

Gaza Mom

Palestine, Politics, Parenting, and Everything In Between

Laila El-Haddad

Laila El-Haddad takes us into the intense life and world of a busy Palestinian journalist who is both covering the story of Gaza and living it, with her young son. El-Haddad was in Gaza City in 2005, watching hopefully as the Israelis prepared a troop withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. She covered the January 2006 Palestinian elections—judged “free and fair” by international monitors. But then, she watched aghast as the Israeli government, backed by the Bush administration, moved in to punish Gaza’s 1.5 million people for the way they voted by throwing a tough siege around the Strip.

Gaza Mom provides a wealth of detail (and some charming photographs) that inform readers about the daily lives of Gaza’s Palestinians, along with El-Haddad’s reporting and political analysis.

The Abridged Edition of this earlier work focuses on El-Haddad’s writings from within Gaza and on the angst she felt in late 2008, when she worried deeply about the fate of her parents and other relatives trapped inside Gaza during a fierce Israeli attack.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Laila El-Haddad is the coeditor of *Gaza Unsilenced* (2015), coauthor of the award-winning ethnographic cookbook *The Gaza Kitchen: A Palestinian Culinary Journey* (2013), and the author of *Gaza Mom: Palestine, Politics, Parenting, and Everything In Between* (2010). She is a talented blogger, journalist, political analyst, social activist, and a policy advisor for Al-Shabaka, the Palestinian Policy Network. Born in Gaza, El-Haddad currently lives in Columbia, Maryland with her husband and their three children.

ACCOLADES

“As I write this, I have never met Laila al-Haddad, but yet I have known her for years—first through her blog Raising Yousef, her journalism, and by her handle @Gazamom on Twitter. It was through Laila’s pioneering blog that I made my first ‘visits’ to Gaza—a place I have never physically been precisely because of the situation she describes. The journey she chronicles in this book is intensely personal, and yet it is one Palestinians, exiles and wandering souls all over the world will recognize. The realities of life in Gaza are hard. But Laila’s razor-sharp observations, tenderness, and humor make her throughout this book—a wonderful traveling companion. It’s a journey I highly recommend.”

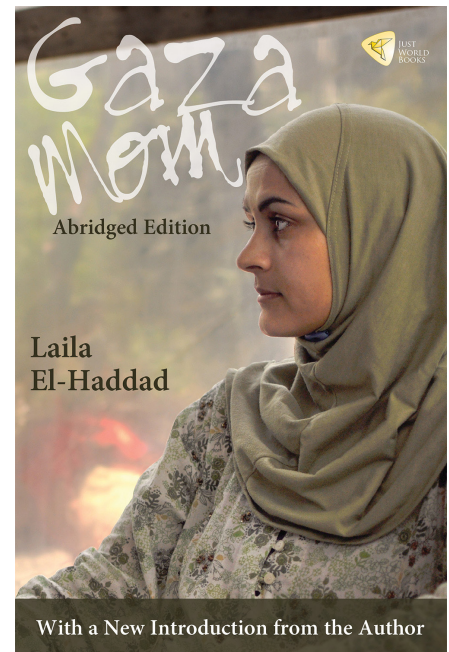
—Ali Abunimah, founder of Electronic Intifada

“Laila El-Haddad writes with passion and uncompromising honesty revealing a personal narrative that encapsulates a collective Palestinian experience. Making no pretense at objectivity, Laila challenges the limits of the genre to create for the reader an experience of total immersion beyond his/her comfort zone and shattering the complacency of simply ‘not knowing.’ Occupation and exile, siege and incursions, oppression and dehumanization, the tragedy of the Palestinian experience unfolds in the fullness of its human expression through Laila’s intense and captivating revelations. Her sense of self and identity, sometimes presented with critical distance and irony, remains the dominant vehicle of expression in the multiplicity of Laila’s roles as mother, daughter, wife, journalist, blogger, activist—or simply a Gazan Palestinian grappling with her plight as with the fate of her nation.”

—Hanan Ashrawi, PLO Executive Committee

“*Gaza Mom* is humanly moving and politically explosive, vividly illuminating the cruelties of everyday life for Palestinians living under occupation for decades. Laila El-Haddad writes with disciplined passion and conveys a powerful sense of authenticity. This book should become required reading for Americans who have yet to comprehend the prison camp conditions that prevail in Gaza.”

—Richard Falk, author of *Palestine: The Legitimacy of Hope*



SUBJECT CATEGORY

Autobiography: Historical /
Politics: Middle Eastern

PRICE

\$20.99 • \$27.99

ISBN

9781935982296 • 9781935982173

PAGE COUNT

288 (abridged edition) • 440 (unabridged)

SIZE

6 x 9

FORMAT

Paperback

PUBLICATION DATE

07/01/2013 (abridged)
11/01/2010 (unabridged)

US DISTRIBUTION

Publishers Group West
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