



س
غزة

Where The Sun Spills
Its Light

2023

GaZa

G U I D E B O O K

Where The Sun Spills Its Light



There are seventy mosques with niches in the city, out of which eleven mosques the Friday prayer is held. One of these is the “Friday Mosque” located near the market, where Governor Husayn Pasha performs his prayers. This mosque is notable for its tall and well-constructed minaret. Additionally, there are two hundred standpipes available to quench the thirsty people.

Gaza is known for its bathhouses, including Al-Basha and Al-Askar baths, as well as its 600 shops. While Gaza may not be a full-fledged port, it has established itself as a thriving commercial city with a wealth of valuable goods. Glass and saddlery factories are prevalent, and the stone-built merchant market is highly flourishing.

The city boasts a delightful atmosphere and fresh air. Additionally, it is abundant in wheat and renowned for its high-quality barley. Noteworthy are the woolen crackers produced in Gaza. Gaza is also known for its production of tissues, bathrobes, and towels, which come in various sizes, both large and small.

The town is home to 7,000 orchards renowned for their exquisite grapes. Similarly, its olives, berries, lemons, capers, figs, melons, pomegranates, dates, and other fruits enjoy a well-deserved reputation in markets worldwide. It is worth mentioning that the town’s oil is exported to Egypt, and transported on the backs of camels. This high-quality oil is in great demand there.

GAZA

You are currently glimpsing into the rich history of a beloved city. However, this history merely scratches the surface of the city's vast historical tapestry. Throughout the ages, the city has been witnessing to numerous significant events. From its lands, the city has welcomed titans, merchants, hermits, lovers, travelers, and heroic figures who valiantly resisted invasions. The following details will captivate your interest and inspire further exploration. During your search, you will come across abundant information recounting the city's multiple instances of destruction, sieges, starvation, and the extermination of its people. Yet, you will find no accounts of its surrender to any adversary.



بلدية غزة



My Homeland

Glory and beauty, sublimity and splendor
Are in your hills, are in your hills
Life and deliverance, pleasure and hope
Are in your air, are in your air

Will I see you, will I see you?

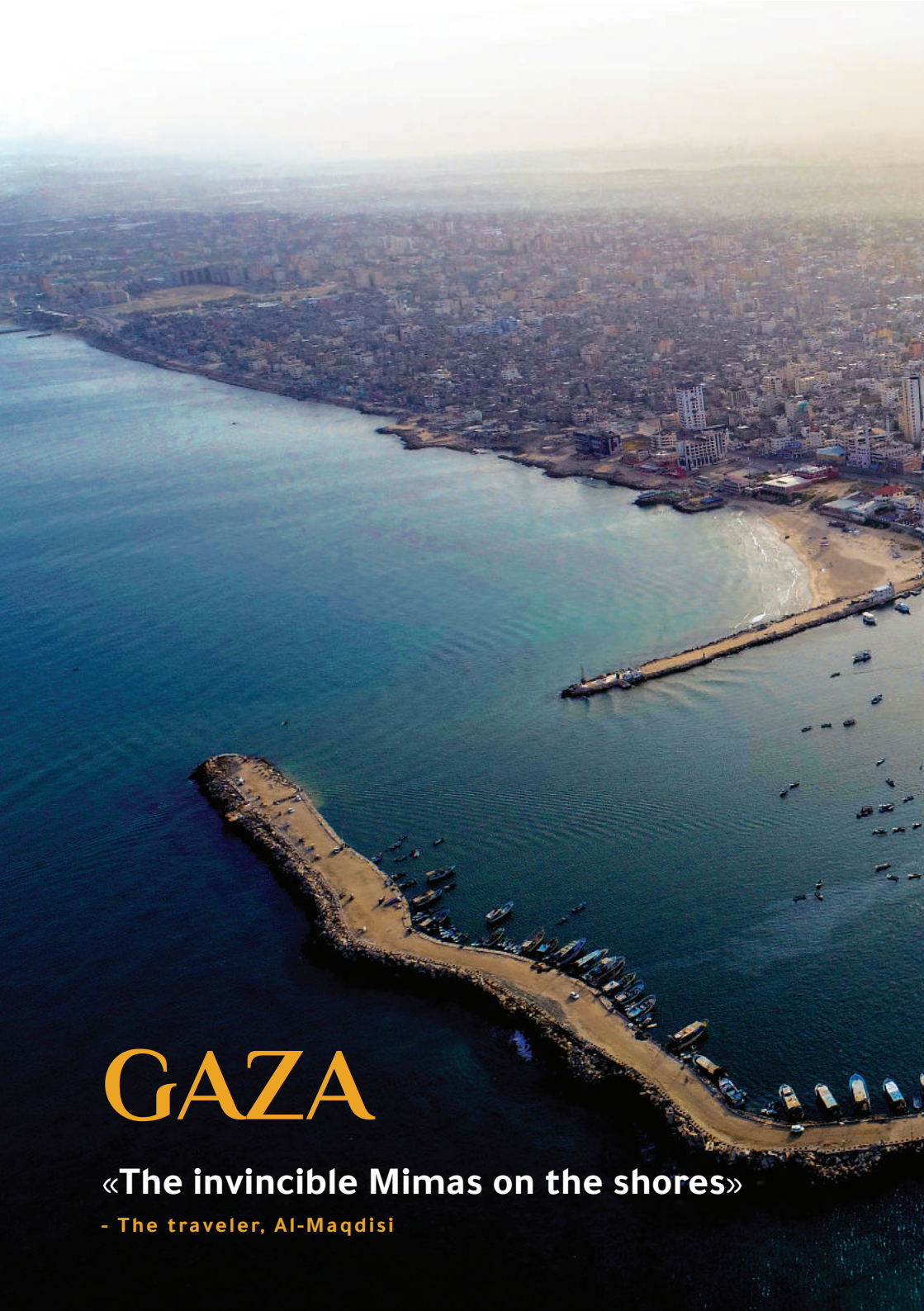
Safely comforted and victoriously honored
Safely comforted and victoriously honored

Will I see you in your eminence?
Reaching to the stars, reaching to the stars

My Homeland, My Homeland...

O, My Home poem
By the Palestinian poet, Ibrahim Tuqan





GAZA

«The invincible Mimas on the shores»

- The traveler, Al-Maqdisi



بلدية غزة



بلد ستر

“And the grains of a sheaf drying up,
Shall fill the valley with sheaves!”

- Mahmoud Darwish

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Gaza: The Phoenix

The Gaza municipality has adopted the phoenix as its emblem, symbolizing a mythical bird renowned for its beauty and grandeur. While the specific attributes of this remarkable creature remain shrouded in mystery, its profound significance resonates deeply. Much like the phoenix, Gaza symbolizes a perpetual cycle of renewal and revival, emerging resiliently from its own metaphorical ashes.



Mayor's Speech

This is our city, Gaza, warmly greeting and embracing its indigenous citizens and guests, whether they are visitors or residents, with regard to its history, geography, and the tales of old.

Here, the sun's rays shine upon the ancient stones, minarets, churches, and the golden shore, reflecting the city's nobility and beauty. Our city, which has endured the ups and downs of life, has always proven its worthiness and capacity to live on its own terms, embracing love, devotion, dignity, and sacrifice.

Now, we present to you a glimpse of our beloved city, its streets, gardens, and renowned monuments that extend throughout history. Despite the concealed agony that resides within its core, the city's present is vibrant and full of life, eagerly anticipating a future built upon harmony, unity, and everlasting prosperity.

Dr. Yahya Al-Sarraj

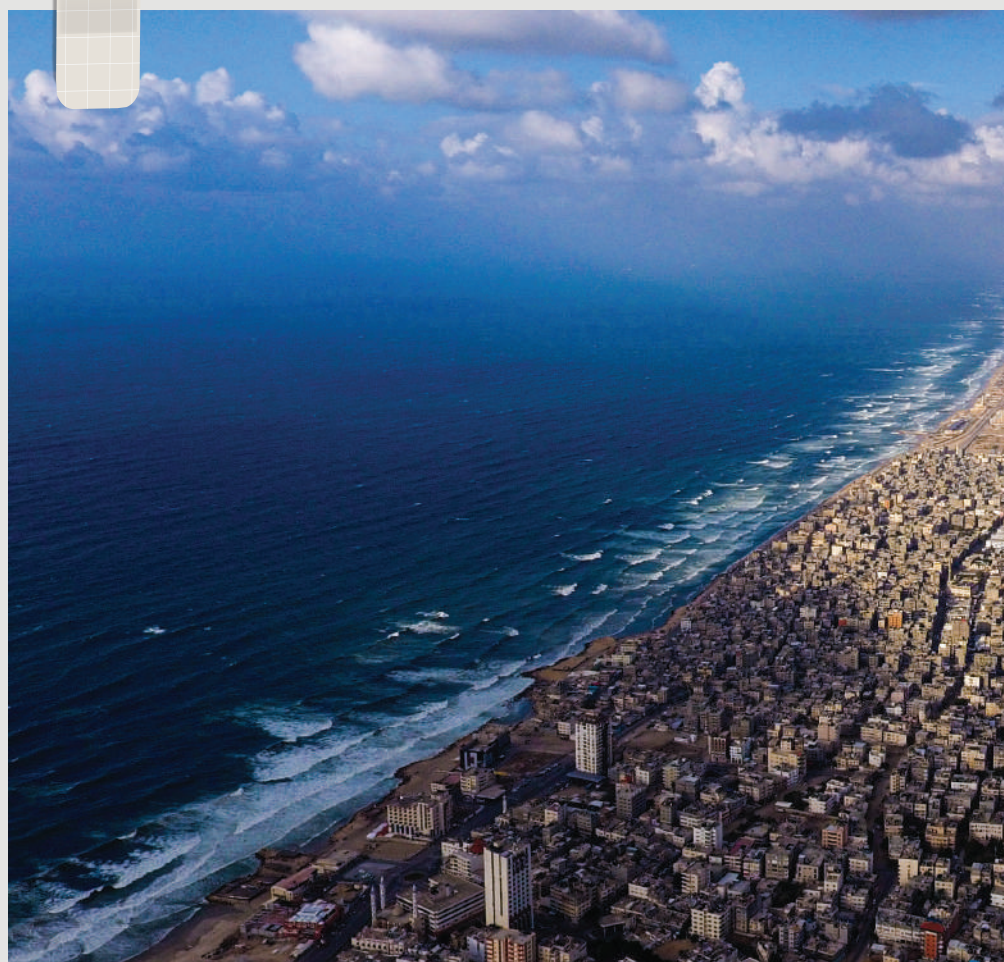




Partners In Development

Our vision ||

is to become a thriving creative city—a dynamic hub that serves as both a commercial and cultural center.



Gaza in brief

Gaza has been etched with gold in history for being one of the historic Palestinian cities with a longstanding reputation for having some of the best fertile lands in the world. This ancient city embellishes the Mediterranean coast with its spectacular and breathtaking beauty. Thanks to its privileged location on the southwestern edge of Palestine, Gaza acquires significant importance stemming from its central position in the ancient world. Situated along the renowned Horus Route, it served as a crucial thoroughfare for travelers heading toward Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad, and other civilizations of antiquity



The city acquired various names throughout successive civilizations. The Canaanites called it '**Hazati**,' the Egyptians referred to it as '**Gazato**,' and the Assyrians knew it as '**Izzati**.' These names were derived from the sense of pride, signifying the city's impregnability and strength—a testament to its unwavering resilience throughout its long history. It is noteworthy that Gaza City retained its Arabic name, which coexisted since its inception. The Arabs used to call it '**Gaza**' and continue to refer to it as '**Ghazzat Hashem**,' in honor of Hashem, the grandfather of Prophet Muhammad. He passed through Gaza during his summer commercial journey to the Levant, where he breathed his last and found his final resting place.





