

**Ruth Dayan Source Sheet**  
**Student's copy**





**Source 1: Photographs of Ruth Dayan Collaborating with Local Artisans**

Note to teachers: project or share all three of these photographs before moving on to the discussion questions below.

The above photographs show Ruth Dayan visiting local artisans with whom she worked to support their livelihood through the sale and export of Israeli crafts. In the first photograph, Dayan examines raw material used by Arab craftsmen to make rugs. In the second photograph, she examines a fabric. The third photograph features Dayan sitting with weavers at a loom.

## Ruth Dayan—She Marshals Her Own Force For Peace

By JANICE ROTHSCHILD

The general's ex-wife deploys regiments of her own. Although Ruth Dayan refers to herself as a farmer's wife and grandmother and looks like a relaxed suburbanite with little on her mind more pressing than the weekly grocery list, this lady directs a million-dollar business, organizes Arab-Jewish friendship societies and initiates fashion trends eagerly grasped by some of the world's leading designers. She was recently on a speaking tour throughout the United States on behalf of Israel Bonds.

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She garners exotic jewelry and clothing from the desert tribes, many pieces hundreds of years old, adapts each item to modern use

modestly, "because Pauline likes to wear her own things. Of course, the Arab women think we are mad. No modern Arab woman would be seen in such a thing."

In what she euphemistically refers to as her spare time, Ruth Dayan works for an organization which she established to help bring about world understanding between Arabs and Jews. "It started because I am working in refugee camps," she explained. "I was brought up among the Arab people."

The project is two years old. A federation of sorts, it includes women, children, students, professional groups, any combination of Arabs and Jews who share mutual interests. Each club meets once a month with lectures and discussion programs relevant to its own specific concerns. Housewives, for example, have pro-

**Source 2: "Ruth Dayan – She Marshals her own Force for Peace", January 11, 1973, *The Sentinel***

This article was published on January 11, 1973 in *The Chicago Sentinel*. The article describes how Ruth Dayan came to run a million-dollar business that helped local immigrants and transformed the Israeli fashion industry. See the full article below

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She garners exotic jewelry and clothing from the desert tribes, many pieces hundreds of years old, adapts each item to modern use and sells it to such arbiters of haute couture as American designer Pauline Trigere and Stanley Marcus of Neiman-Marcus.

One day the ex-farmer's ex-wife (Moshe Dayan was then military commander of Jerusalem) happened to notice the intricate needlework that these refugees had brought with them from their native land. She learned that every girl among them, from the time she is old enough to hold a needle, is taught to make the delicate lace and embroidery that will some day become part of her trousseau. That gave Ruth Dayan the idea. Instead of trying to grow tomatoes she would direct their hands toward something they were better qualified to do.

Success in one village led her to others. Soon she was visiting 30 transit camps, as the villages were called then, organizing production of crafts according to the distinctive skill and tradition that each group brought from its country of origin. She supervised every detail, suggesting adaptations of style and technique that would make the product marketable. The Dayan home in Jerusalem became a showroom for jewelry and embroidery from Yemen, richly textured rugs from Morocco and Kurdistan and needlework from Eastern Europe.

Bedouin jewelry is especially popular today due to the current trend toward the occult. Bedouin women, who wear most of their wealth around their necks, are great believers in amulets. One of these, a bulky pendant intended to contain charms or potions, inspired Trigere to order an entire line for her own collection. She uses it to hold four cigarettes, a mystic number presumably sufficient for an evening's outing.

Mrs. Dayan also revealed that Trigere had asked for one of her dresses, a traditional Arab gown fully encrusted with Bethlehem embroidery. "I was very flattered," she confessed



Within a short time the Israeli government recognized the potential in what Mrs. **Dayan** was doing and sent her to London for further study. Upon her return in 1953, she became head of the Crafts Department of the Ministry of Labor. The following year she established Maskit, Israel Center of Handcraft.

Originally government-owned, Maskit is now a commercial company with only 25 percent of its shares held by the government. It produces and markets more than 10,000 different items, from camel saddles to lampshades, and employs upwards of 700 people. Many of them are Arabs from the administered territories, including the refugee camps of Gaza.

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The project is two years old. A federation of sorts, it includes women, children, students, professional groups, any combination of Arabs and Jews who share mutual interests. Each club meets once a month with lectures and discussion programs relevant to its own specific concerns. Housewives, for example, have programs on such subjects as child rearing or cooking or cosmetics. At each meeting a different member prepares refreshments and brings along the recipe to share with all the others. In this way, says **Ruth Dayan**, "They see that all women are the same. It doesn't matter where they come from."

Thus the general's ex-lady marshals her own force for peace. When one of her employees, a 20-year-old model of uncommon beauty and intelligence, replied to an American's query about what young Israelis believe in, she said, "I believe in **Dayan**."

"Which one?"

"Both of them," she answered in a flash. And no wonder!

—Reprinted From The Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle

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**Source 3: Maskit Advertisement, 1970**  
**“Want to be Original? Choose a Maskit Fabric!”**

The title of this advertisement – “Want to be Original? Choose a Maskit Fabric!” – emphasizes the original style of the Maskit company. The ad was published in the newspaper *Davar* on April 16, 1970.

The subtitle says: “In continuation of the sale of summer fabrics, a selection of fashionable fabrics for any purpose, for any occasion, and at unprecedented prices!” The ad offers fabrics for summer and pant suits at a price of 14.90 Israeli lirot per meter. The ad also states that the fabrics are original fabrics made by Maskit and that their availability is limited. According to the ad, the fabrics can only be found in Maskit stores in Tel Aviv, Yerushalayim, Haifa, and Netanya.

Other similar advertisements:



**כ א ר י מ ה**  
**השמלה הישראלית המקורית!**

„כארימה“ של משכית בחרה עמי ישראליות רבות כשמלת הייצוג שלהן. כי „כארימה“ מתאימה לכל עונות השנה ולכל מאורע. „כארימה“ ארוכה לשעות הערב ומגורה לשעות היום. מקורה: דפדוף נוחה ומכונה: עם פרחים או בלעדיהם. משלל זרועות וזרועות בנשים.

„כארימה“ היא השמלה לכל ישראליות השואפת למקורות.

היצרנית: רחוב 32 ירושלים. רחוב 33 חיפה. רחוב מנחם 6 תל אביב. רחוב הרצל 20.

**משכית**

Historical Jewish By **חדש במשכית!**  
 ג'רין, 25.05.1976, page 17



**חדש במשכית!**

מבחר בני-חוץ מקוריים, בלעדיים ל „משכית“ מתוצרת „רקמה“

גדיי ושאף של „קשת“ חדישים בבית השמלה בנורס בוסתן. מנגנון המודיע המקורי והמכונה „היזורים“ בגדיי לשיא. „משכית“ נחשבת לזאת המעמדת למהדר בגדיי יחידה המכונה „שליי“ בני השמלה המפורסמת ביותר בזמננו.

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