Public Relations Practice in Palestinian
Universities, 1994-2012

Submitted by Majdi Alkhouli to the University of Exeter in partial
fulfilment for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Arab and Islamic
Studies in August 2012

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وَقُل رَبِّ زَدْنِي عِلْمًا
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Majdi Alkhouli ......................

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ABSTRACT

Although Public Relations is one of the oldest phenomena in human communities, as an independent discipline it came into existence only at the beginning of the 20th century. Since then it has developed to encompass the concepts of other disciplines such as economy, administration, psychology and sociology.

This thesis examines the development of Public Relations practice in Palestinian universities in Palestine. The concept of Public Relations was not well developed in Palestine before 1994. Through the Oslo Accords signed between the PLO and Israel, in 1993 a new embryonic state structure was put into place. Palestinian Life changed for a while, and many organisations were constructed; Palestinian Universities grew during this time, many Public Relations departments were established, and the concept of Public Relations was introduced. Although Public Relations has since played a significant role, it has thus far been neglected as an area of research.

Given the dearth of research on the subject thus far, this thesis aims to provide a baseline of empirical evidence on the structure, practice and role of PR in Palestinian universities, and of the perceptions about these aspects, of those involved in it as leaders and practitioners, as well as of academics and other staff in these universities who are directly or indirectly affected or represented by PR activities. Those roles and perceptions also relate to the potential contributions of Public Relations at these universities to wider Palestinian society.
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<tr>
<td>BU</td>
<td>Birzeit University</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDF</td>
<td>Israel Defence Forces</td>
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<tr>
<td>IUG</td>
<td>Islamic University of Gaza</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAM</td>
<td>Joint Assessment Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>JCA</td>
<td>Jewish Colonial Association</td>
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<td>JNF</td>
<td>Jewish National Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>Muslim Christian Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOEHE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>OPT</td>
<td>Occupied Palestinian Territories</td>
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<tr>
<td>PASSIA</td>
<td>Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCBS</td>
<td>Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO</td>
<td>Palestinian Liberation Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>Palestinian Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNA</td>
<td>Palestinian National Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIJ</td>
<td>Palestinian Islamic Jihad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMC</td>
<td>Supreme Muslim Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, scientific and cultural organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNRWA</td>
<td>United Nations Relief and Works Agency</td>
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<td>US</td>
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