Saudi Arabia

Geographical Location

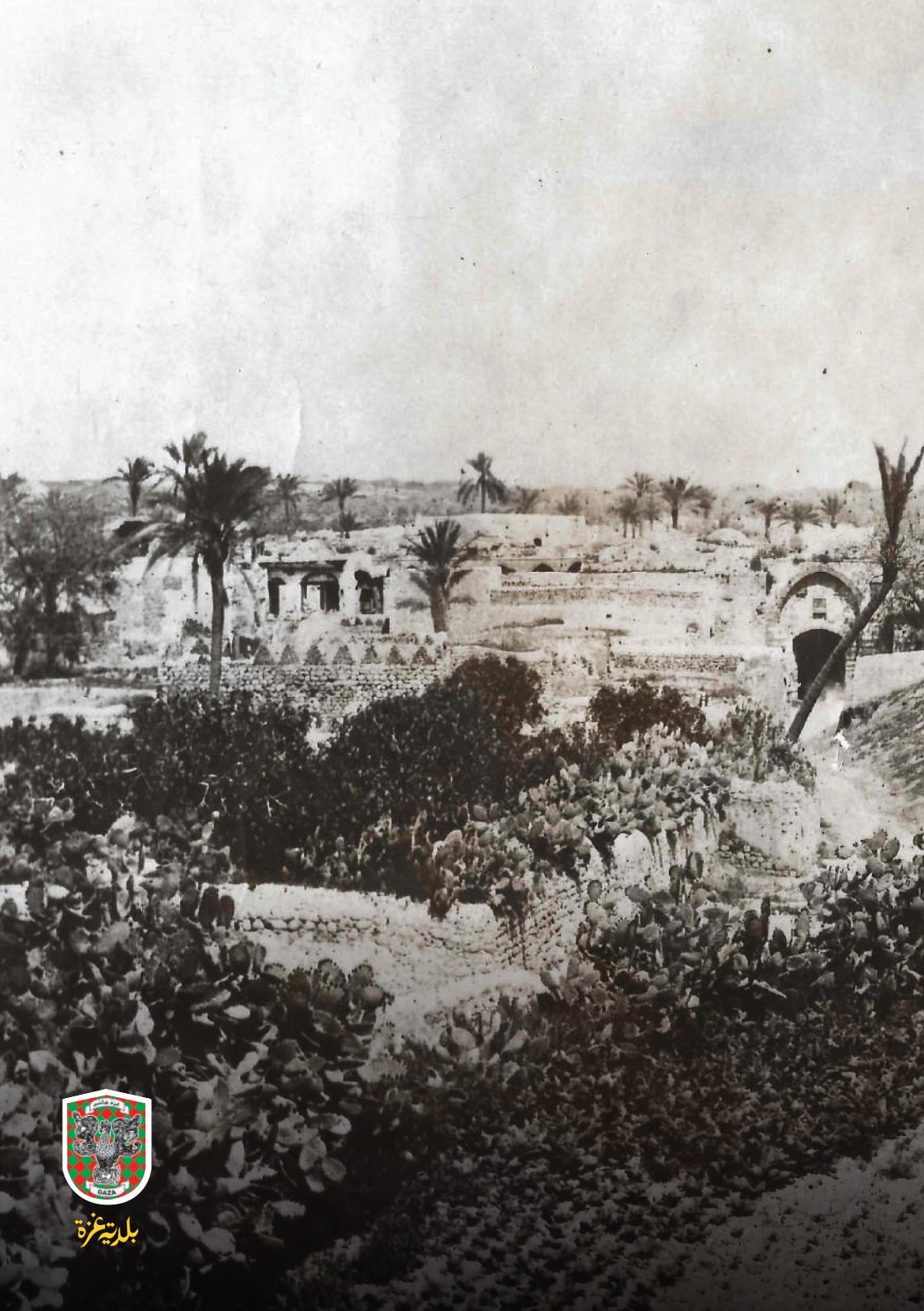
Gaza City is located in the southwest of Palestine, as it was built on a hill that rises about 45 meters above sea level. It is bordered to the west by the Mediterranean Sea and to the south by the Arab Republic of Egypt. It is 79 km away from Jerusalem, the capital of Palestine. The city is the first tourist destination for residents of other cities because of its cultural, tourist, and recreational places.

Area and Population

The city spans approximately 65 square kilometers and is home to around 900 thousand residents, as per the end-of-2022 census.

Nature and climate

The city is situated at a latitude of 31.1 degrees north of the equator and a longitude of 34 degrees east. The climate is characterized by mild, dry summers and cool, rainy winters.



بلدية غزة



Gaza: The City of History and Rootedness

|| The minaret of the Great Omari Mosque in the Old City in 1860 AD

© Palestinian Digital Archive, Birzeit University

The City's History Throughout the Ages

Perched atop a prominent hill and fortified with walls and castles across successive periods, the ancient city of Gaza was originally founded by a humble community.

The city of Gaza, with its unique location in the heart of the world at the junction of the three continents (Asia, Africa, and Europe) along the Mediterranean Sea, formed an important link between East and West, and its port, Teda (Anthedon Port), reinforced its status as a civilized crossing for commercial, cultural and human interaction between the many civilizations of the world through what is known Horus Route.



|| The Walls of Gaza City, by David Roberts






The earth stands alone as a witness to the authentic interaction among civilizations that have traversed, developed, and inhabited its lands, leaving behind evidence that reflects civilizational sophistication and religious tolerance.

There is no bond truer than the one formed through human interaction with the Earth. Since ancient times, Gazans have engaged with their bountiful environment. They constructed walls and towers using its stones, fortifying the city against invaders. They built homes and ovens with its clay, and crafted utensils for their daily lives. They also harnessed wood and metals in various industries, cultivating the land and relying on it for sustenance, clothing, and medicine. Their trade was established based on the crafts skillfully produced by their hands.

|| The city of Gaza is home to the oldest human artifacts, which can be found at the archaeological sites of Tell al-Sakan and Tell el-Ajjul. These sites hold ancient traces of human habitation.

|| An exceptional collection of ancient pottery and stone vessels





Gaza, renowned in the 5th and 6th centuries as the **Virtuous City**, the **Charming City**, the **Rich City**, and the **Shining City**, housed an extensive collection of pottery and stone vessels. It stood as a beacon of learning, attracting students from all corners of the world. Additionally, esteemed travelers and geographers included references to Gaza in their journeys, documenting various aspects of the region.

Gaza in the Eyes of the Travelers:

“The flowers and plants adorned its beauty,
As autumn bloomed into a spring melody.
Gaza of the Sham blossomed with lands,
Whenever the dazzling clouds graced its sands.”

(The Traveler Abd Al-Ghani Al-Nabulsi)

“The city is spacious in its territory, abundant in architecture, with beautiful markets, numerous mosques, and encompassed by walls.”

(Ibn Battuta)

“Gardens, resembling paradises adorned with verdure, offer a picturesque sight to behold.”

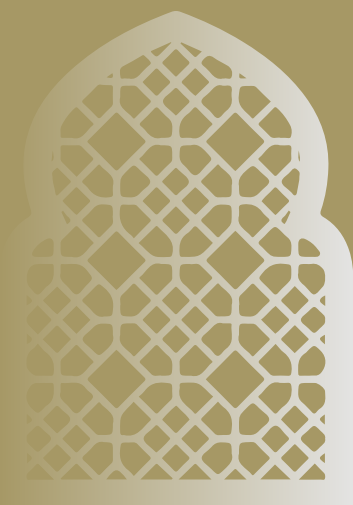
(The traveller Al-Khyari)

“A medium-sized town with orchards overlooking the Mediterranean Sea, Gaza boasts palm trees and fertile fields. Sand dunes lie between the town and the sea, interspersed with orchards. Notably, there is a small castle or mansion situated within its vicinity.”

(Ibn Hawqal)

Imam Muhammad Ibn Idris Al-Shafi'i has penned this poetry to convey his intense longing and nostalgia for his homeland, saying:

“Verily, my heart yearns for the land of Gaza,
And even if silence befalls us after our parting.
May Allah bless me with a piece of its sacred soil,
That I may adorn my eyes with its profound longing.”



The Historic And Archaeological Monuments

Visible traces of the construction and urbanization of ancient civilizations in the city have regrettably faded over time. Nevertheless, the city continues to unveil its rich historical heritage, revealing the remnants of its prosperous past through a vast array of artifacts that astonish the world. Numerous monuments dating back to the Canaanite, Assyrian, Babylonian, Greek, and Roman periods have been unearthed within its borders, either by chance occurrences under specific circumstances or through a limited number of archaeological excavations.

The majority of the surviving historical and archaeological structures can be traced back to the Mamluk and Ottoman periods, owing to the materials used in their construction and the extensive building and urbanization that occurred during that era.



Great Omari Mosque

Once a pagan temple, Al-Omari Mosque underwent a transformation into a church before becoming one of the most notable and expansive historical mosques in Palestine. Exhibiting magnificent architecture, it boasts an exquisite form and design, encompassing an area of 4,100 square meters. Positioned at the heart of the ancient city of Gaza, the mosque derived its name from the Muslim Caliph Umar ibn Al-Khattab, who liberated it during his reign.



El-Sayed Hashim Mosque

El-Sayyid Hashim Mosque, constructed during the Ottoman era in the Mamluk architectural style, underwent pulpit renovations in 1850 AD. Situated in the northwestern part of the old town, on the western side of the ancient Ashkelon Gate, the mosque spans an area of 2,400 square meters. It is believed to be associated with Sayyid Hashim ibn 'Abd Manaf, a direct ancestor of the Prophet Muhammad, who is buried there.





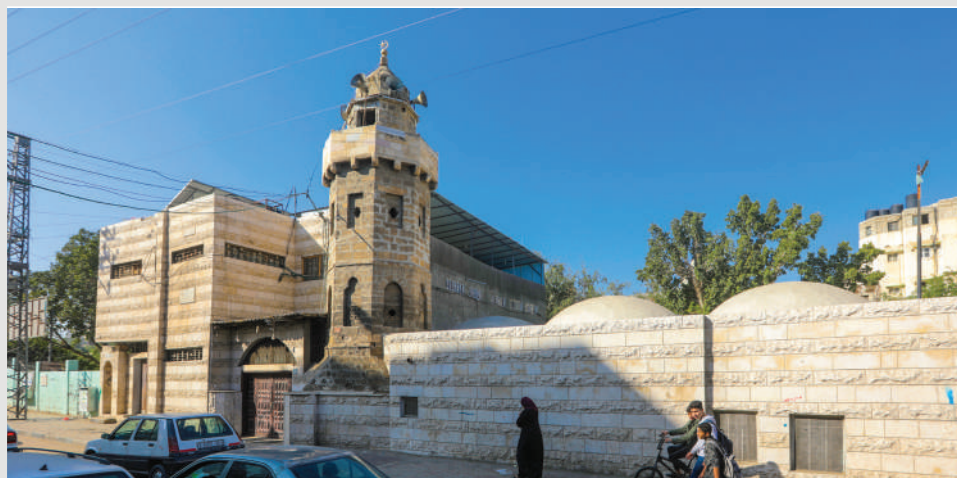
Within a winding alley that meanders through the streets of the old town, specifically in the Ras Al-Taleh neighborhood of the Zeitoun district, a captivating historical scene emerges. Minarets and churches are adjacent in a harmonious tapestry, symbolizing eras of peace, brotherhood and unity between the Muslims and Christians of the city.

