It is the preference of housewives, but also of farm workers. It is mentioned most often by inhabitants of the Beirut camps and people living outside the camps. Similarly, those who would like to spend money are women, people without any income, the youngest age group and above all students. Men, better-educated respondents, those in the

⁴ Lebanese questionnaire: Buy a house or property.

highest income group and professional are overrepresented in the small minority that prefer interest income - in short, people for whom such an investment is a serious option.

Overall, the composition of preferences for each option indicates people's realistic evaluation of their situation. Those who would like to start a business believe they are suited to this by age, training, income and profession. People who would like a better living environment are people who have little hope of more than that. Those who want to spend money are those with little or none. And those who can think of interest income belong to a social group that can afford to do so - and it is not very large.

In your opinion, which of the following counts most for success in life?

	Lebanese 2002	Palestinians in Lebanon 2003
<i>Education</i>	19	38
<i>Working with others and standing together as a group</i>	7	19
<i>Working hard for yourself</i>	18	14
<i>Experience</i>	7	12
<i>Religious belief</i>	22	4
<i>Other⁵</i>	27	13

Figures in %, rounded

There are two striking differences between the Lebanese population and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon: first, Palestinians place far greater faith in education as a factor for success - and second, only a very small number of Palestinians are convinced that religious belief may account for such success. Is this an indication that Palestinians are less susceptible to the rise of religiosity observed in Lebanon? We shall return to this question below.

In any case, their choice of success factors is further evidence of the realism we have already noticed. Those that lack education are overrepresented among those that mention it: women, older people, those with little or no formal education, people without any income and - by occupation - housewives, farm workers and unemployed; residents of Beirut seldom mention education as a vehicle for success. The profile of those who believe teamwork contributes most to success is quite different: men, people in the 35-49 age group, technical-school graduates and high earners. This group is disproportionately strong among office workers, teachers and professionals. Recognition of hard work is strongest among men and people older than 50, without formal

⁵ Other options included: connections, inheritance, good fortune/luck, tricks, what your parents taught you, other.

schooling or with an average income, manual workers and workers in the transport sector and the retail trade. Finally, experience is a factor of success among women, people with an average education, farm workers and service workers, but also teachers. In short, options obviously reflect respondents' various life experiences.

How risk-tolerant are Palestinians - again, by comparison with the Lebanese?

What kind of job would you prefer:

A job in a factory or in an office with a good salary you can rely on

Or

Your own business where you can win a lot or lose a lot?

In line with the responses to the choice between investment and consumption, Palestinians reveal a pronounced preference for personal initiative. Sixty-five percent favour their own business with all the risks involved - compared with just 47% of the Lebanese. It should be noted that this choice reflects not just entrepreneurial initiative, but also suitable qualifications, and the insight that the chances of finding a well-paid job are minimal. A disproportionately high number of respondents in a family workshop or the transport sector opt for their own business. Those who already have a permanent job, such as UNRWA personnel or teachers, are far more reticent. The willingness to work for oneself correlates inversely with education and income. As a rule, people who opt for a business career have no other option.

How satisfied are respondents with their current job?

	Lebanese 2002	Palestinians in Lebanon 2003
<i>Of course, everyone would like to earn more, but I'm satisfied with my salary.</i>	37	45
<i>It's a pity, but I will not get the education and job I am entitled to.</i>	62	71
<i>If I could, I would change to another kind of work.</i>	76	72

Agreement in %, rounded

Substantial minorities of both the Lebanese and Palestinians are satisfied with their salary. Despite this, a far greater number of respondents in both samples feel that they do not have the educational and job opportunities that they actually deserved. And clear majorities of both groups would prefer a different occupation.

Among Palestinians an above-average proportion of university graduates and, as to be expected, respondents in the highest income group are satisfied with their salary.

They are professionals, teachers, office workers and self-employed. People who complain about the lack of educational and occupational opportunities tend to be unemployed or farm workers. Less-educated people and those in the middle age groups would like a career change.

Asked which class they belonged to, the responses of the Palestinian population in Lebanon break down as follows - again alongside the replies of the Lebanese:

	Lebanese 2002	Palestinians in Lebanon 2003
<i>Upper & upper middle class</i>	12	3
<i>Middle class</i>	52	45
<i>Lower middle class</i>	28	21
<i>Lower class</i>	8	31

Figures in %, rounded

It is clear that both samples regard themselves as middle class. Few Lebanese are willing to classify themselves as lower-class, whereas almost one third of Palestinians do not have any problem with this. By contrast, few Palestinians are prepared to put themselves in the upper class of their group; those that do are mostly young, university graduates, in the highest income group, employed by UNRWA or professionals. A disproportionate number of those that classify themselves as middle-class are young, secondary-school or university graduates, students and office workers. The lower middle and lower class is comprises mainly older people, respondents with no or little schooling, farm workers and unemployed.

Here are two descriptions of the social differences among Palestinians in Lebanon. With which one do you agree?

A small minority has most of the wealth

Or:

A majority of people are at a middle level, with few people who are rich or poor.

Respondents are pretty evenly divided. There are few differences on the basis of social markers: the view of a Palestinian society with few extremes in wealth predominates among respondents in the highest income group - in line with people's reticence noted above to classify themselves as upper-class. By contrast, university graduates refer disproportionately frequently to the small, wealthy minority. This view is far more common outside than inside the camps.

Although half of the Palestinian respondents believe in the social cohesion of their society, half of these, in turn, do not think that this situation will persist. In response to the question:

In the last 10 years, has the difference between rich and poor among Palestinians in Lebanon increased, decreased, or remained the same?

No less than 75% said that differences had increased; only 15% believed that they had decreased, and the remaining ten percent felt that the situation had not changed.

How do respondents assess their own economic situation over time and their children's prospects?

	<u>worse</u>
<i>As regards your living conditions, are you better or worse off than 10 years ago?</i>	77
<i>Comparing your present situation to that one year ago, are you better or worse off?</i>	66
	<u>agree</u>
<i>Young men and women from a family like mine have a reasonably good chance of achieving their goals in life</i>	50
<i>I'm afraid that our children might not enjoy the same standard of living as we have now</i>	88

Figures in %, rounded

Three quarters of Palestinians feel that their living conditions have worsened in the past ten years, and two thirds of them are convinced that this decline continued in the past year.⁶ One respondent in two believes that the outlook for the young generation is positive. However, this sanguine assessment is less common among students, teachers, UNRWA personnel and respondents living outside the camps. Nine in ten Palestinians fear that their children will be worse off than themselves.⁷

It would be understandable to assume that people like Palestinians in Lebanon that take such a realistic - in other words, pessimistic - view of their situation and their prospects would be envious of those around them who are better off.

⁶ This view is disproportionately common among the inhabitants of the Ain al-Helweh camp; the security situation in the camp worsened considerably during this period.

⁷ A year earlier, 85% of the Lebanese also expressed this opinion.

When I see what rich people have I feel that I should have the same.

One year before, 72% of the Lebanese respondents had agreed with this statement. In 2003, only 40% of Palestinians shared this view. Remarkably, the disadvantaged minority express less social envy than the majority in which they live. Of course, this could change: social envy is disproportionately strong among younger Palestinians, students, and even professionals. It is more prevalent inside than outside the camps, and strongest in camps in the south of the country. That said, the majority are not envious.

