

## **The Conceptual Development of the Palestinian National Identity**

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**Abstract:** The Paper attempts to follow the conceptual development the Palestinian national identity and to shed a light on the historical stages it has undergone. Where the Palestinian national identity has passed through many stages between periods of prosperity and solidity and periods of conflict and distortions on its concept and existence due to political fluctuations in the Palestinian territories. Thus, the paper divided it into periods, depending on the specificity of each stage and its impact on the Palestinian national identity starting from Palestinian under the Ottoman Empire until the end of the British Mandate. Then The Palestinian during the Nakba and until the 1967 setback. Then Palestinian from the battle of dignity 1968 until the Madrid Conference. And last Palestinian from 1991 until now and discussed every stage and its main features.

**Keywords:** Palestine - National Identity – Israel – Al-Quds – Hamas - PLO

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Date of Submission: 13-11-2019

Date of Acceptance: 27-11-2019

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

In order to talk about the Palestinian national identity or identify its elements, it is important to shedding light on the historical stages it has undergone. Where the Palestinian national identity has passed through many stages between periods of prosperity and solidity and periods of conflict and distortions on its concept and existence due to political fluctuations in the Palestinian territories.

### **II. THE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY**

The Palestinian national identity depends on belonging to the entire Palestinian people and not parts of it, and in continuation of this situation, to be a solid nucleus of national belonging.

As Manuel Hassassian and Khaled Al-Haroub (2006) pointed out, the Palestinian national identity was formed from the historical facts it faced in the region, from colonialism to the outbreak of the Intifada and nowadays. It witnessed many political ideologies of this century, such as Zionism, Nasserism and Islamism, which had an impact on the structure and essence of the Palestinian concept of national identity.

Rouhana (2012) defines national identity and belonging to the land and homeland according to the historical and modern context, as a set of values and ethics that must be reflected in work, together with the awareness that the public must learn patriotism, sincerity and sacrifice.

To summarize, the Palestinian national identity is the Arabic language, customs, traditions and culture, the memory of social displacement, and the joint defeat of Zionism in all forms and ways to stand firmly in front of the fateful issues and entitlements. This is also the Palestinian's specificity and level of consciousness and learning. It is the identity of resisting the occupier as an opponent of him/her and a fighter against his/her existence. It is also a representative identity of populations geographically separated, economically different, governed by differentiated systems and of different economic systems, yet they have a historical origin, a memory of uprooting, a constant conflict with opponent identities.

#### ***The elements of the Palestinian national identity***

Many of the Palestinian researchers sought to explore the elements of the Palestinian national identity to delineate these bases in the face of hostile campaigns. Some of them felt that they were no different from the elements of the general national identity of affiliation, loyalty, classification, definition and comparison that may be related to the promotion of identity and awareness of social status and connection to the place. In this case, the bases of the Palestinian national identity are dispersed because the above elements are connected to a tangible social reality rather than to a virtual world, as is the case for many Palestinians who have been expelled from their lands or who belong to it historically only as a result of their lack of birth on this land, while many researchers, including al-Qalqili and Abu Ghoush (2012), considered that the bases of the Palestinian national identity, in general, are defined by the following five principles which are

1. The right to resist "the Palestinian experience confronting the "Israeli" occupation".
2. The right to return.
3. Arab and Islamic dimension of the issue.
4. The unity of the land and the right to establish a Palestinian state with al-Quds as its capital.
5. Palestinian cultural and historical heritage.

### **III. THE FORMATION STAGES OF THE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY**

It is impossible to talk about the Palestinian national identity or to identify its elements or features without shedding light on the historical stages it has undergone in order to reach the current form that it has reached. Just as it did not originate from anything, it passed through periods of prosperity that witnessed the power of the minds of the Palestinians and their hearts. Followed by other periods that left deep scars and distortions on the concept and existence. Is national identity still exist? In order to determine the history of the Palestinian national identity and the stages of its development, hence we felt that it should be divided into periods, depending on the specificity of each stage and its impact on the Palestinian national identity as follows:

1. Palestinian national identity under the Ottoman Empire until the end of the British Mandate.
2. The Palestinian national identity during the Nakba and until the 1967 setback.
3. Palestinian national identity from the battle of dignity 1968 until the Madrid Conference.
4. Palestinian national identity from 1991 until now.

Palestinian national identity under the Ottoman Empire until the end of the British Mandate

Certainly, the first features of the Palestinian national identity emerged only in the later stages of the history of the Ottoman Empire, since the strength of the Islamic identity and belonging to the door of the high caliphate, even among the non-Muslims of the empire, was very high and left little room for the appearance of individual identities except at a later stage when the weakness of the Ottoman Empire emerged. In addition to an effective colonial role to urge the peoples and populations of that region to secede or demand more special administrative authority away from the eyes of the higher door. It is naive to say that the Arab national identities, especially the Egyptian and Jordanian ones, would not have developed without the correspondence of McMahon Hussein (Me'ari, 2008) and the desire of Muhammad Ali Pasha and his son Ibrahim to follow the Western model of openness and renewal of the political system. This is why it is difficult to address the history of the Palestinian national identity in isolation from other Arab national identities. First, because present Palestine is part of the nation and the Arab system as a whole. Second, because the Arab states as they were, including Palestine, did not actually exist on the map of the world before the end of the British Mandate, but was part of the Ottoman Empire, especially the Levant. Even some of the Palestinian cities were following the generals in other Arab countries such as the state of Beirut, which extended to the north of Jaffa and included five Sanjaks, including the Sanjak of Nablus and Sanjak of Acre (Me'ari, 2008).