Katib Al-Wilaya Mosque

Katib al-Wilaya Mosque spans an area of 377 square meters. Its construction can be traced back to 1432 AD, during the reign of Mamluk Sultan Muhammad Ibn Qalawun. The mosque obtained its name, “Katib al-Wilaya Mosque,” in honor of the Ottoman governor Ahmed Bey, who oversaw its renovation during the reign of Sultan Murad bin Salim II in 1587 AD.

Church of Saint Porphyrius

The Church of Saint Porphyrius stands as one of the oldest archaeological churches, originating from the early 5th century AD in 425 AD during the reign of King Arcadius. It was constructed by Bishop Porphyrius of Gaza, who found his final resting place within the church. Commonly referred to as the “Cemetery Church” and locally known as the Orthodox Roman Church, it resides within an enclosed area, surrounded by a wall, encompassing an approximate area of 2,000 square meters.





Ibn Marwan Mosque

Ibn Marwan Mosque, established in 1371 AD, stands as one of the renowned mosques in Gaza. Situated in the Tuffah neighborhood, this mosque spans an area of 320 square meters and was constructed during the Mamluk era. It is named after Sheikh Ali Ibn Marwan, whose tomb rests beneath the dome attached to the mosque. Sheikh Ali Ibn Marwan, a noble figure, passed away in 1315 AD. It is believed that he hailed from one of the noble families from Morocco who settled in Gaza.



Ibn Othman Mosque

Ibn Othman Mosque is the second-largest historical mosque in Gaza, following the grand Al-Omari Mosque. It is named after Shihab al-Din Ibn Othman, a renowned religious scholar of Gaza. Its construction dates back to 1400 AD. Within the western arcade of the mosque, there lies the tomb of Prince Yalakhja, the ruler of Gaza during the reign of Mamluk Sultan Barquq, who passed away in 1446 AD.



The Lady Ruqayya Mosque (Sayeda Ruqayya Mosque)

The Lady Ruqayya Mosque is situated in the Shejaiya neighborhood. Its name is believed to be derived from Ruqayya bint Ahmed, the wife of one of the governors of Gaza during the Ottoman era. Spanning an area of approximately 174 square meters, the mosque comprises a single spacious prayer hall with a mihrab (prayer niche).



Holy Family Church for Latin

It is located on Al-Kamilia Street, named after King Al-Kamel Al-Ayyubi. This monastery was established by the Austrian monk George Ghatt in 1879. In terms of the name, it is said that the family of Christ crossed the land of Gaza during their travels. Therefore, Father Ghatt desired this monastery to be a shrine that chronicles the passage of the Holy Family in Gaza on their way to Egypt.



© Premiere Urgence Internationale



Saint Hilarion Monastery

(Tell Umm Amer)

It is located southward, about 7 km from Gaza City, on a hill that rises about 22 km, 500 meters away from the Mediterranean coast. It is one of the first and most prominent monasteries in Palestine as it is attributed to Saint Hilarion who was born in the city of Tabatha, about 7 km from Gaza.



The Byzantine Church

It is one of the most prominent churches in the Levant, which existence lasted from the Islamic conquest of Palestine until the Abbasid Caliphate rule, witnessing 24 Byzantine emperors and 14 Muslim caliphs. It is located northeast of Gaza within the boundaries of Jabalia Municipality, with an area of about 500 square meters. The basilica style was adopted when building the church, characterized by its three extended arcades. It also contains a place for worshipping as well as a baptismal basin.



Commonwealth II War Cemetery

(The English Cemetery)

The English cemetery is located in Al-Tuffah neighborhood on Jaffa Street. The cemetery includes 3217 graves in an area of 40 dunums. It was established by the British Commonwealth Forces during the occupation of Palestine in 1917 AD during the First World War.



© IUGAZA

|| Shaykh Ahmed Zawiya



Zawiyas are religious places whose construction flourished during the Mamluk era. It is mainly the headquarter of a righteous man who gathers a group of disciples who seek knowledge, in which seminars for praying and reciting the Holy Quran are held. The Zawiyas were characterized by their simplicity and modesty.

Shaykh Ahmed Zawiya

It is located in the Al-Daraj neighborhood of the Old City. It is attributed to Sheikh Ahmad Badawi, one of the most famous Sufi scholars who resided in Gaza. He came to the city from Egypt at the age of forty-one. His followers in Egypt and abroad formed a Sufi sect known as (Ahmadiyya).

Maqam Al-Sheikh Abi Al-Azm

The construction of Maqam Abi Al-Azm dates back to the Mamluk Era. It was established by the governor of Gaza (Qanswa Qara), for Al-sheikh Abi Al-Azm in 1502. The maqam remained standing until the French campaign on Palestine, then was renewed in the late 19th century. After that, it was transformed to become a library for educating children. However, it was eventually abandoned and destroyed due to World War I.

Maqam Ibn Marwan

It is located in Al-Tuffah neighborhood in the old city of Gaza, the maqam mainly consists of a single chamber situated to the southwest of the ancient Ibn Marwan Mosque. Al Sheikh Ali Ibn Marwan, who passed away in the year 715 AH, is buried there.



The Historic Gaza Municipality Building

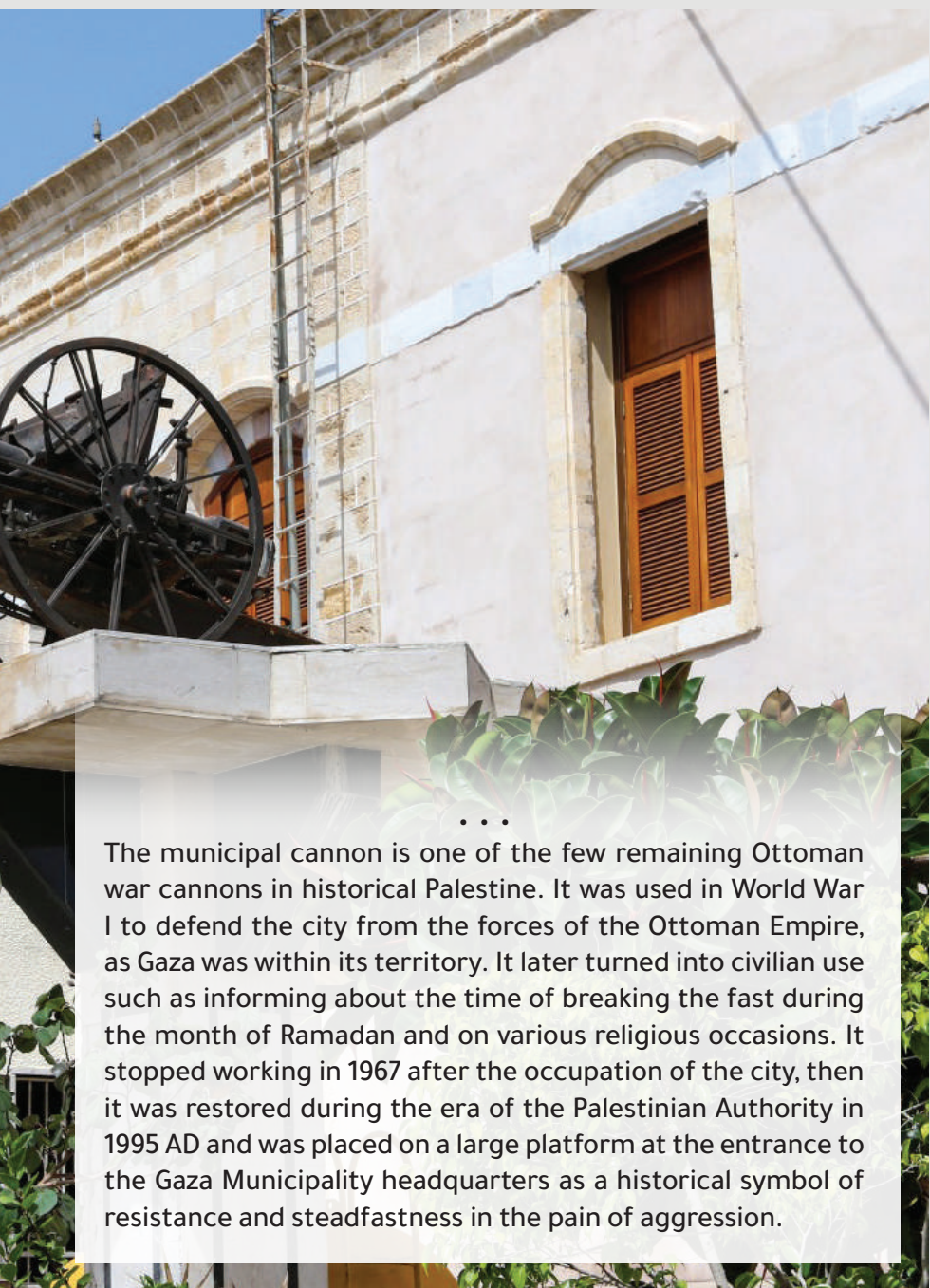
At the beginning of Omar Al-Mukhtar Street from the western side, stands out the old Gaza Municipality Building, adorned with its beautiful and distinctive architectural embellishments and divisions. The headquarters was constructed during the presidency of Mr. Fahmi Al-Husseini of the Municipal Council between 1928-1934. It remained the main building of Gaza Municipality until the end of the 1960s, before its relocation to the current main building in Palestine Square.



Presidential HQ of Gaza's Municipality

On a high hill that reveals the old city in all its details, the building of the current headquarters of the municipality of Gaza, which was established at the beginning of the 20th century 1904 AD. In the past, the headquarters was used as a hospital under the name of Tal al-Zuhur, and later as the main headquarters of the municipality. The building occupies an area of 320 square meters with a stone façade with wooden window openings.





...

The municipal cannon is one of the few remaining Ottoman war cannons in historical Palestine. It was used in World War I to defend the city from the forces of the Ottoman Empire, as Gaza was within its territory. It later turned into civilian use such as informing about the time of breaking the fast during the month of Ramadan and on various religious occasions. It stopped working in 1967 after the occupation of the city, then it was restored during the era of the Palestinian Authority in 1995 AD and was placed on a large platform at the entrance to the Gaza Municipality headquarters as a historical symbol of resistance and steadfastness in the pain of aggression.



Al-Kamiliyah School

It is one of the most significant schools in Gaza City, named after its founder, King Kamil ibn Al-Malik Al-'Adil, in the year 1237. The school is located in Zeitoun neighborhood of the old town and was attached to Al- Kamiliyah Mosque. It stands as the sole surviving school of its kind.



© Beetcom 3amer



Saqqa Palace

(Qasr Al-Saqqa)

Saqqa Palace stands as a remarkable example of the opulent houses of wealthy residents of the city. It is located in Shejaiya Neighborhood. The Palace was constructed in the Ottoman era, specifically during the reign of Sultan Muhammad IV in the year 1661.



Al-Alami Residence

Among the most prominent landmarks that distinguished the old town is the Al-Alami residence. It is located in Al-Daraj neighborhood along with the Kassab Residence, both stand as the last witnesses to that type of architecture. The residence opens its doors to visitors and invites them to explore its rooms and spaces. It also hosts numerous cultural activities, art exhibitions, and events.



Hathat House

It is located in Shejaiya Neighborhood near Sayyida Ruqayya Mosque. The house belongs to Ibrahim Hathat who built it in the 18th century.





Qasr Al-Basha

It is the only remaining model of palace architecture in the city of Gaza. A lot of decorations stand out to adorn the entrance to the palace, with two lions facing each other on their sides to symbolize the victory of the Mamluks. The Palace is located in Al-Daraj neighborhood on the eastern side of the Old City, and its names varied according to the changes that occurred in the city.