To summarise: the Palestinians in the sample are investment rather than consumption oriented. They are risk tolerant and entrepreneurial, even if often owing to a lack of alternatives. Most are dissatisfied with their current job and would change if they had the opportunity. For the most part, Palestinians take a realistic view of their social situation. They regard Palestinian society as socially cohesive, but do not deny that social cleavages are growing. They generally feel that they are worse off than a decade, and even a year, ago, and are pessimistic about the prospects of the next generation. Despite this, among them social envy is less widespread than in the majority society in which they live.

Religion, homeland and family: Identity patterns

Asked about their religious affiliation, 76% of the Palestinian respondents declared that they were Muslim, no less than 19% that they did not belong to any religion and one percent that they were Christians;⁸ four percent gave no answer. The figure of 19% needs to be explained.⁹ Is it an indication of secularisation or an expression of political correctness?

The explanation is complicated by the fact that a powerful leader in one of the camps prohibited the interviewers from asking various questions pertaining to religion. As a result, up to 30% of respondents failed to answer six of the questions. In the following analysis the replies to these questions are either not used at all or used only in conjunction with the subsets whose interpretation was not affected.

⁸ The only Christians in the sample were in the Beirut camps. It is estimated that initially 15% of all Palestinian refugees were Christian; most of these have probably acquired Lebanese nationality.

⁹ This option was the choice of an above-average number of respondents in camps in Beirut and the north and those living in Beirut outside the camps and in the Baabda/Chouf region.

<i>No matter what a person's religion is, the most important thing is that everybody leads an honest life and is a good human being.</i>	91
<i>I try hard to live my daily life according to the teachings of my religion.</i>	87
<i>How often do you pray? Answer: Regularly</i>	77
<i>Do you practice religious rituals? (Attending prayers, services, fasting) Answer: Regularly</i>	75
<i>I would prefer that my children attend a school run by a religious institution.</i>	72

Agreement in %, rounded

Support is strongest for a general profession of humanism. But scarcely fewer respondents declare that they try to put the teachings of their religion into practice in their daily life; they must include a number of those who say they have no religion. Only eight percent declare that they pray rarely or never, and at six percent the proportion that never participates in religious rituals cult is even smaller. According to these findings, Palestinians in Lebanon are not as religious as those in the Palestinian territories,¹⁰ but still somewhat more religious than the Lebanese.¹¹

Religiousness is more pronounced among women than men, and rises with age - in contrast to the Lebanese findings of stronger religiousness among the youngest generation. The wish to have one's children educated at a religious school correlates inversely with education, but still enjoys the support of 57% of university graduates.

The responses to two other statements, however, raise questions about this picture of an all-pervading religious world:

<i>I believe in a better life after death, where good people will be rewarded and bad people will be punished. Answer: No</i>	36
<i>I can be happy and enjoy life without believing in God. Answer: Yes</i>	32

Figures in %, rounded

These are two of the items that not all interviewees could be asked on account of political censorship; 22% were prevented from answering the first statement and 30% the second. These percentages in the table are those for the total sample, i.e., in the ab-

¹⁰ Theodor Hanf & Bernard Sabella, *A Date with Democracy. Palestinians on Society and Politics*, Freiburg 1996, pp. 36ff.

¹¹ Theodor Hanf, *The Sceptical Nation*, op. cit., pp. 204f.

sence of censorship they could have been higher, but not lower. Accordingly, two findings are noteworthy: a good third of all respondents do not share the accepted teachings of Islam and Christianity on life after death - compared with just 15% of the Lebanese,¹² and just under a third of Palestinian respondents agree that life can be happy without belief in God, as against just 11% of the Lebanese.¹³ The last opinion is more prevalent than average among those who say that they do not have any religion.

Consequently, we must conclude that a number of those who pray and practise religious rituals do not agree with a core tenet of their religion and feel they can find happiness in this life even without belief. The responses paint an overall picture of a Palestinian population in Lebanon that is roughly one third not very religious.

What unites and divides Palestinians?

<i>I prefer to be with people who speak my own language.</i>	90
<i>I feel very close to people of my own religion, whatever their education, wealth or political views.</i>	89
<i>I feel close to all Palestinians, whatever their religion, education, wealth or political views.</i>	89
<i>Which of the following do you consider to be the biggest differences among Palestinians?:</i>	
<i>Differences between rich and poor.</i>	42
<i>Differences between refugees and non-refugees.</i>	36
<i>Differences between Palestinians inside and outside.</i>	16
<i>Differences between Christians and Muslims.</i>	5
<i>Differences between West Bank and Gaza.</i>	2
<i>Obviously there are differences between religious groups in Palestinian society, but they should be kept out of politics.</i>	55
<i>A good friend is a good friend whether he is called Mohammad or George.</i>	53
<i>The identity and uniqueness of my (religious, geographic, kin) community are more important than loyalty to my country.</i>	45

Agreement in %, rounded

¹² In 1995, only six percent in the Palestinian territories were of this opinion.

¹³ In the Palestinian territories, 28% agreed with a less extreme formulation: *I can be happy and enjoy life without being religious.*

Identification with language, religion and nation, respectively, largely coincide. The most important perceived differences among Palestinians are first economic, second between refugees and people who stayed behind, and third between refugees inside and outside the camps. Only one in 20 regards the differences between Christians and Muslims as important. A good half of the respondents believe these differences should be kept out of politics, and a similar proportion accepts the possibility of friendship across religious barriers.

This finding reveals a considerable gulf between the religions. In 1995, no fewer than four in five respondents thought interreligious friendship was possible¹⁴, and in Lebanon in 2002 as many as nine in ten. Does this result reflect reservations about the tiny minority of Palestinian Christians or - a consequence of wartime events - about Lebanese Christians? Our data is inadequate to answer this question, but the data for the Palestinian territories point to the latter. Moreover, the distance is greater within the camps, where people have scarcely any contact with Christians at all, than outside. This distance correlates inversely with income.

The proportion of those whose loyalty to their specific community is stronger than their loyalty to their country is remarkable high - in 2002 in Lebanon only somewhat less than one third of respondents agreed with this statement.¹⁵

This raises the question of bonds with the more narrowly defined religious and kinship groups, which was explored through responses to the following statements:

<i>I may fight with my cousin, but we are united against strangers.</i>	56
<i>I can break the law if it is in the interest of my family.</i>	15
<i>I would not mind if a child of mine married someone from a different religion as long as they love each other.</i>	20
<i>If agree: I would not mind even if it is my daughter.</i>	5

Figures in %, rounded

More than half of the Palestinian respondents express solidarity with the proverbial cousin - at 47% it was not much weaker among the Lebanese. However, only 15% are prepared to break the law if it is the interest of their family. One in five respondents accepts mixed marriages between members of different religions. Men and professionals are overrepresented in this tolerant minority, as are Christians. Asked about mixed marriages involving an own daughter, just one in 20 agreed. In short: more than half identify with their family, but substantially fewer if this involves breaking the law. The

¹⁴ Theodor Hanf & Bernard Sabella, loc. cit., p. 57.

¹⁵ Theodor Hanf, *The Sceptical Nation*, p. 206.

hard core of group identity is religious: the vast majority of Palestinians in Lebanon reject an exchange of women, the prerequisite, according to Lévy-Strauss, for full social integration.¹⁶

Family ties also affect economic considerations.

If you were to choose people to work in Your Own Business whom would you prefer? (Pick one only)

<i>anyone who is qualified</i>	45
<i>members of my family</i>	31
<i>people I know and trust</i>	19
<i>people of my religion</i>	5

Figures in %, rounded

Kinship ranks second among these criteria. Women, respondents with little or no education and people in the lower income groups show an above-average inclination to employ family members. But an even larger percentage accepts the principle of merit where business is concerned.

How do respondents define themselves?

People in a country can belong to different social groups at the same time. You have a job, a religion, a language, you belong to an ethnic group, you live in a village or a town, you may belong to a political party - and all these things may be of different importance to you.

If somebody asks you what you are, how would you describe yourself? First, second, and third.

The responses by frequency are:

	1st place	2nd place	3rd place
Muslim	65	12	12
Palestinian	21	49	35
Family	12	30	37
Arab	1	6	10
Other	1	3	7

Figures in %, rounded

¹⁶ Among Lebanese a much larger minority of 39% were prepared to accept a daughter's mixed marriage.

Religion is the most common identity marker - not as strong as among respondents in the Palestinian territories in 1995, where no less than 81% defined themselves primarily as Muslims, but far stronger than among the Lebanese in 2002, where only five percent defined themselves primarily as Muslims and four percent as Christians. These data confirm the findings above that Palestinians in Lebanon are less religious than their fellow citizens in Palestine, but far less so than the Lebanese.

Religion plays a disproportionately strong role along women and middle-aged respondents.¹⁷ It correlates inversely with income, whereas homeland as primary identity marker correlates directly with income.

Correlating the first, second and third options with one another reveals interesting patterns.

1st place	2nd place	3rd place
Muslim	62% Palestinian 30% Family 7% Arab	47% Family 37% Palestinian 11% Arab
Palestinian	52% Family 27% Muslim 9% Arab	37% Muslim 26% Family 13% Arab
Family	53% Muslim 41% Palestinian	58% Palestinian 35% Muslim 1% Arab
Arab	53% Palestinian 27% Muslim 13% Family	33% Palestinian 27% Muslim 27% Family

Figures in %, rounded

Religion, homeland and family are closely linked in all identity patterns. Overall, religion is the most important marker; homeland and family ties are, as a matter of course, part of the identity of those that define themselves primarily as Muslims. And vice versa: for those respondents that identify themselves primarily by homeland or family, the other two markers also define their identity. Arabness is the primary marker for only a tiny

¹⁷ Not one of the few Christian respondents mentions religion. They define themselves in terms of homeland and family.

minority¹⁸ (- two decades ago, probably, it might have been for many more -), and only small minorities mention it as a secondary or tertiary marker.

Despite the finding above that about one third of Palestinian respondents were less than fervent believers, and that almost one fifth said they did not belong to any religion, the replies to the question of preferred identity markers show not only that a little under two thirds choose religion as their primary marker but also that it plays an important role in the self-perception of tepid Muslims: for them religion is, to quote Heinrich Heine, the "portable fatherland". One knows who one is: Muslim, Palestinian and member of a family all in one.

Political orientations in exile

What in your opinion is the most serious political problem facing the Arab world today which governments should urgently address (one issue only)?

The responses by frequency are:

Palestine	62
Israel / Arab weakness	15
Divisions among Arabs	8
Refugees	4
USA, imperialism	2
Democracy	2
Economic issues	2
Other	4

Figures in %, rounded

Palestine - the causes and effects of its loss - is *the* political problem for nine in ten Palestinians in Lebanon; by comparison, everything else pales into insignificance. This is a typical world view of an exiled community. Equally typically, views at the personal level are more differentiated:

¹⁸ Some twenty years ago, one might safely assume, the proportion of respondents opting for Arabness might have been considerably higher.

Think of your life - all aspects of it: What changes, reforms or improvements (personal, social, economic or political) do you think are most necessary for the future?

The responses break down as follows:

	1st place	2nd place
Economic improvements, better life	48	45
Return to Palestine, liberation	22	29
Children's future, education	18	17
Other political issues	5	3
Civil rights	4	4
Other issues	3	3

Figures in %, rounded

For almost half the respondents, economic concerns play a dominant role in their personal lives: the most immediate concern is to survive or to live in slightly better circumstances. Even so, the liberation or return to Palestine is still the most important issue for about a quarter of respondents. This is followed in third place by concerns about education and the children's future. Among those who would like a better life, women are overrepresented and respondents in the highest income group underrepresented. Education is of interest especially to woman and young people, either for their children's or their own sake. Liberation and return are most important not only for the oldest respondents, but also for those that say they have no religion and for the camp dwellers. The higher the income level, the greater the significance attached to political rather than economic matters.

What are respondents' preferred sources of information on matters that interest them?

TV	93
Friends & relatives	3
Newspapers	2
Radio	2

Figures in %, rounded

This result is surprising only in its one-sidedness: Palestinian refugees in Lebanon live almost exclusively in television territory. Favourite channels are those that provide

plenty of independent, professional, solid information and uncensored commentary on events in all parts of the Arab Orient:

Al-Jazeera	33
Al-Manar	29
Palestine TV	7
Abu Dhabi TV	6
Al-Mustaqbal	5
LBC	4
Other	16

Figures in %, rounded

The print media cannot seriously compete with this. Only eight percent of all respondents read a newspaper regularly and 30% occasionally.¹⁹ Men and older people are overrepresented among newspaper readers. Newspaper readership rises with education and income. The fact that Palestinian refugees have easy access only to Lebanese newspapers but receive television broadcasts from all Arab countries may account in part for their disinterest in print media. Even friends and relatives are more important sources of information than newspapers.

Another possible source of information is membership of political or civil society organisations.

What political parties, public organisations and trade unions or clubs do you belong to?

The replies to this question break down as follows:

None	67
Fatah	5
Women's organisations	2
Trade unions	1
Democratic or Popular Front	1
Other (all below 1%)	6
No reply	18

Figures in %, rounded

¹⁹ Three fifths of newspaper readers prefer as-Safir and one tenth each an-Nahar and ad-Diar.

Two thirds of the respondents do not belong to any organisation at all and only about every twentieth is a member of a political party.²⁰ The lack of formal political and social involvement begs the question of political abstinence.

If you keep out of politics you have peace and a clear conscience.

In 2002, 69% of the Lebanese respondents agreed with this statement; a year later only 43% of the Palestinians in Lebanon did. In other words, a clear majority are by no means apolitical.

Which of the following influential groups of people do you consider as very important or as not very important in Palestinian society?

In descending order of "very important" we obtain the following picture:

Political leaders	76
Chairpersons of political parties	76
Religious leaders	76
Members of the Palestinian National Authority (ministers)	73
Military leaders	73
Members of Parliament	71
Managers of big enterprises	65
Big businessmen	64
Bankers	61

"Very important" in %, rounded

Views are ranked clearly: political and religious leaders are considered to be most influential, followed closely by holders of political and military office. Business leaders come only a relatively distant third.

The Palestinian political leadership as a whole is regarded as important. How popular or unpopular are the individual members?

Think of Palestinian political leaders. Which leader do you most admire?