Its construction dates back to the Mamluk era in the year 1600 AD. Many names were given to this palace. At the beginning of its establishment, it was known as (Radwan Castle) in relation to the Radwan family that ruled Gaza City during the early Ottoman rule. It was called (Pasha Palace) and (Napoleon's Fort) as Napoleon Bonaparte stayed for a few nights during his French campaign in 1799 AD, and in (Al-Dabouya) at the end of the Ottoman rule, as it took a government center at the time, while it was called during the British Mandate (Al-Saraya) when it was used as a police headquarters, and (Pasha Palace) is the most frequently used name for the building in the current period.

During Egyptian rule, the palace served as the headquarters of Princess Ferial's School, sister of King Farouk. The school's name was changed to "Al-Zahraa School" after the July Revolution. At the beginning of 2010, the palace was opened as the first government museum in Gaza, utilizing its spaces to display different types and forms of artifacts. Visitors can come to the palace at any time of the year.



Khan al-Zayt

The Khan had two gates while others say it had three main gates including the one located at its northern wall opposite Al-Qissariya, and the second one located on the western wall facing Sheikh Atiya Street “Hamam Al-Sammara Street”. However, large parts of Khan Al-Zayt were demolished during World War I.



Qissariya Market

The Qaysariyya market was built in the middle of the old city in the fourteenth century during the reign of the Mamluk Sultan Muhammad ibn Qalawun by Prince (Tankz al-Nasiri) in 1329 AD. It is popularly known as the Gold Market, as it is one of the largest ancient gold markets in Palestine.



Hamam al-Sammara

(The Bath of the Samaritans)

After a long day of working, Hamam al-Sammara is the best place to go for relaxation and leisure. The bathhouse is located in Zeitoun neighborhood in the Old City and covers an area of 300 square meters. It is worth mentioning that the bathhouse is still standing and provides services for both men and women in a captivating and traditional atmosphere.



Rifaiya Road

Sabil Al-Rifaiya is located on Al-Wahda Street, a few meters away from Qasr al-Basha. This sabil was established by (Bahram bin Mustafa Pasha) in 1568 AD, and it was called the Sabil Al-Rifaiya after (Rifaat Bey Al-Jarkasi), the governor of Gaza City at the time, who renovated and restored it in 1861. He used solid sandstone to build it and re-operated it again in 2014 after its restoration.



|| Tell Al-Montar



Tell Al-Montar

It is located 2.5 km east of Gaza City at an altitude of 90 meters above sea level. This coveted position established important strategic and security advantages throughout history. The surrounding mountains and hills served as surveillance and protection posts, as well as a hotspot for joyous gatherings and ceremonies.

Tell Al-Sakan

Located north of the Gaza Valley and 5 km south of Gaza City, Tal Al- Sakan sits on a sandy hill at an altitude of over 30 meters above sea level, and it is dated back to the early Bronze Age around 2300-3300 BC. It is the oldest fortified Egyptian administrative center in Palestine. Moreover, it played a vital role as a major hub for trade and commerce between Egypt and its neighboring regions.

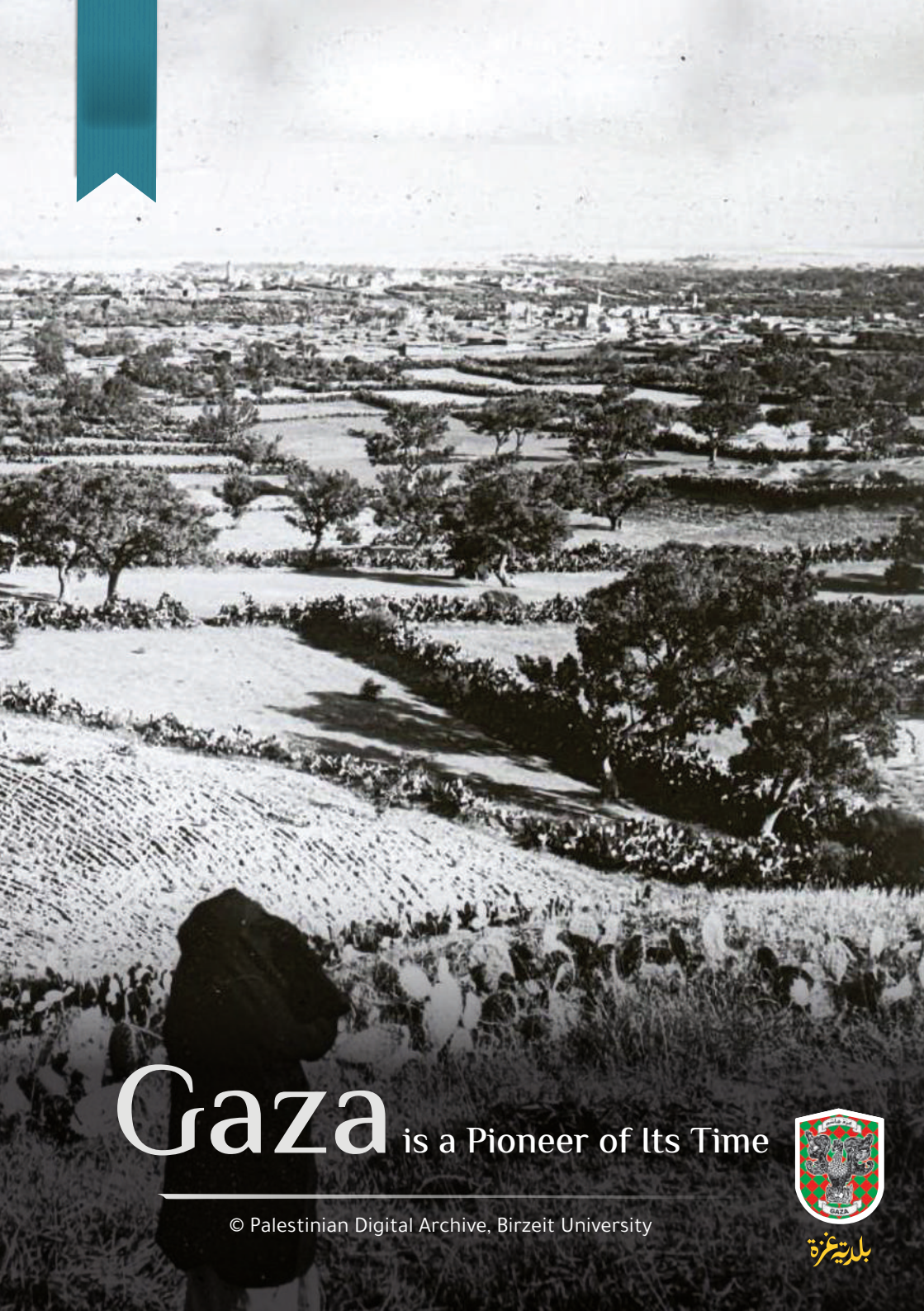
Tell el-Ajjul

It is located south of Gaza City on the banks of the Gaza Valley, dating back to the early Bronze Age around 4500-1350 BC. This hill witnessed human settlement activities on the banks of the valley, as well as excavations that took place between 1932-1935 AD where many architectural remains of the city were discovered along with its wall, which was more than 150 cm wide and 50 feet high. This wall was permeated by a number of gates and contained watch towers. Furthermore, the remains of pottery jars that were used to bury the dead were also found, and a 500-foot-long tunnel prepared by the residents to flee the city when it was besieged was also found. But that's not all, as five palaces dating back to the dynastic era in Egypt were also found in addition to a number of pottery and copper utensils, golden ornaments, and a group of golden scarabs that were used as amulets.



|| Aerial photo of Gaza City, 1956

© Palestinian Digital Archive, Birzeit University



Gaza is a Pioneer of Its Time

© Palestinian Digital Archive, Birzeit University



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Anthedon Harbour

The name of the Anthedon Harbour comes from the Greek word “Anthedon”, which means white flowers, in reference to the tulips that the coast of Gaza City was famous for. The port has acquired many names, including Miomas, Balakhia, and Theda. It is the oldest known commercial seaport along the Mediterranean coast, established during the Greek period in 323 BC and continuing into the Roman era. The port is situated approximately 6 km northwest of Gaza City and covered an area of about one square kilometer.

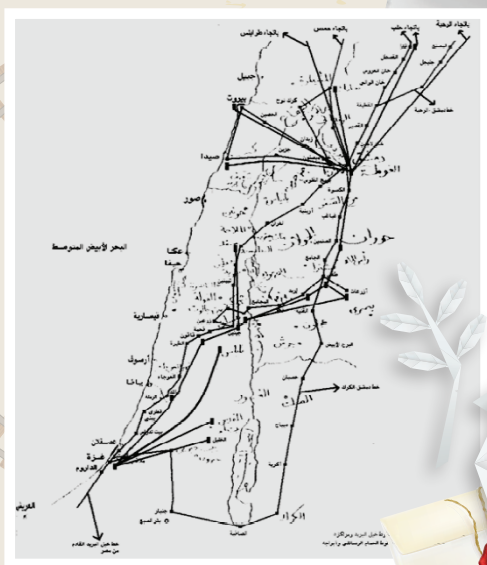


|| Aftermath of excavations at the archaeological site of Anthedon



Mail in Gaza

During the Mamluk era, Palestine gained significant importance due to its strategic location between Egypt and the Levant. So, the Mamluks established an organized mail system. The mail routes included connections between Gaza and Cairo, Damascus, as well as Karak. This emphasizes the crucial role that the city of Gaza played as a vital hub along the Postal Road, situated at the heart of the world.

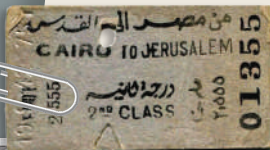


|| Postal Lines Route



Hejaz Railway

It served as a vital link connecting various Arab countries, particularly Gaza. The construction of the railway began at the end of the Ottoman Empire. However, its progress was temporarily halted due to World War I in 1916, and it was permanently discontinued following the events of the Naksa in June 1967, which resulted in the occupation of the Gaza Strip.



Palestine Railways

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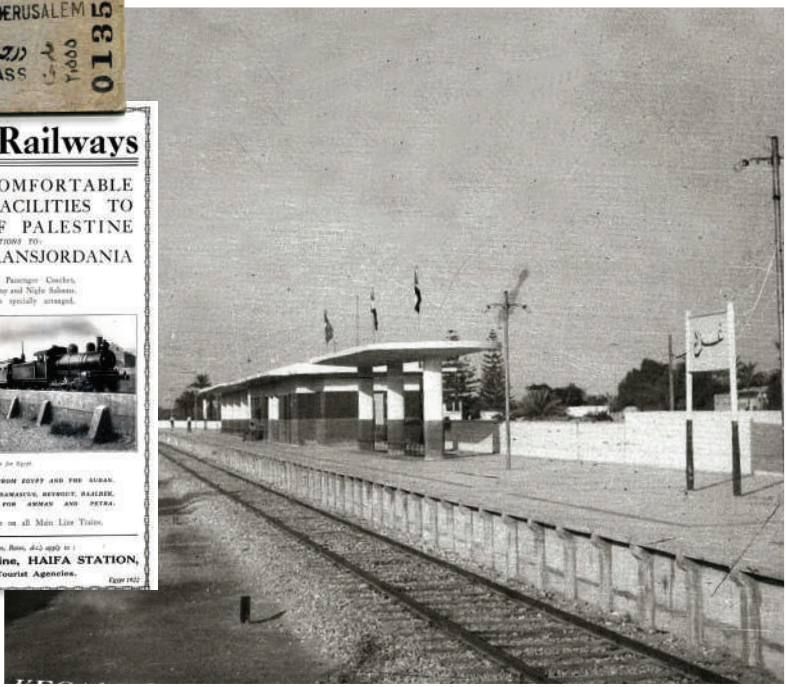
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Page 1942



|| Gaza's Train Station on The Railway Road



The First Airport in Gaza

It is situated in the northeastern part of the city in close proximity to the Karni crossing. The facility was established in the 1940s during the British occupation and operated by the United Nations Emergency Forces (UNEF) following the British withdrawal in 1948. However, its operations ceased after 1967 following the events of that year.



|| Archive Photos

A contemporary observer of the city would notice that it has managed to preserve numerous historical features that are still visible in its alleys and landmarks, breathing life into its surroundings. On the other hand, when looking at the modern face of the city, we witness the characteristics of urbanization and contemporary life, along with its modernity. Presently, the city is progressing with its neighbors, boasting a population exceeding 900,000 residents. Its service buildings are strategically distributed within a tightly-knit urban fabric, resiliently defying all endeavors by the Israeli occupation to demolish and erase its existence.