²⁰ Only two respondents each admitted that they members of Hamas and Islamic Jihad. As we shall see below, these organisations enjoy substantially more support than these figures suggest.

Whom else do you admire (your second choice)?

Which Palestinian leader do you most dislike?

	Favourite leader	Second choice	Most disliked leader
Arafat	37	4	9
Barghuti	12	16	-
Rajub	-	-	12
Sheikh Yassin	6	7	-
Rantissi	2	2	-
Habash & Hawatmeh	2	1	-
Others	8	19	11
No one	14	19	28
No reply	19	32	37
Many / all	-	-	3

Figures in %, rounded

Yasser Arafat is still the most admired political leader, followed by Barghuti, who is the most popular second choice. Arafat is almost heartily disliked by almost one tenth of respondents, whereas no one dislikes Barghuti. Arafat and Barghuti both represent the Palestinian mainstream. Sheikh Yassin and Rantissi are the leaders of the second most important stream in Palestinian politics, political Islam. Habash and Hawatmeh represent the secular Left, supported by only a small minority of respondents. The most unpopular politician in the survey is Rajub, one of Arafat's contentious security officers.

The correlation between first and second choices shows that Barghuti is the leading second choice of Arafat supporters, followed by Sheikh Yassin, Habash and Hawatmeh. Sheikh Yassin is a disproportionately popular second choice of Barghuti supporters, whereas followers of Habash or Hawatmeh favour Barghuti. Respondents' sympathies reveal that preferences for the mainstream, political Islam and the secular Left are fluid. Patterns of disapproval are much clearer: people who admire Barghuti like neither Rajub nor Arafat, and dislike of Arafat is above average among supporters of Sheikh Yassin, Rantissi, Habash and Hawatmeh.

What do the respondents feel about general support for their favourite politicians and their ability to get things done? And are they willing to follow them through thick and thin?

<i>Most people like me support these leaders.</i>	34
<i>Given the situation in the country, these leaders cannot do very much to improve our lives.</i>	76
<i>Even if these leaders act in a way I do not understand, I would still support them in an election.</i>	32
Agreement in %, rounded	

Only one third of the respondents believe that most people agree their choice of political leader. Three quarters do not think their preferred leaders have much scope for action. Less than one third are prepared to give political leaders unconditional support. Clear majorities are very realistic about all these points and very critical of their favourite leader, regardless of their admiration.

Party preference is a much clearer indication of political orientation than leadership preference.

If you could vote for a Palestinian parliament, which party or organisation would you most likely vote for?

If you could vote for TWO parties or organisations, which other one would you vote for?

Think of Palestinian people you know in your ward, neighbourhood, etc. Which political party would most of them vote for?

The results in descending order of party preference are as follows:

	Preferred party	Second choice	Perceived preference of neighbours
Fatah	35	9	37
Hamas	15	12	8
Popular Front & Democratic Front	4	8	2
Islamic Jihad	3	11	1
Other	3	3	3
None	16	23	3
Don't know/no reply	25	35	47

Figures in %, rounded

Fatah enjoys a relative majority, but with slightly less support than for Arafat, and far less than the combined preferences for him and Barghuti. Hamas, on the other hand, enjoys considerably greater popular than its leaders. Support for it and Islamic Jihad together reveal that the Islamists have considerable potential. Both the secular parties are also twice as popular as their leaders. Assessments of the neighbours' preferences reveal that respondents slightly overestimate the strength of Fatah and underestimate that of all other movements.

The comparison between first and second choices reveals various affinities between political tendencies. Hamas and the secular parties are overrepresented among the second choices of Fatah supporters: Fatah's right wing partially overlaps with political Islam and its left wing with the secularists. The second choice of Hamas and Islamic Jihad supporters is the respective other organisation. Reciprocity is also above average between supporters of the Popular Front and the Democratic Front, though many also opt for Fatah as second choice.

Assuming a future independent Palestinian state: What should the government's priority be? (Pick one only)

The order of priorities is clear:

Total honesty of government	64
Enforcement of the law	20
Upholding and promoting religious values	10
Efficiency in managing the economic development of the country	6
Figures in %, rounded	

Clean government is the most important priority for almost two thirds of respondents²¹ - a reflection no doubt of the long debate on corruption in the Palestinian Authority. One fifth give priority to the rule of law²², and one tenth to promoting religious values.²³ Just six percent think that effective economic development policies are the state's top priority.²⁴

²¹ Priority overrepresented among women and respondents outside the camps.

²² Mainly men, the lowest age group, pensioners, students, transport workers, service workers, professionals and camp dwellers.

²³ Mainly men, the lowest age group and camp dwellers.

²⁴ Mainly men, the highest income group, manual workers, office workers and camp dwellers.

Think of the serious problems and conflicts which have developed in Palestinian society in recent times. Which of the following descriptions do you agree with most?

I fear that co-operation between different Palestinian movements and organisations may have become impossible. 14

Or:

In spite of everything, co-operation can still be achieved 86

I fear that peace and co-operation between Muslims and Christians may have become more difficult. 14

Or:

In spite of everything, co-operation can still be achieved. 86

Agreement in %, rounded

Equally large majorities believe that cooperation between different Palestinian organisations and between Muslims and Christians is possible. In the first case, young people, people with average incomes and people living outside the camps are overrepresented in the pessimistic minority, and in the second case respondents who say they have no religion. Most Muslims think interreligious cooperation is possible - as does every Christian respondent.

In the present conflicts all sides should seek compromise and agreement.

Even very different groups living in one country can easily accept each other as they are and respect each other's mutual rights.

Whether one likes it or not, when groups of different origin or different religion live in one country, a group will either control others or be controlled.

No less than 93% agree with the first statement²⁵ and 91% with the second, but only 43% with the third. There can be no doubt that the search for consensus and cohesion is a significant characteristic common to all Palestinian political tendencies, but not necessarily under conditions of super- and subordination.

But what are Palestinians' ideals and desires?

²⁵ Men and respondents in higher educational and income groups are overrepresented in the confrontational minority. All Christian respondents favour compromise.

In your mind, which country comes closest to being an ideal country, the country that other countries should attempt to be like?

The responses in descending order are as follows:

Palestine	34
None	15
Lebanon	9
Germany	6
Sweden	6
Switzerland	3
Syria	3
USA	1
Other European countries	9
Other Arab countries	8
Other	6

Figures in %, rounded

In many surveys, the replies to this question indicate respondents' preferences for specific social systems. Any such interpretation in the present case would be misguided.

More than one third choose Palestine, among them a disproportionate number of women and camp dwellers. This choice correlates inversely with education. The social composition of those who chose Lebanon is similar²⁶ - in both cases a choice that reflects resignation and a lack of alternatives. Among those that vote "none", another expression of resignation, the highly educated, high earners, professionals and people living outside the camps are overrepresented.

Other Arab countries are chosen primarily by well-educated, prosperous respondents. Such people, and a disproportionately large number of students, also favour Sweden, Switzerland and other European countries. Germany is the choice of respondents with average education and low income and manual workers. Men for the most part choose Arab and European countries, which arouses the suspicion that these options reflect hopes of university places or jobs rather than political convictions.

By contrast, the answers to the following question are eminently political:

²⁶ In this group, respondents living outside the camps are overrepresented.

Relations with a number of foreign governments, peoples and international organisations have had a certain impact on the fate of Palestinians. For each country or organisation we mention, please tell us whether you consider its impact as more helpful or as more harmful.

The response in descending order of those who answered "harmful" is as follows:

Israel	99
USA	98
Jordan	87
Vatican	80
United Nations	76
Russia	76
Egypt	75
Saudi Arabia	72
Japan	71
World Bank	71
European Union	62
NGOs	40
Syria	34
Iraq ²⁷	29

"Harmful" in %, rounded

In the eyes of a majority of respondents, only Saddam Hussein's Iraq, Syria and NGOs are helpful to the Palestinians; all other states and organisations on the list are regarded as harmful. The states perceived to be most hostile are Jordan, the USA and Israel, indeed, the latter virtually unanimously. In short: Palestinians in Lebanon feel that, apart from the few supporters of their cause, they live in a hostile world.

In summary: nine in ten respondents regard the Palestine question as the most important political problem. Whereas half of them feel that their economic situation is their most pressing problem, one quarter feel most affected by the political situation. Three quarters of the respondents feel that political and religious leaders do exercise an influence on Palestinian politics; business leaders are not thought to have much political weight. Yasser Arafat, the choice of one third, is the most popular politician, followed by Marwan Barghuti; the most unpopular politician is Rajub. Three quarters of the respondents do not believe that the politicians they favour can do very much for them. Four in ten respondents have no particular preference for any political party, and only one in twenty is a member of one. If elections were to be held tomorrow, one third

²⁷ At the time the interviews took place, it was still Saddam Hussein's Iraq.

would vote for Fatah, a little less than one fifth for Islamist parties and just under one twentieth for the secular Left. What voters desire most from any political party is financial rectitude. A broad majority think that conflicts between political factions and between the religious groups can be resolved. Respondents expect only Iraq, Syria and certain private organisations to support their cause; they regard all other governments in the world as hostile.

Wishes, refusals, resistance. Opinions on the route to Palestine and Jerusalem

At present, Palestinians are experiencing the most difficult period in their history since the catastrophe of 1948. People have opposing views about the situation and about what to do. Please tell us for each one of the following statements whether you generally agree or not.

Ranked by descending agreement, the range of opinions on the peace negotiations is as follows:

<i>We need to be patient. There is still a chance of a final agreement that respects fundamental Palestinian interests.</i>	66
<i>We cannot forget all that has happened and is still happening and simply start a new process of reconciliation with Israel.</i>	62
<i>The process which started with the Oslo Agreement has turned out to be detrimental to Palestinian interests.</i>	34
<i>Regardless of what may be right and desirable, Palestinians will have to negotiate and come to terms with Israel.</i>	25

Agreement²⁸ in %, rounded

The contradictions are immediately apparent: two thirds of the respondents believe that there is still a chance of a peace agreement that takes account of their interests, and almost as many feel that in view of past and present events this is not the time for

²⁸ The first and third statements were presented as alternatives.

new attempts at reconciliation.²⁹ For one third, the Oslo process as an unequivocally negative experience.³⁰ Finally, one quarter are convinced that there is no alternative to agreement with Israel.³¹

What do respondents view as negotiable and what not?

<i>Palestinian refugees should be prepared to emigrate to other countries, or to stay where they are, provided they are granted appropriate compensation for their losses.</i>	9
<i>Palestinians should accept a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, provided all refugees living elsewhere are allowed to settle there.</i>	26
<i>Palestinians should accept a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, but only on condition that all refugees are allowed to return to the places from where their fathers came before the catastrophe.</i>	78
<i>The area of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is too small for a viable Palestinian state.</i>	76
<i>All Palestinians who wish to return must be welcome in a Palestinian state, irrespective of costs.</i>	92
<i>Palestinians should not be satisfied with the West Bank and Gaza, but should work for the liberation of all Palestine.</i>	92

Agreement in %, rounded

The answer: not much is negotiable. Less than one in ten accepts emigration with compensation.³² One quarter can envisage a state consisting of the West Bank and Gaza if all refugees can settle there.³³ More than three quarters will accept such a state only if all refugees can return to their places of origin - i.e., to Israel within its pre-1967 boundaries, whence most of the refugees in Lebanon come.³⁴ A similar propor-

²⁹ Rejection of new peace negotiations correlates directly with respondents' education and income. Among respondents without any religion rejection is as high as 78%. This view is particularly widespread among students and professionals, manual workers, service workers and UNRWA personnel.

³⁰ They are overrepresented among men, technical- and secondary-school and university graduates, and people with either no or a high income. Almost two thirds of professionals view Oslo is harmful.

³¹ Support for this view is above average among respondents with a low income, pensioners and unemployed.

³² Above-average support among manual workers, transport workers and unemployed.

³³ Above-average support among camp dwellers.

³⁴ Agreement rises with the age of the respondents.

tion think a state consisting of the West Bank and Gaza will be too small to be viable. Nine in ten respondents demand the return of the refugees regardless of cost, and almost all want all of Palestine to be liberated.³⁵

How do respondents feel about Jerusalem?

<i>Jerusalem should be re-partitioned as it was on 5th June 1967, that is into an Arab city and an Israeli city.</i>	8
<i>Jerusalem can remain an undivided city provided that its eastern part is the capital of the state of Palestine.</i>	25
<i>The holy places in Jerusalem should be placed under the sovereignty of the respective religion.</i>	63
<i>The final status of Jerusalem is non-negotiable because it is an Islamic trust.</i>	92
<i>All of Jerusalem, including the Jewish part, should be under Palestinian control.</i>	97

Agreement in %, rounded

Less than one tenth approve of a return to the pre-1967 status quo. But even an undivided city with the Arab eastern part as Palestinian capital is acceptable to only one quarter. However, almost two thirds would accept allowing the respective religions to assume responsibility for their holy places.³⁶ Finally, more than nine in ten respondents support uncompromisingly Islamic and nationalist points of view: Jerusalem is non-negotiable because it is one of Islam's holy places,³⁷ and Palestinians should control the whole city, including its Jewish quarter.³⁸

For sure, these are precisely the views that meet many Israeli concerns. But in interpreting them one must take into account first that agreement with these points is agreement with slogans long proclaimed by the Palestinian leadership and long accepted as politically correct, but not expressed for many years now, and, second, refugee camps that offer no perspectives are places particularly suited to keeping such views alive. Above all, these statements were made at a time when towns, villages and camps in the Palestinian territories were being attacked almost daily by Israeli soldiers, tanks and helicopters and the structures of the autonomous Palestinian Authority were being destroyed - not a time when thoughts about compromise were up-

³⁵ The younger the respondents, the more likely they are to agree.

³⁶ Respondents without religion are underrepresented.

³⁷ Respondents in the highest income stratum reject this more often than others - as do all Christians.

³⁸ Agreement falls gradually as education rises.

permost in people's minds, let alone those of a group that will very probably be among the losers if a compromise is ever reached.