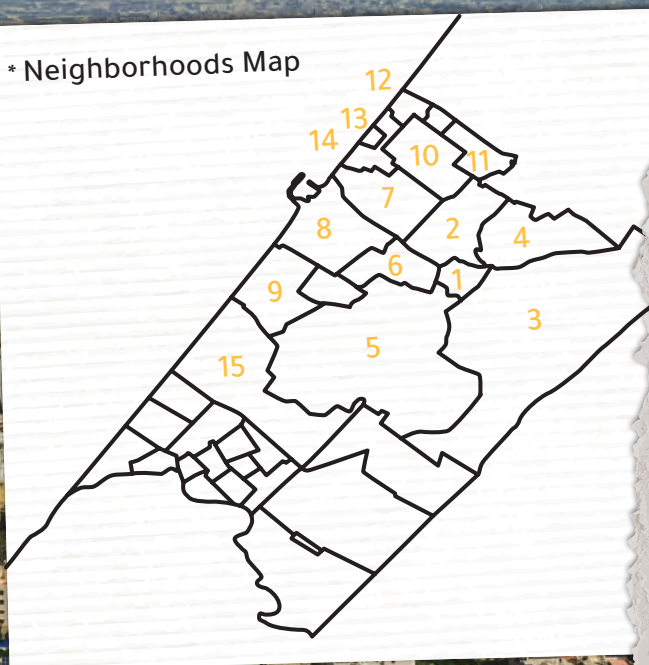
Present-Day Gaza



بلدية غزة

Gaza Neighborhoods

- 1: The Old City 2: Al-Daraj Neighborhood 3: Shejaiya 4: Al-Tuffah
5: Al-Zaytun 6: Al-Sabra 7: Al-Rimal Northern Neighborhood 8: Al-Rimal Southern Neighborhood 9: Tel al-Hawa
10: Al-Nasr 11: Al-Sheikh Radwan 12: Madinat al-Awda
13: Al-Balakhiya 14: Beach Camp for Palestinian refugees
15: city expansion





Gaza Neighborhoods

Gaza City consists of 20 neighborhoods, residential areas accredited by the Municipal Council, and a Palestinian refugee camp, and the most prominent are:

• **The Old City:** One of the main cultural, architectural, and economic centers of the Gaza Strip since it is located in the city center with an area of 0.703 dunums. The Old City has a unique architectural design dating to the Mamluk and Ottoman era and another combination of architectural cultures.

• **Al-Daraj Neighborhood** It is located in the center of Gaza with an area of 2432 dunums. Quarter's name dates back to the Ottoman era when it was named due to its topography gradient. Previously, it was named "Bani Amer" in relation to the Arab Bani Amer tribe that inhabited it at the beginning of the Islamic conquest. Then, the "Al-Barjaliyya" neighborhood in relation to the warriors defending the city's towers in the Mamluk era.


• **Shejaiya Neighborhood:** One of the largest Gaza neighborhoods and located directly to the east of the Old City with an area of 14305 dunums. Shejaiya neighborhood includes four residential areas: Turkmen, Eastern Turkmen, Jdeideh, and Eastern Jdeideh. Shejaiya's name dates back to the martyr "Shuja Al-Din Al-Kurd", who was martyred in a battle between the Ayyubids and the Crusaders in 637 AH / 1239 AD.

• **Al-Tuffah neighborhood:** It is located northward of the city, with an area of 2843 dunums. The neighborhood's name Al-Tuffah "apple" is due to the large number of apple farms that used to enchant the eyes of its visitors with its snow-colored flowers and the smell that was adorning noses. In the past, it was named "Haker Al-Tuffah", and it had a khan named "Khan Haker Al-Tuffah".

• **Zaytun Neighborhood:** It is the largest quarter in Gaza in terms of area, with 9,156 dunums. Moreover, it is the second-largest quarter in Gaza in terms of population. Zaytun Quarter is located in the heart of the Old City and occupies almost the whole southern half. It was named Zaytun "Olive" because of the large number of olive trees that still cover most of its land.

• **Sabra Neighborhood:** It is located southward of the old hill of Gaza with an area of 1,516 dunums. This neighborhood was named Sabra "Cactus" because it was widely spread in its region.





• **Al-Rimal:** It is one of the most prestigious neighborhoods in Gaza and has the largest area with 5138 dunums. It was built in the forties of the 20th century on large areas of marine sand, and it is one of the first neighborhoods that adjoined the sea. Al-Rimal neighborhood includes the Legislative Council, Unknown Soldier's Square, cinemas, and cultural and entertainment venues. It also contains Omar Al-Mukhtar Street, the longest and most significant street in the city, which connects its east to its west.

• **Tel al-Hawa:** One of the neighborhoods of the new Gaza City with an area of 751 dunums. Architecture emerged there after the arrival of the Palestinian National Authority to the Gaza Strip in 1994. This neighborhood contains most of the government institutions.

• **Al-Nasr:** It is one of the prestigious and organized neighborhoods in Gaza that stretches from Al-Rimal neighborhood in the south to the Sheikh Radwan neighborhood in the north, and from the Beach Camp in the west to Al-Daraj in the east, with an area of 2044 dunums. This neighborhood was established to be a place of residence for the families of the martyrs who fell in defense of Palestine. In 1959, it was announced under the name "Nasr City for the sons of martyrs".

• **Al-Sheikh Radwan:** It stretches from first street to third street in the north, and from Al-Nasr Street in the west to Jabalia Camp in the east. It is located 3 km north of the Old City. The neighborhood's name dates back to a righteous man named Radwan, who inherited this land from his father and was buried in it. Radwan is the brother of Sheikh Ijlin, who was also named Sheikh Ijlin neighborhood after him.

• **Madinat al-Awda:** It is One of the new residential cities in Gaza, with an area of 711 dunums, where architecture emerged after the arrival of the Palestinian National Authority to the Gaza Strip in 1994. It is located between Al-Nasr and Sheikh Radwan neighborhoods, north of Gaza City.

• **Beach Camp for Palestinian refugees:** It is also known as Al-Shati Camp, and it is located on Gaza Beach, from the north and northwest of Gaza. It is about 4 km from the city center, with an area of 519 dunums and 813 dunums at the time of construction.

• **Al-Balakhiya:** is located 6 km northwest of the Old City and with an area of one dunum that includes the northwestern part of the Beach Camp up to the street borders that connects Sheikh Radwan area with Al-Bahr Street. It is one of the historical neighborhoods since it contains several houses and artifacts, which still need studies and ages of excavation.



بلدية عجلون



Distinctive Landmarks

of a City Brimming with Beauty







|| Kuwait Square, a memorial monument on Salah al-Din Street

A large, three-dimensional red sculpture of the phrase "I love GAZA" is the central focus. The letters are thick and blocky, with a heart symbol replacing the word "love". The sculpture sits on a low, light-colored concrete base. The ground in the foreground is paved with reddish-brown rectangular tiles. In the background, the blue sea is visible under a clear blue sky with some light clouds. To the left, there's a small structure made of straw or reeds. To the right, some colorful umbrellas and beach chairs are partially visible.

I love GAZA



|| The Lighthouse project at the seaport of Gaza City: A masterpiece
by the Palestinian Artist, Sherif Serhan



”

A monument symbolizing the struggle of the Palestinian people against the Israeli occupation. It was erected during the Egyptian administration of the Gaza Strip in 1957. The Israeli occupation forces destroyed it in 1967 following its occupation of the Gaza Strip. Then it was rebuilt in 2000 by a decision of the late President Yasser Arafat.

|| The memorial monument of the Unknown Soldier, and the Palestinian Legislative Council in the background.



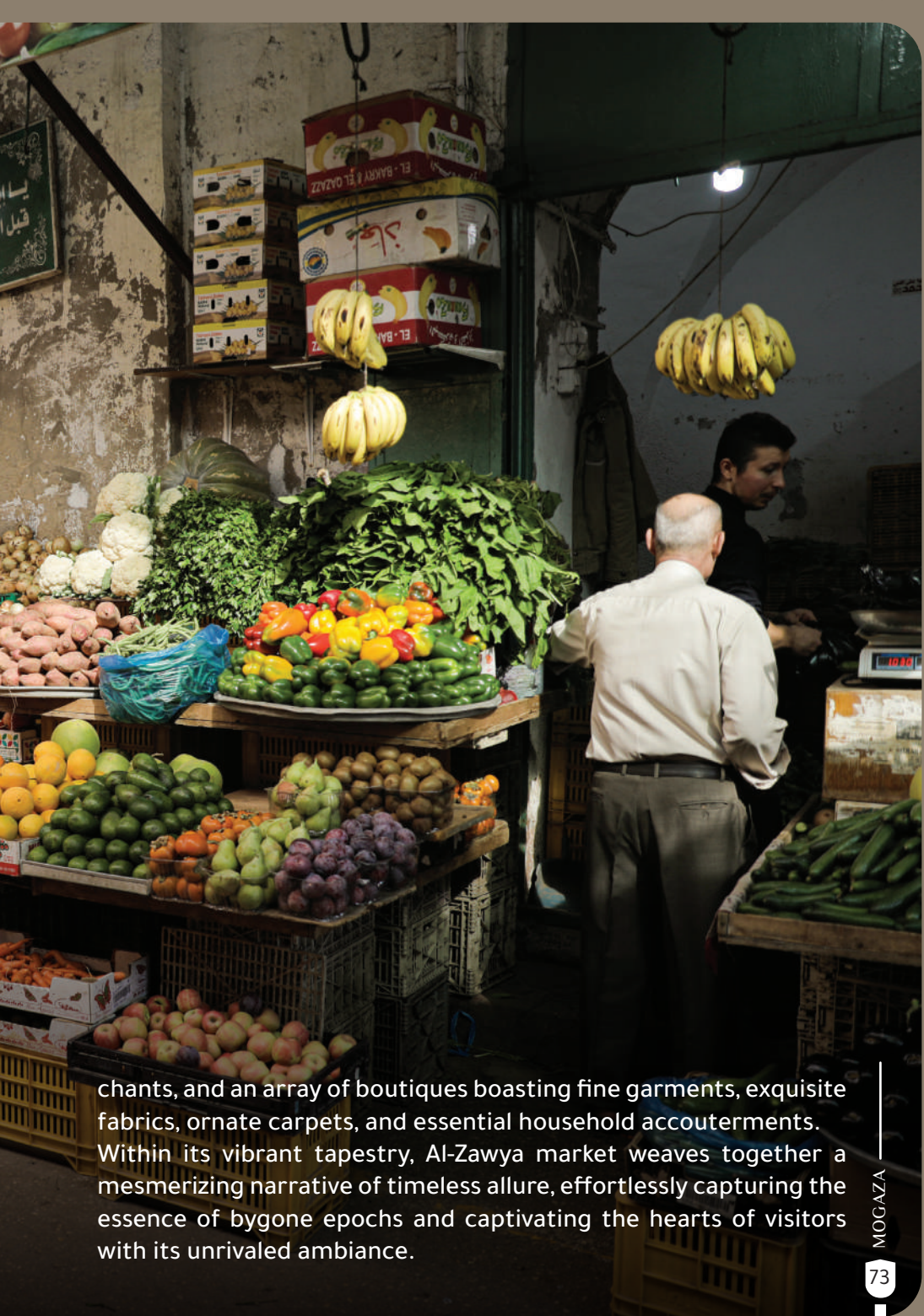
|| The ancient cedar tree, deeply rooted in the land of Gaza for over two centuries



The City Marketplaces

Al-Zawya Market:

A regal gem, reigns supreme as the Crown jewel of the bustling Gazan markets, exuding a harmonious blend of historical grandeur, archaeological splendor, and thriving commerce. Rooted in the illustrious Mamluk era, this market stands as an ode to the past, adorned with an enchanting tapestry of elongated stalls, beckoning perfumers, verdant produce purveyors, succulent meat mer-



chants, and an array of boutiques boasting fine garments, exquisite fabrics, ornate carpets, and essential household accouterments. Within its vibrant tapestry, Al-Zawya market weaves together a mesmerizing narrative of timeless allure, effortlessly capturing the essence of bygone epochs and captivating the hearts of visitors with its unrivaled ambiance.