Asked for their views not of what they wanted but of what they thought likely, Palestinians were realistic, possibly even mildly optimistic:

<i>Eventually, Palestinians and Israelis will have to live together in a common state.</i>	17
<i>Whatever may be the future fate of Palestinians in Palestine, I am afraid that it will not change my life very much.</i>	32
<i>Relations with Jordan will evolve towards a confederation covering all social, economic and political areas.</i>	49
<i>Eventually, the Palestinian state will be part of a larger state comprising all or most Arab countries.</i>	72

Agreement in %, rounded

In recent months, both Palestinian and Israeli intellectuals have resuscitated the idea of a common state. The rationale behind this is the consequence of Israel's settlement policy, which creates facts that render a two-state solution increasingly impracticable; thus, in the not too distant future, Israel will have to choose between ruling the Palestinians in an apartheid-like system and establishing a common state. A full 17% of the Palestinians living in Lebanon accept the idea of a common state.³⁹ Only one third of respondents take the pessimistic view that regardless of what happens in Palestine it will not have any real effect on their life. Half believe that eventually there will be a confederation between a Palestinian state and Jordan,⁴⁰ and as many as seven in ten see their future in a pan-Arab state⁴¹ - hopes kindled by Arabism are still alive among this group of refugees.

One can learn from one's enemy. Which of the following Israeli institutions should be a model for Palestine?

³⁹ As high as 22% among men. Agreement correlates directly with age.

⁴⁰ Agreement correlates inversely with education and income.

⁴¹ Above-average agreement among manual workers, farm workers, professionals and pensioners.

The breakdown in descending order of agreement is as follows:

Health system	66
National insurance	65
Electioneering and politics	38
Parliament	38
System of justice	33
All of the above	32
Agreement in %, rounded	

The Israeli social systems have made the strongest impression on Palestinians: two thirds think they are worth emulating.⁴² And almost four in ten respondents view the Israeli system of democracy as a model for their own state.⁴³ There is less support for the legal system; Palestinians' experience with it is seldom happy. Overall, though, the willingness to learn from the adversary even in times of severe armed conflict is quite remarkable.⁴⁴

Since the beginning of the al-Aqsa intifada and increasingly ruthless Israeli repression, highly contradictory opinions have been voiced about different means of struggle, their moral acceptability as well as about the opportunity to apply them.

For each of the following, please tell us if you consider it morally acceptable.

⁴² Respondents with higher levels of education are overrepresented.

⁴³ Agreement rises from 25% at the lowest to 44% at the highest educational level. Remarkably, support is above average among respondents that identify themselves as Muslim.

⁴⁴ Above-average willingness among Muslims, all Christians and respondents living outside the camps.

The statements on the following list of measures break down as follows:

	"Morally acceptable"
Peaceful strikes and stay-aways	48
Peaceful public demonstrations	46
Tough demonstrations using stones and petrol bombs	22
Violent action even involving the sacrifice of one's own life	13
Violent action against Israeli interests abroad	13
Destruction of Israeli property	12
Violent action against Israeli soldiers in the territories	11
Violent action against settlers, military or not	11
Violent action against Israeli soldiers, whether in the territories or not	11
Violent action against any Israeli, military or not	11

Figures in %, rounded

Peaceful protest is completely acceptable for just under half the respondents. The use of limited violence is morally acceptable for a further fifth. Any option involving heavy violence is morally acceptable for little more than one tenth of respondents.⁴⁵ In short: the great majority of respondents have enormous reservations about the moral acceptance of violent resistance against the occupying forces.

What do respondents feel about the spectacular act of terrorism in September 2001?

If you think of the collapse of the twin towers of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, which of the following statements comes close to your feelings?

⁴⁵ Supporters of violence are overrepresented among respondents living in Beirut outside the camps. Supporters of violent actions including suicide are overrepresented among respondents living in Beirut both inside and outside the camps, among those with no religion and Christians, office workers, service workers and students.

The results in descending order are as follows:

<i>America deserved it because of its misdeeds in other parts of the world.</i>	90
<i>Murder of thousands of innocent civilians is simply horrible.</i>	84
<i>I disapprove of it. Yet it made Americans feel how other people feel under terror, and it may teach them a lesson.</i>	80
<i>It has given Muslims a bad name in the world.</i>	79
<i>Suicide and murder are contrary to the teachings of our religion.</i>	73
<i>Even if horrible, it was a masterful coup.</i>	54

Agreement in %, rounded

It is obvious that respondents' feelings are ambiguous. Nine in ten feel that America deserved it,⁴⁶ but almost as many find mass murder simply horrible. Four in five agree with the statement that encapsulates their ambiguity: disapproval, coupled with the hope that Americans learn what terror means for others.⁴⁷ Yet, a similar proportion fear that 11 September 2001 has discredited Muslims in the eyes of the world. Almost three quarters of respondents are convinced that suicide and murder are incompatible with their religion.⁴⁸ While disapproving of the deed, a good half admire its "masterful" execution. Agreement with this statement correlates inversely with income and education. It articulates the opinion of people who are worse off, by comparison with others in the same boat, and *schadenfreude* over the fate of the powerful whom they hold responsible for their situation - in a nutshell: an expression of powerlessness.

An interesting question is whether this feeling of powerlessness has led refugees to abandon hope of returning to the land of their fathers and encouraged them to consider emigration as a way of escaping from their situation. We saw above that only a minority accepted compensation as an adequate solution to the refugee problem. In recent months the hypothesis of a growing interest in emigration has become a topic of discussion. To test whether it has any basis in reality we asked respondents a concrete question:

If you could freely choose between different I.D. papers, which one would you prefer?

⁴⁶ Women rather than men, without religion rather than with, living outside rather than inside the camps.

⁴⁷ The lowest and highest income groups and camp dwellers are overrepresented.

⁴⁸ The lowest and highest income groups and Muslims are overrepresented, people without religion and those living outside the camps are overrepresented.

The replies in descending order were as follows:

Palestinian territories I.D.	96
Lebanese I.D.	2
Australian I.D.	2
United States I.D.	1
East Jerusalem I.D.	-
Israeli I.D.	-

Figures in %, rounded

This finding does not confirm the hypothesis; if they had the choice, almost all surveyed Palestinian refugees in Lebanon would return to Palestine.⁴⁹

To summarise: respondents have mixed feelings about the desirability and chances of a new peace process. Hopes go hand in hand with the scepticism born of experience. They do not see very much that is negotiable. Emigration with compensation is acceptable to only one in ten and a return to the Palestinian territories to only one in four - after all, most Palestinians in Lebanon do not come from there. Three quarters want to return to where their families come from, and nine tenths desire the liberation of all Palestine. They are equally unwilling to make any concessions on Jerusalem. When asked for their views of likely rather than desirable developments, the responses are obviously coloured by hopes: for an acceptable negotiated result, for a confederation with Jordan, for a future as part of a pan-Arab state. How do they think about the means to achieve their goals? While almost half of all respondents consider peaceful means appropriate, one tenth only think that violence against Israeli settlers, soldiers and civilians is morally acceptable. Their assessment of terrorism is ambiguous. Majority disapproval for moral and religious reasons is mixed with the hope that America will learn something from 9/11. Finally, rejecting the alternatives - staying in Lebanon, emigrating to the USA or Australia - they just want to be Palestinians in Palestine.

⁴⁹ There are no significant differences by gender, age and income.

Democrats waiting to prove themselves

Once democracies have been established and consolidated, as a rule the number of democrats - citizens - that affirm and support democratic values, institutions and decision-making processes start to grow. But is it possible for people to become democrats in utterly different circumstances, viz. circumstances in which they feel they lack the rights and power to determine their own destiny? It is possible for a democratic political culture to emerge not only in the shadow of successful democratic systems, but also because people feel that they are being denied democracy?