The Fish Market Hub:

Nestled along the shores of the Gaza Sea, the bustling Hissed Fish Market reigns as the grandest congregation for Showcasing and trading the freshest catch in the city. It stands proudly in close proximity to the bustling seaport, embodying the epitome of maritime abundance. With its vibrant ambiance and an awe-inspiring array of marine treasures, this market serves as a testament to the timeless bond between man and the bountiful Sea. Dive into the Captivating tales that unfold within the Fishermen's Haven, where the essence of coastal livelihood thrives.

Fras Market:

One of Gaza's magnificent Historic popular bazaars, situated west of the New Gaza municipality building. A timeless icon of Gaza's rich heritage, located to the west of the New Gaza Municipality building.

Sheikh Radwan Market:

The Revered Hub of Commerce and Culture. Nestled in the northern expanse of Gaza lies the illustrious Sheikh Radwan Market, a name synonymous with vibrant trade and historical significance. Within its expensive walls, a myriad of grand stalls stands proudly, offering a captivating array of specialized shops. Here, the tantalizing aromas of freshly harvested vegetables, succulent fruits, and oceanic treasures mingle, while the air buzzes with the whispers of silk and gold. Step into this time-honored emporium and immerse yourself in the tapestry of tradition and opulence that define the Sheikh Radwan Market.



Al-Shati Market:

A vibrant daily market nestled in the heart of the Beach camp, locally known as “ Al-Shati Camp “, pulsating with a myriad of commercial outlets and bustling public stalls. Here, a treasure trove of fresh products awaits, with a kaleidoscope of vibrant vegetables, succulent fruits, tantalizing seafood, and premium cuts of meat. But what truly sets this market apart is its reputation for unbeatable prices, Captivating both locals and neighboring communities. Step into the Captivating world of the Coastal Bazaar, where affordability meets the lively spirit of a beloved community market.

Al-Shejaiya Market:

A sprawling marketplace showcasing an extensive array of diverse clothing, positioned on the historic site of the old train station, adjacent to Salah al-Din Street in the vibrant Al-Shejaiya Neighborhood.

Al-Yarmouk Popular Market:

The weekly city Bazaar, is an epitome of historical grandeur, embodying the rich tapestry of Gaza’s past. It pulsates with the vibrancy of trade, offering an eclectic assortment of goods, both new and pre-owned, catering to the diverse needs of its patrons.



Trailblazing Education



Al-Azhar University



UCAS



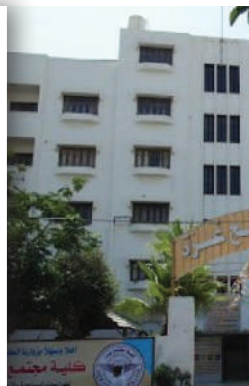
Al-Israa university



Al-Quds Open University



GCCTS



Additional Institutions:



IUGAZA



University of Palestine



Al-Aqsa University







Arts and Culture

The city expresses itself through arts and culture. These are the main tools of measuring people's taste and building on it, in order to create a state of ongoing beauty. That's why the city is vibrant with artistic, and cultural institutions that aim to enrich the lives of people with activities such as musical, cinematic, on-stage, or literary works.

||The previous headquarters of the Arts and Crafts Village prior to bombardment.



Cultural centres and libraries



Rashad Al-Shawwa Centre:

Rashad Al-Shawwa Centre is considered the first of its kind in all of Palestine. It was established in 1988 by the late former mayor Rashad Al-Shawwa. The center went on to become a cultural incubator in 1992, as it was built according to international standards. Since then, the center has been offering an incubation space for a lot of national and cultural activities, providing talented youth with a free platform to share their abilities.

The building consists of three floors, containing versatile rooms where ceremonies, exhibitions, and theatrical activities are held. Moreover, there is also a library on the top floor that is called “Diana Tamari Sabagh” library, containing more than 100,000 books. Recently, the cultural café has been opened as an interactive space for intellectuals and young people.



Gaza Municipal Library:

In 1999, the library was opened as the first public library in the city. Its establishment was a result of the twinning agreement between the Gaza municipality and the Urban Society of Dunkirk- France, opening Gaza's eyes to the world to enhance the culture, facilitate access to different sources of information, and contribute to the cultural, social, and educational development of the Palestinian society.

The library consists of many books and frequently published magazines that are available in Arabic, English, and French. They are divided into two floors. It also includes a special section for children and another one for internet use.

In addition to the research, photography, and book borrowing services, the library offers many specialized training courses in languages and different skills. It also arranges annual camps for children during the summer holidays.



Al-Qattan Centre:

Abd Al-Mohsen Al-Qattan Foundation established the child's center in Gaza in 2005. It was created to enhance the children's opportunities, feed their curiosity, expand their perception, and connect them with the world. This happens through the spaces provided by the center's library, exhibition halls, and theater as well as a number of interactive games.

The center offers various activities across all age groups that promote the child's freedom to play and participate. Furthermore, it integrates them into talent development clubs. The center's services extend beyond its corridors through the "mobile library" and "child's-friendly areas" projects.



Children's Happiness Centre:

The center offers many internal and external activities aimed at preserving Palestinian identity and heritage, contributing in strengthening the children's diverse creativity and artistic capacities. It also focuses on developing an interactive, school-family bridge through the various activities offered by the center.



Institut français of Gaza:

The French center, known well across Gaza Strip, is one of the most important foreign cultural centers in the city. It provides a selective programme which offers opportunities for young people to explore the world and different cultures, and enhance their knowledge of languages, literature, and cultures, focusing on the aspects that can be related to the Palestinian community in general, and to Gaza's community specifically, utilizing the library within the center, in addition to the meetings, exhibitions, and celebrations that are held in order to contribute to the promotion of cultural exchange between the two countries.



Holst Park & Cultural Center:

One of the cultural centers of the General Department of Cultural Affairs and Centers in the municipality of Gaza, it was established in 1998. The center provides various cultural and cognitive services, including reading, music, theater, and painting.



Arts and Crafts Village:

The village was established in 1998 with the aim of preserving Palestinian identity and heritage, disseminating contemporary art, and holding exhibitions of art and handicrafts. As a result of the Israeli aggression in 2018, the village headquarter was damaged and moved to the Rashad al-Shawwa center until the rebuilding of the headquarter.



Artificial Limbs And Polo Centre:

It is a charitable medical center affiliated with the municipality of Gaza and established in 1976 to provide services in the fields of prosthetic limbs, orthopedic devices, and postpartum abnormalities. Moreover, it provides many unique services to injured people and persons with disabilities in Gaza.



Basma Association for Culture and Arts (Al-Wahidi House):

Founded in the Gaza Strip in 1994, the Basma Association is an independent non-profit NGO that aims to support the growth of Palestinian society by offering cultural, educational, recreational, and psychosocial support activities to children, youth, and women, including people with disabilities.

As a result of the 2020 war, the site of the BACA was destroyed, so it has taken al-Wahidi House as a headquarter for it, to outline the importance of preserving archaeological sites and supporting the cultural and historical heritage of the city.

It is one of the few remaining archaeological houses in the Old Town, al-Wahidi House was renovated in 2022 and set up as a cultural center that celebrates this architectural heritage and kept it alive as a vibrant icon.



Arab Orthodox Cultural and Social Center:

An independent social and cultural center that offers cultural and social activities.

The Arab Orthodox Social Cultural Center in Gaza is one of the most important independent cultural centers concerned with providing activities and hosting cultural events of all kinds.

The center was opened in 2021 with the latest international specifications to be a leading platform for talent, innovation and entrepreneurship to promote cultural identity and social change for the Palestinian people.



© ymcagaza

Young Men's Christian Association:

The YMCA is one of the most critical active national institutions in Gaza that still works very efficiently since its opening in 1952.



Al-Ghassein House:

One of the historical houses located in the Old City, it is an outstanding example of late Ottoman-era architecture.

The house was restored in 2020 and involved a central courtyard surrounded by several rooms that are presently utilized as administrative and incubating spaces for many cultural activities. Moreover, art and cultural exhibitions are held periodically, so the house represents an effective forum for intellectuals and youth.



Palestinian Red Crescent Society (Haider Abdel-Shafi):

The YMCA is one of the most critical active national institutions in Gaza that still works very efficiently since its opening in 1952.



Before ..



Said Al-Mashal Foundation for Arts and Culture:

A Palestinian cultural institution established in 1996 in Gaza, also known as Al-Mashal Cultural Center, is one of the city's leading cultural institutions.

The institution was destroyed by Israeli war missiles in 2018, resulting in the loss of an essential cultural space.



© Theatre Day Productions أيام المسرح

Theatre Days Productions:

The TDP was founded in 1995 to work in the field of drama and theater as well as provide various pieces of training and artwork.



Tamer Institute for Community Education:

A non-governmental and non-profit educational organization established in 1989 to provide cultural services for children and youth.



General Union of Cultural Centers:

The GUCC was founded in 1997 to be a great incubator for the 52 cultural institutions and societies in Gaza.



Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children:

The ASDC was founded in 1992 in Gaza to assist children and adults with hearing disabilities in obtaining educational, rehabilitation, and training opportunities.



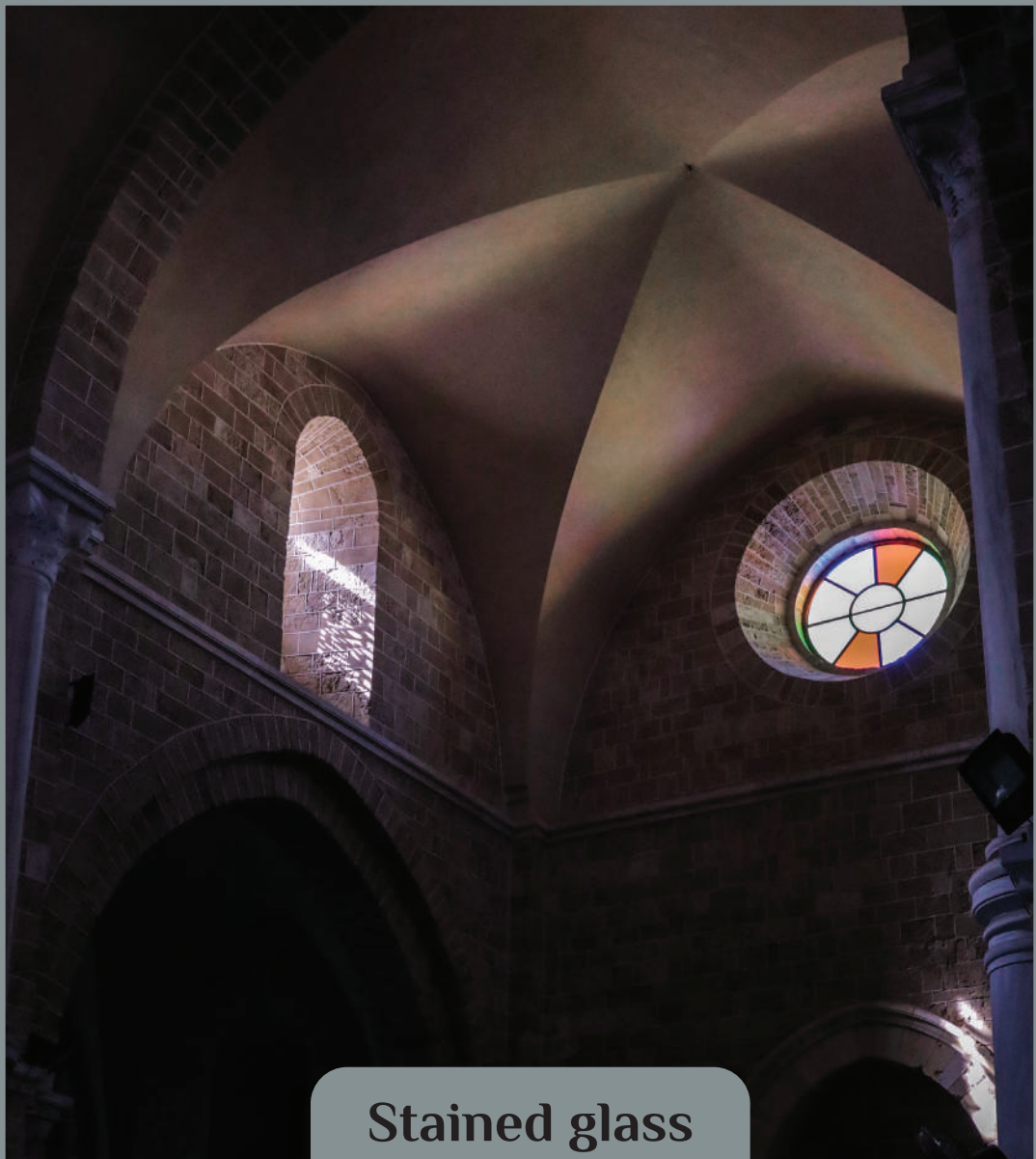


Traditional crafts



Pottery

As part of Gaza's history, this industry has played a significant role in manufacturing household utensils and construction work. At the end of the last century, 69 pottery factories in Gaza exported brown pottery to Jaffa, Beersheba, Transjordan, and Sinai.



Stained glass

A long-standing industry with roots dating back to the thirteenth century in Gaza. Expert manufacturers cut and install glass to create decorative pieces for decorating windows, openings, and daily tools. The final product embodies a high aesthetic and taste value.



Textile industry

Gaza is famous for its silk and woolen textile industry since Gazan's skilled artisans have created elegant gowns, carpets, and fabrics that adorn urban and rural clothing. Gaza is also known for its unique textile colors.



Gold industry

It is one of the traditional professions that developed with goldsmithing techniques. The pioneers of this craft gather in the gold markets to reshape the gold and metal bars into beautiful molds according to the customer's request.

A man is seated in a workshop, focused on weaving a large, round bamboo basket. He is wearing a grey and black long-sleeved shirt. The workshop has a rustic feel, with a concrete wall and various tools and materials hanging on the wall. A wooden workbench is visible to the left, and a large, partially finished bamboo basket is in the foreground on the left. The lighting is natural, highlighting the texture of the bamboo and the man's concentration.

Bamboo Industry

This craft has been around for over a century, passed down through generations as a family tradition. Skilled artisans use bamboo as their primary material to create exquisite furniture for homes, offices, and hotels.





Peasant Embroidery

Embroidery is one of the earliest artistic techniques used by skilled Palestinians to produce high-quality handicrafts, such as clothing and home furnishings. Unique colored threads are used for engraving nature-inspired shapes that have the character of originality and creativity.



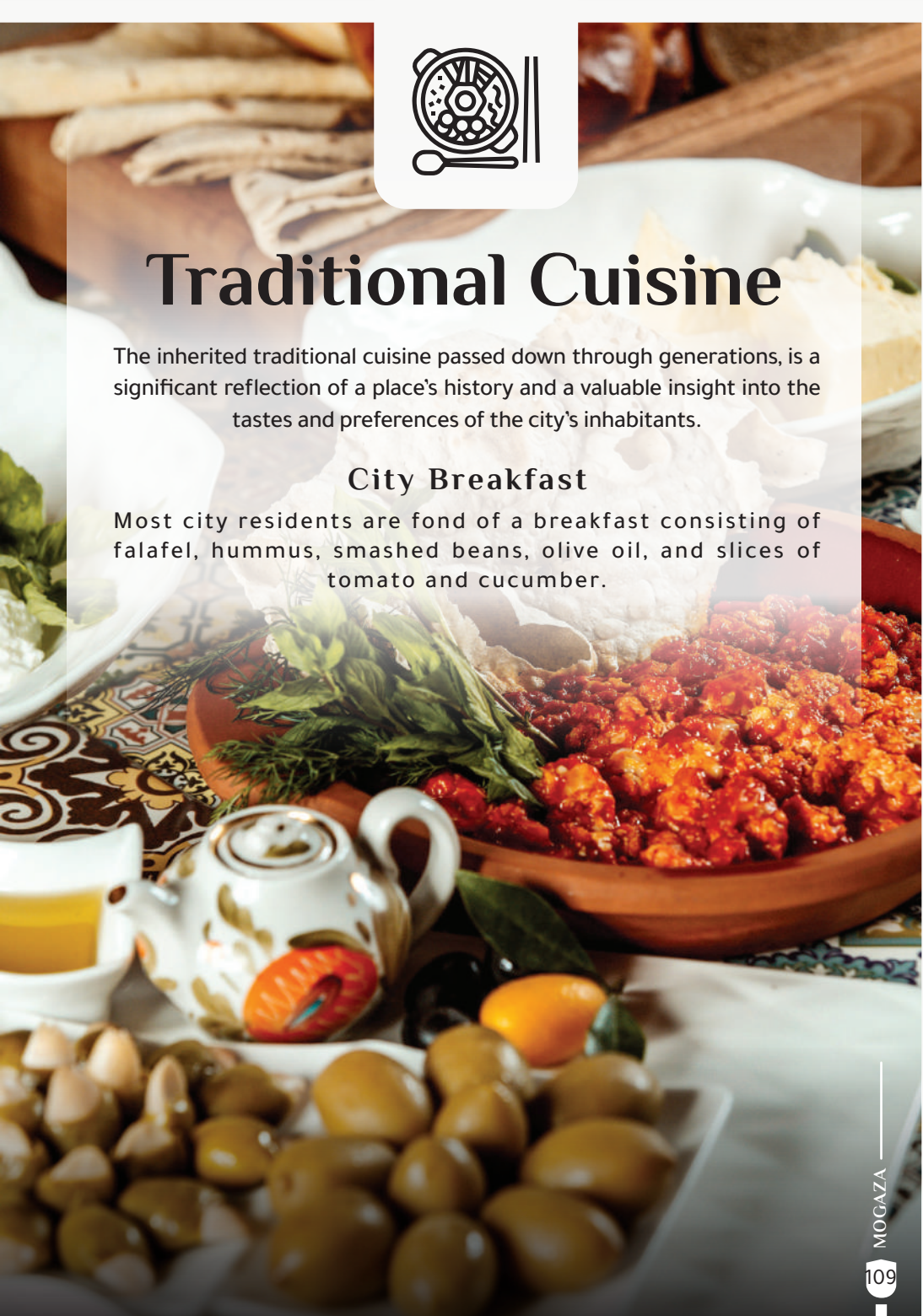


Traditional Cuisine

The inherited traditional cuisine passed down through generations, is a significant reflection of a place's history and a valuable insight into the tastes and preferences of the city's inhabitants.

City Breakfast

Most city residents are fond of a breakfast consisting of falafel, hummus, smashed beans, olive oil, and slices of tomato and cucumber.







Seafood

Like most coastal cities, fish of various kinds is one of the most important dishes of the people of the city who care a lot about the way they are served.

Gazan Salad

It is said that due to the Gazans' intense love for chili peppers, they created a salad known as the Gazan salad. It consists of tomato, lime, cucumber, dill, plenty of green peppers, and olive oil.

"al-Dakka"

This dish is served alongside fish, Fatta, fries, and other ingredients commonly found on the Gazan table. It consists of a lot of green peppers, garlic, salt, and lemon juice. It is called Al-Dakka because the ingredients are pounded in a clay pot until it becomes mashed and spicy.

Sumaghiyyeh

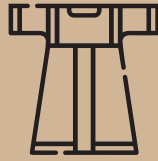
is one of the most popular meals in Gaza. It is named after the extensive use of Sumac in its preparation. The dish includes onions, spinach, garlic, chunks of meat, and other ingredients. In Gaza, sumaghiyyeh is well-known for being served during joyous occasions such as weddings and the first day of Eid.

Fughiyyeh

Fughiyyeh is a winter dish consisting of chard, onions, rice, peppers, garlic, soaked chickpeas, and lamb meat.

Rumaniyyeh

Rumaniyyeh is a traditional dish celebrated in most Palestinian coastal cities. It consists of lentils, eggplant, pomegranate seeds, and tangy pomegranate juice. It is served cold and eaten with toasted bread.



Traditional costumes



||Palestinian women wearing traditional thobes specific to Palestinian cities and villages

From right to left (Ramallah- Beit Jala- Beit Sahour- Hebron- Beit Dajan- Mount of Jaffa- Jericho- Gaza- Villages of Hebron Mountain- Villages of Jerusalem- Beersheba- Ashdod)

© PalestineRemembered.com



Women's traditional costumes in the Gaza district

The traditional thobe symbolizes the identity of the city and its residents. In particular, the traditional Palestinian costume has a major historical significance for the Palestinian people. Each city has its unique costume, distinguished by its patterns, motifs, and fabrics. The traditional costume of the Gaza district's cities (such as Ashdod and Ashkelon) is made of linen and distinguished by geometric designs, and known for its "Paradise and Fire" design."

|| The above pictures showcase the thobes of the city of Gaza and its district



|| Scenes from the celebration of Eid al-Fitr in Al-Zawiya market



Holidays, Occasions and Events

Like other Palestinian cities, Gaza celebrates Islamic and Christian religious holidays, New Year's Day, Islamic New Year, and Independence Day (November 15th). It commemorates the Nakba (May 15th), Land Day (March 30th), and Palestinian Prisoners Day (April 17th) annually.

Furthermore, numerous cultural and artistic celebrations and periodic festivals take place regularly, where the city's residents gather to celebrate in a space that honors art in all its forms.