The Palestinians first experiences with democratic practices in the Palestinian territories have not been notably successful - because of internal neopatriarchalism on the one hand and, more importantly, external factors on the other, which have not only hindered the emergence of a democratic state, but the emergence of any state at all.

The Palestinian refugees in Lebanon live in a state in which the rule of law by and large functions, there is a division of powers, and the government is accountable and can be voted out. In this state they do not have the rights of citizens. Over and above this, they are familiar with Israel, the state that turned them into refugees. As we saw above, many of these refugees, despite their hostility to Israel, are prepared to learn from Israel in matters of democracy.

In this section we shall analyse the existence and extent of democratic attitudes in a group of disadvantaged refugees and exiles - and whether the awareness of being deprived of democratic rights can generate democracy.

To start with, we asked pairs of questions to ascertain basic attitudes to democracy.

Here is a list of statements which describe different ways in which a society can be governed. For each pair of statements, which one could you agree with?

The responses in order of descending support for the democratic options are as follows:

	Democratic option
<i>A president whose power is balanced by that of a parliament.</i>	90
<i>Or:</i>	
<i>A president who can act without the interference of a parliament.</i>	
<i>Judges who follow the instructions of the government.</i>	
<i>Or:</i>	
<i>Judges who apply the law no matter what the government says.</i>	81
<i>Newspapers controlled by government in order to prevent disunity.</i>	
<i>Or:</i>	
<i>Newspapers free to criticise government and exercise the freedom of expression.</i>	76
<i>A state authority that controls particular interests and preserves social harmony.</i>	
<i>Or:</i>	
<i>Freedom for people to pursue different interests provided they obey the rules.</i>	66
<i>Only one political party with a single plan for the country's future.</i>	
<i>Or:</i>	
<i>More than one party, each with its own plan for the country's future.</i>	31

Figures in %, rounded

Nine in ten respondents favour checks and balances: they do not want a president with untrammelled power. Four fifths want an independent judiciary and almost as many, a good three quarters, a free, critical press. Attitudes on the role of interest groups are less clear. Two thirds favour free competition between interests provided they obey the rules, but a third would like to see interest groups controlled in the interest of social harmony.

The weakest link in respondents' democratic awareness is the very low level of approval, just 31%, of a multiparty system. Obviously, many respondents attach a lot of importance to the link between just one political party and a "single plan for the country's future"⁵⁰ - something the Palestinians have always lacked. Follow-up questions on the forms of government acceptable to Palestinians and which of these respondents

⁵⁰ Women are overrepresented. Agreement correlates inversely with level of education.

prefer significantly qualifies the majority vote for a one political party with a single plan for the future.

There are other countries like ours - that is countries with different religious, language and national groups. There are different forms of government in these countries and different opinions about what is the best way of governing such a country.

We will give you some of these opinions.

Please tell us whether you find each of the following opinions acceptable or not.

Which one of these opinions do you think is the best solution?

	accept	best
<i>One group (majority or not) rules over the others, and people that refuse to accept this have to keep quiet or leave.</i>	11	3
<i>A single party open to everyone rules without opposition.</i>	27	8
<i>A joint government with a quota for all major groups.</i>	60	27
<i>All people vote for any party they like; the winning party (parties) governs (govern) and the other parties form the opposition.</i>	72	46
<i>None, don't know</i>		16

Figures in %, rounded

The first option describes an unreservedly undemocratic situation in which one group rules over everybody else. One tenth of the respondents are willing to accept it,⁵¹ but only three percent think it is the best solution.

A good quarter can live with a one-party system,⁵² but less than one tenth think it is the best form of government.

The third option is a brief description of consociational democracy: all groups that get a substantial share of the vote form a grand coalition and share power. Three in five respondents find this system acceptable, but only one in four think it is the best solution.

⁵¹ Agreement correlates inversely with education; interestingly, agreement among illiterates (eight percent) and university graduates (six percent) is well below average.

⁵² Agreement correlates inversely with income. Primary-school graduates, unemployed, manual workers, farm workers and transport workers are overrepresented.

The last option describes a competitive majority democracy in which the winning party or parties form the government and the others the opposition. Almost three quarters of respondents find this system acceptable⁵³ and almost half think it is the best solution.

To summarise: a little more than one third of respondents find undemocratic solutions acceptable, but only about one tenth think they are the best solution. By comparison, almost three quarters favour one of the two democratic systems as the best solution.⁵⁴

A broad majority of respondents would also like elections at the local level. Given the choice between: *Local authorities elected by the people of the respective region, town or village* Or: *Local authorities appointed by the central government*, 89% opted for the former.

Disillusionment with a politically brilliant leadership that fails to provide transparency in financial matters explains the following response. Asked whether they prefer: *A government that is honest and does not accept bribes* Or: *A government that is a little dishonest but has some strong and inspiring leaders?*, two percent choose the latter; 98% want clean government plain and simple.⁵⁵

The responses to the following questions reveals a strong desire for political leadership of high quality.

*When electing people for political office who should be chosen?
(Pick one only)*

The results in descending order are as follows:

<i>anyone who is qualified</i>	72
<i>people I know and trust</i>	12
<i>people of my religion</i>	8
<i>Members of my family</i>	9

Figures in %, rounded

⁵³ Agreement is higher than average among respondents who identify themselves as Muslims or Christians. It is 80% among men and 81% among professionals.

⁵⁴ Support for the power-sharing model is above average among respondents in the lower educational and income strata, while support for competitive model rises almost linearly with education and income. Women are overrepresented among those that gave no reply or could not decide which model was the best solution.

⁵⁵ Already in 1995 a representative survey conducted in the Palestinian territories found 94% in favour of clean government. Whether inside or outside the territories, Palestinians have no illusions about "strong and inspiring" leaders and their financial practices.

On the other hand, if it will ensure that what they regard as qualifications can become politically effective, a majority of respondents are prepared to correct the result of democratic elections to favour their opinion. No fewer than 61% agree with the statement:

It is permissible to falsify election results in order to allow the better candidate to win.

Education is not a significant variable, but agreement correlates inversely with income. Bad practices in countries in the region appear to have coloured the views of a group of people that do not have the vote themselves.

Opinions and desires for economic and social policy were assessed on the basis of preferences in the following pairs of questions:

Shops and factories owned by private businessmen who will work hard to make the businesses grow

Or:

Shops and factories owned by a government elected by the people?

A government which tries to keep wages, housing and education as equal

as possible for all people, even if incomes are heavily taxed

Or:

A government which allows people who are clever and work hard to become

wealthier than others, even if some remain permanently poor?

No less than 84% prefer a state-controlled economy to a free-market economy, and 82% an equality-oriented social policy. Such preferences are not atypical for economically disadvantaged people with little prospect of improving their situation through their own efforts.

A government can use different methods to protect its ability to govern a country.

Think of a future Palestinian state. Which of the following methods do you approve of and which do you disapprove of?

<i>The prosecution of political activists who use violence</i>	78
<i>The banning of arms and their collection from groups and individuals</i>	68
<i>The censoring of newspapers and other media</i>	33
<i>The banning of peaceful political activities of opposition groups</i>	25
<i>Imprisonment and preventive detention of members of the opposition</i>	18
<i>Using tough measures of interrogation to get information from prisoners</i>	6

Approval in %, rounded

Almost four fifths of respondents support government action against violent activists. Two thirds favour a ban on arms - which cannot be taken for granted in a group that in recent decades has got used to the idea that if could relying only on its weapons in the final instance. The number of those willing to grant a hypothetical Palestinian government the right of press censorship is considerable higher than that of those who, as we saw above, support censorship in theory: a third compared with a quarter. One quarter of respondents are prepared to accept a prohibition on peaceful oppositional activities, a little under one fifth have no trouble with preventive detention of members of the opposition, and one twentieth is even prepared to approve tough interrogation methods, a euphemism for torture.

These responses confirm what was learnt above: about one quarter of respondents have strongly undemocratic attitudes, and those of a further tenth are barely democratic.

One third display considerable uncertainty in dealing with different opinions and interests.

It is harmful for society if individuals or groups have divergent opinions and pursue divergent interests.

It is normal that people have divergent opinions and pursue divergent interests as long as they obey the rules.

Fifty-six percent agree with the first of these statements and 89% with the second, i.e. about one third with both.

Responses to the key statements about democracy correlate closely, which makes it possible to construct a democracy scale⁵⁶, on which the survey sample breaks down as follows:

⁵⁶ This scale includes the following items: *More than one party, each with its own plan for the country's future.* - Yes; *Judges who apply the law no matter what the government says.* - Yes; *Newspapers free to criticise government and exercise the freedom of expression.* -

Not democratic	4
Hardly democratic	22
Democratic	56
Strongly Democratic	18

Figures in %, rounded

What is the social profile of these groups?

Women are underrepresented among strongly democratic respondents and overrepresented among those who are basically democratic. Age is insignificant.⁵⁷ Eminent-ly significant on the other hand is education:

	Not & hardly democratic	Democratic	Strongly democratic	All democrats
No formal education	31	62	7	69
Primary school	38	48	14	62
Junior high school	27	59	13	72
Technical school	28	51	22	73
Secondary school	22	56	22	78
Tertiary education	13	59	29	88

Figures in %, rounded

The correlation is not completely linear. The proportion of non-democrats among respondents without any formal education is lower than among primary-school graduates. But from primary school through university education the proportion of democrats ("democratic" and "strongly democratic" taken together) correlates directly with education. From technical schooling upwards, the proportion of strongly democratic respondents grows substantially. In short: a lack of formal schooling is not an obstacle to democratic attitudes, but the more formal education people have, the more likely they are to have democratic, and in particular strongly democratic, attitudes.

Income is also a significant variable:

Yes; *One group (majority or not) rules over the others, and people that refuse to accept this have to keep quiet or leave.* - No; *A single party open to everyone rules without opposition.* - No; *Local authorities which are elected by the people of the respective region, town or village.* - Yes. The Alpha value of the scale is .4790

⁵⁷ By religious affiliation 13% of the Christians are undemocratic and a further 39% hardly democratic.

	Not & hardly democratic	Democratic	Strongly Democratic	All democrats
Low income	35	54	11	65
Middle income	25	56	19	75
High income	14	55	31	86

Figures in %, rounded

The proportion of non-democrats correlates inversely and that of democrats directly with income.

There are also considerable differences by occupation. Non-democrats are strongly overrepresented among farm workers, transport workers and people in family businesses, and less strongly among the unemployed, housewives and industrial workers. Strong democrats are overrepresented among UNRWA personnel, professionals, students, teachers, office workers and pensioners.

Equally noteworthy are the differences by camp and place of residence. The region around Tyre, both inside and outside the camps, the Beirut camps and the camps near Tripoli contain the highest proportion of non-democrats. The bastions of Palestinians with strong democratic convictions, by contrast, are the camps near Sidon and the city itself.

To summarise: large majorities of Palestinians in Lebanon desire a political system with a division of powers, an independent judiciary and freedom of the press. A large majority would like a political leadership recruited on the basis of their qualifications for the job; only a minority regard family and religious affinities as valid criteria.

A strong minority would accept a one-party system. The fact that only eight percent regard a one-party state as the best political system goes some way to qualifying this indisputable black mark against the democratic convictions of Palestinians. Similarly, a minority would accept a Palestinian government that practised censorship and suppressed opposition to remain in power - a second blemish on the overall picture of Palestinian democracy. A majority are prepared to accept electoral fraud to the advantage of the candidates they regard as best - a third significant failing.

With our data it is possible to construct a meaningful democracy scale that confirms individual results: one quarter are non-democrats and the broad majority are democrats; one fifth of all respondents can be classified as unconditionally democratic. The factors that best explain democratic attitudes are education, income and the concomitant job satisfaction; religious affiliation does not play any statistically significant role.

In answer to the question posed at the beginning, we can now say that even disadvantaged population groups can develop democratic attitudes; education and - relative - prosperity are conducive to this process. The Palestinians in Lebanon are democrats

waiting to prove themselves. They are waiting for a Palestinian state to which they can belong, and one which a very large majority, though not all, Palestinians would like to be a democracy.

Reason for hope in the future

*Think about the life of Palestinians in this country.
How do you feel?
How do you think you will feel in ten years time?*

	Today	In 10 years' time
<i>Very satisfied with life as it is</i>	1	2
<i>Just satisfied, but not very satisfied with life as it is</i>	38	42
<i>Not satisfied, but also not dissatisfied - in the middle</i>	9	34
<i>Dissatisfied with life as it is</i>	43	18
<i>Angry and impatient with life as it is</i>	9	5

Figures in %, rounded

Today a little more than one half feel dissatisfied or angry with their living conditions, but a little less than one quarter only expect to be in the same situation in ten years' time. The proportion of those who say they are very or moderately satisfied today differs little from that of those who expect they will be able to say the much same ten years hence. By contrast, the proportion of those who see themselves "in the middle" ten years down the line is nearly quadruple today's figure.

Even a group that suffers from a multitude of disadvantages needs hope to survive. The Palestinians in Lebanon have a reasonable degree of hope. Whether this is hope of a better life while waiting to prove themselves or of an end to the waiting is unclear. But there can be no doubt that their deepest desire is for the latter.

Information on the survey

The opinion pool has been conducted by Statistics Lebanon in January 2003.

The sample distribution is as follows:

Palestinians living in refugee camps

Camp	No. of refugees	% by camp	Sample N.N.
Ein el Hilweh	44 133	23.01	177
Nahr al Bared	28 358	14.78	114
Rashidieh	24 679	12.87	99
Burj el Barajneh	19 526	10.18	78
Burj el Shemali	19 526	10.18	78
Badawi	15 695	8.18	63
Chatila	11 998	6.25	48
El Buss	9 840	5.13	39
Wawell	7 357	3.84	30
Mieh Mieh	5 078	2.65	20
Dbayeh	4 223	2.20	17
Mar Elias	1 406	0.73	6
Total	191 819	100 %	770

Palestinians living outside the camps

Area	No. of refugees	% by area	Sample N.N.
Beirut	46 695	23.82	143
Mount Lebanon	42 170	21.51	129
Saida	44 603	22.76	137
Tyre	44 189	22.54	135
Tripoli	10 073	5.14	31
Bekaa	8 277	4.22	25
Total	196 007	100 %	600