بتنظيم من
Organized by

معهد إدوارد سعيد الوطني للموسيقى
The Edward Said National Conservatory of Music
جامعة بيرزيت BIRZET UNIVERSITY

غزة . فلسطين ٢٠١٩
Gaza . Palestine 2019

مهرجان البحر والحرية

Sea and Freedom Festival





|| From the Sea and Freedom Festival held by the Edward Said National Music Institute in 2019



شوفونا

Red Carpet

السجادة الحمراء

Amr Al-Khatib Film Festival
Kazama Palestine 2015



|| The Holst Cultural Center hosts the Cinematic Red-Carpet Festival for Films, in 2022



الحمد لله
محمد سيدي



|| From the art exhibition "Letters" held in the Village of Arts and Crafts





|| From the Palestine Flowers and Birds Exhibition, Unknown Soldier Square, 2022





|| Keeping up with the events of the World Cup from the Saad Sayel Sports Hall



|| The Hanging Strawberry Tourist Farm, northern Gaza City



Agriculture in Gaza

Gaza City is one of the agricultural towns where citrus fruits, vegetables, roses, olive trees, and mussels are mainly famous. In fruits, strawberries are traced to the throne of the product.

The city has celebratory carnivals during the harvesting season in winter and spring. The locals call it “red gold” due to its beauty and sweetness in taste.



|| The Industrial Zone (Bedico), east of Gaza City



Industry in Gaza

In Gaza City, there are many local light industries, such as plastic manufacturing, which serve diverse applications in construction and households.

It also includes furniture manufacturing, food, fizzy drinks, juice, fishing, and the production of some pharmaceuticals.





Tourist Destinations

Gaza City is a coastal city with a moderate climate, making it the foremost tourist destination in the Gaza Strip, and for visitors arriving from outside the city because of the Old City's abundance of tourist hotels, restaurants, parks, and archaeological sites.

|| The Fishermen's Port in Gaza Harbor







||Side of the waterfront stretching along Rashid Street





|| Nighttime commercial gatherings in Al-Rimal neighborhood





|| The Park of the Unknown Soldier, Al-Rimal neighborhood





|| The Municipal Park, contains green spaces, diverse seating areas, children's playgrounds, and grocery stores





||Barcelona Park, Tel Al-Hawa, is a vital park that residents of all ages come to for picnics





|| Al-Qubbah Park, east of Shejaiya neighborhood



|| Al-Bayarah Park, Al-Rimal neighborhood





|| Gaza Zoo in the Zeitoun neighborhood, which includes diverse seating areas, games, animal cages, and birds





Sports in Gaza

Gaza City is one of the leading sports cities. The Gaza Sports Club was founded in the city in 1934, paving the way for the formation of other clubs within the city. Additionally, the Palestinian Premier League for the Gaza Strip is held annually.





||The Olive Stadium was founded in 2022 during the era of the current municipal council and can accommodate about 1000 spectators

بلدية غزة

باب اليرموك

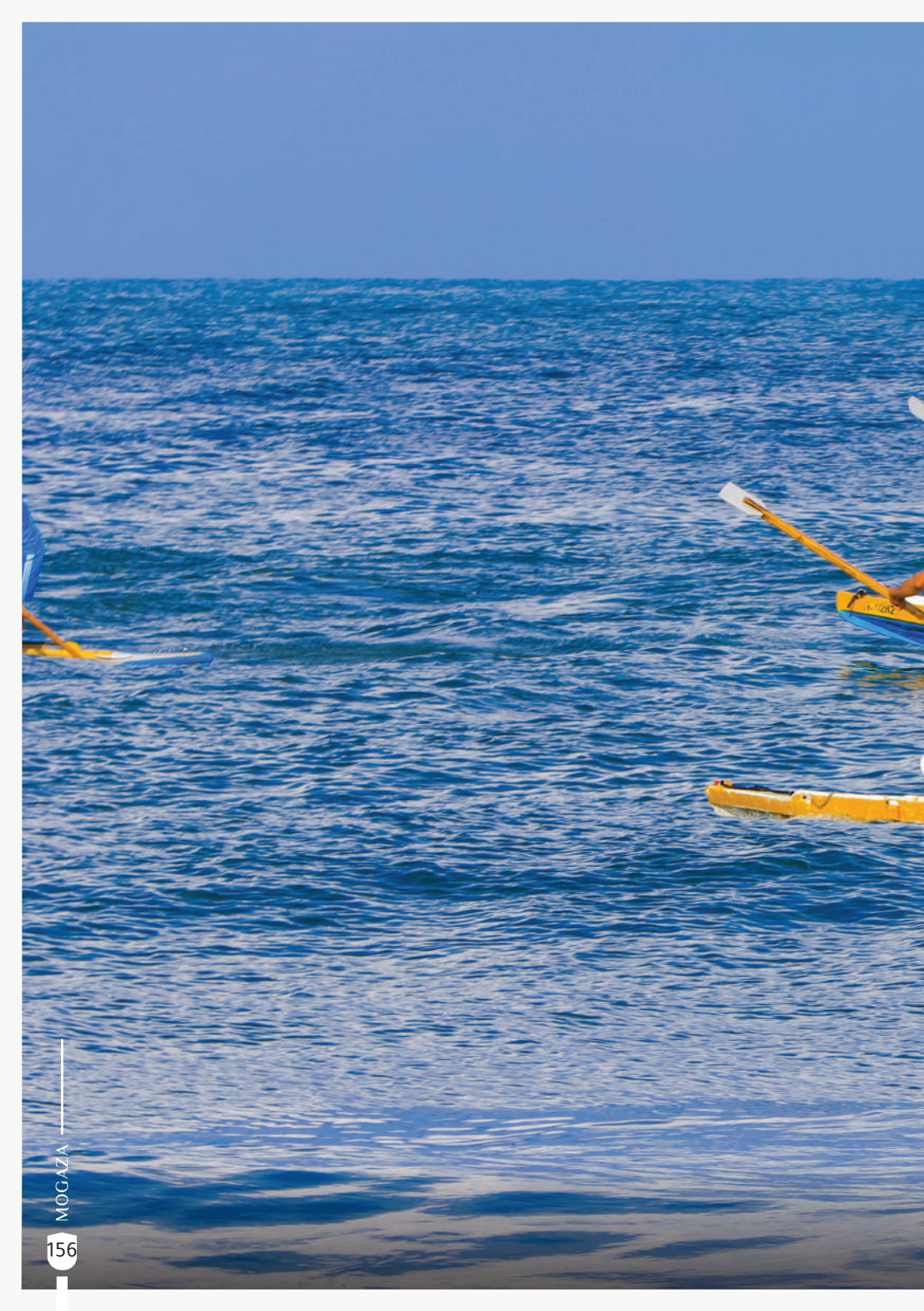


||Yarmouk Stadium, one of the largest and oldest stadiums in the city, was founded in 1952 and can accommodate 9,000 spectators





||The Palestine Stadium, founded in 1967 and can accommodate about 10,000 spectators





|| Rowing Championship held by the Palestinian Sailing and Rowing Federation on the shore of the Gaza Sea

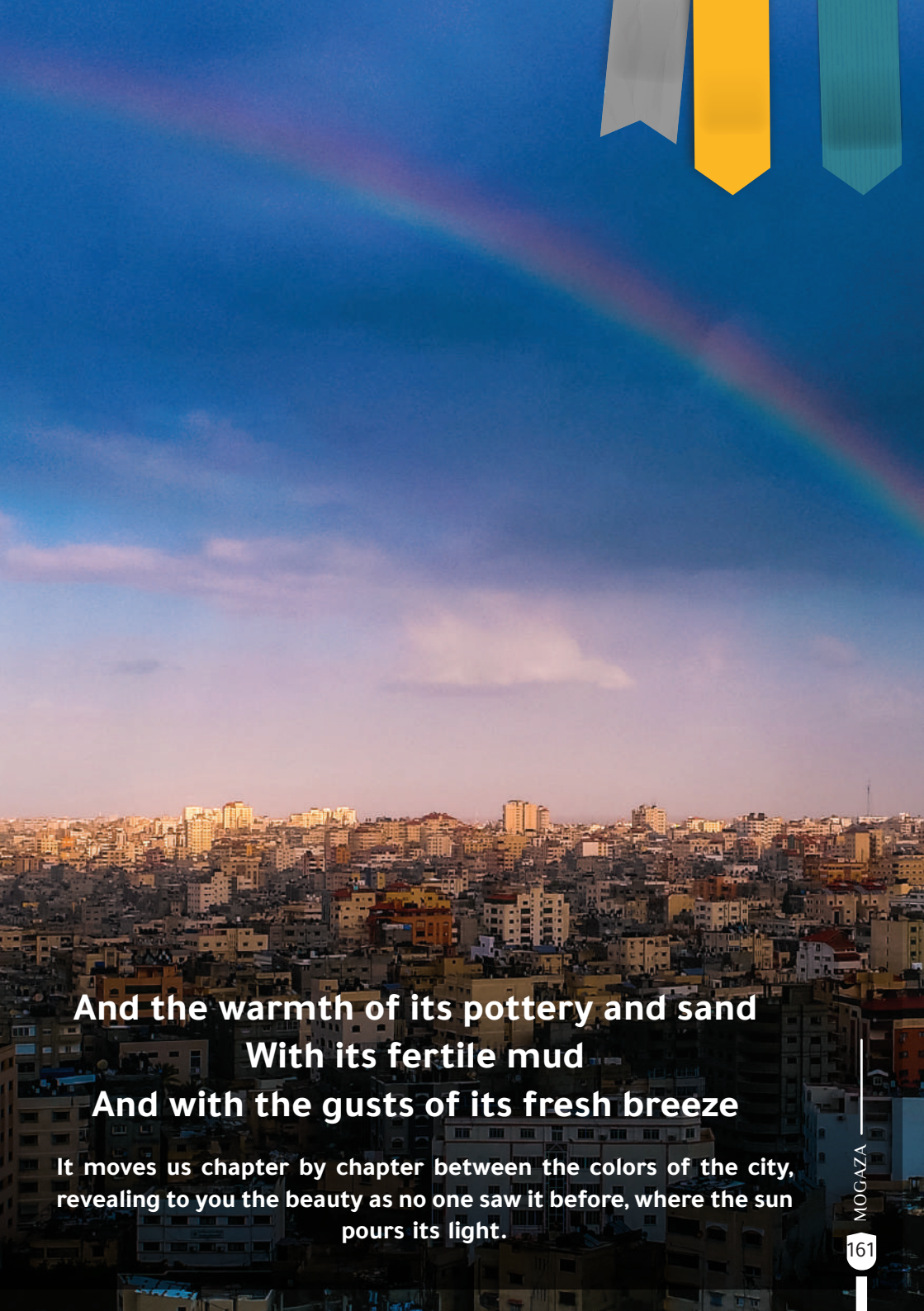




|| Athletics Championship for Persons with Disabilities held by the Prosthetics Center in Yarmouk Stadium

An aerial photograph of Gaza City, Israel, taken from a high vantage point. The city is densely packed with buildings of various heights and colors, mostly in shades of beige and brown. In the background, the Mediterranean Sea is visible, with a few industrial structures and a bridge on the horizon. The sky is a deep blue with some white clouds. At the top of the image, there are three vertical paper tabs: a white one on the left, a brown one in the middle, and a tan one on the right. The text is overlaid on the lower part of the image.

**With the blue of its sea and sky
With its green fields and golden wheat
With the ashes of its rubble**



**And the warmth of its pottery and sand
With its fertile mud
And with the gusts of its fresh breeze**

**It moves us chapter by chapter between the colors of the city,
revealing to you the beauty as no one saw it before, where the sun
pours its light.**

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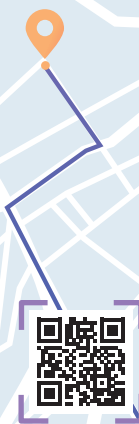
المعلومات
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