Historically, if we date back to the period of the Ottoman Empire, the prevailing identity was the Islamic identity par excellence, and the field was not open to the emergence of other identities that may negatively affect the basic identity. Historians mentioned that the Arabs rejected the attempts of secession and independence from the Ottoman Empire that the colonial powers had repeatedly supported. However, historical yearbooks record individual attempts to show and distinguish Arab and Palestinian nationalism from the Ottoman identity, through the writings of Sheikh Khairuddin al-Ramli, who used the term "our country" for the purpose of Palestine, "Sham" with the intention of Syria, "The lands" with the Ottoman empire as a whole. As another point of view, Mahmoud Me'ari (2008) says in his book, *The Development of Palestinian Identity: Identity that prevailed among the Palestinians, and the rest of the Arabs in the late Ottoman period is the Islamic identity, and perhaps also the Ottoman. Arab Muslims viewed the Ottoman Empire as the state of the Caliphate and saw that they lived in their state and contributed to its service.*"

However, the Ottoman Empire opened the way for political representation based on geographical divisions. The inhabitants of Palestine and other Arab regions were represented in the Council of the Ottoman Envoys, including Rawhi al-Khalidi, Saeed al-Husseini, Hafiz al-Sa'id from the al-Quds Brigades, and Ahmad al-Khamash from the Nablus Brigade. The end of the Ottoman Empire was marked by the establishment of parties for the first time in Palestine. A total of 17 Palestinian political parties and organizations emerged, including the Free Palestinian Party, the Palestinian Communist Party and the Palestinian Farmers Party.

The Palestinian parties played a clear role in supporting the Ottoman Empire after the outbreak of World War I in 1914, mobilizing the public to exert their efforts to protect the Ottoman Empire from collapse. But these efforts did not have much success, especially after Britain's exploitation of Ottoman weakness, through the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, the application of the British mandate in Palestine in 1917, and the guardianship of some Arab territories.

One of the signs of the beginning of the emergence of the Palestinian national identity is the adoption of the Palestinians of the national anthem "Mawtini", written by the late Palestinian poet Ibrahim Toukan from the 1930s until 1972. This stage witnessed the Great Palestine Revolution of 1936, which was considered the

greatest Palestinian revolution against the British Mandate which lasted for six months during which the British attacked the rebels with machine guns and aircraft in an attempt to suppress them. It carried out a large number of arrests and death sentences to all those who resist (Darraj, 2008).

At the end of 1947, as a result of the increasing clashes between Arabs and Jews, the United Nations sent several committees to the region, including the Bill Committee in 1939 and the Woodhead Commission in 1938. Both discussed the causes of the unrest in Palestine and issued a number of recommendations to the United Nations. The resolution of the partition of Palestine No. 181, which was considered the first international attempt to resolve the Arab-”Israeli” conflict and calls for the termination of the British Mandate of Palestine in May 1948 and the granting of 56.5 per cent of Palestine to the Jews who represented 33 per cent of the population. As a rejection of this resolution, the Arab League announced its intention to train the Palestinians and form the Salvation Army and give one million pounds for the defence of Palestine (Abu Nada, 2014). The Palestinian national identity after the Nakba and until the 1967 setback

The Nakba was a historic turning stage in the lives of the Palestinian people. Prior to the Nakba, people living in the southwestern part of the Levant were called "Palestinians" whether Arab, Jew or Christian. After the Nakba, the Palestinians lived in different parts of the land. Their belonging, feeling and history connected them to Palestine.

Thus, the first Palestinian attempt to form a political entity that expresses their national identity and defends their right to exist has been ended by the Arabs themselves. However, there are advantages achieved by the Palestinian government, such as its role in preserving the Palestinians and their Palestinian nationality and enjoying the recognition of a small number of countries in the world. It exercised part of its tasks on the ground and issued passports and continued to deal with the Palestinian pound in economic dealings, and contributed to the formation of a legal cover for the Palestinian presence.

Later, both Egypt and Jordan annexed what was left of historic Palestine to its lands in accordance with the state of the end of the 1948 war. The West Bank was annexed to Jordan from the end of 1948 until 1967 when it was occupied by Israel”, and the Gaza Strip was under the guardianship of the Egyptian military administration for the same period until 1967, with a period of time for the establishment of the Palestinian government and then ended in 1959 (Abu Ghoush, 1994).

Al- Sayigh (1999) said: “the Palestinian National Liberation Movement in 1956 was launched and carried out the hopes of the Palestinians for freedom and independence. The Palestinians joined it from all directions and started their struggle from the territory of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. They adopted hit-and-run techniques, armed operations, the kidnapping of soldiers and aircraft and bombing sites. Its emergence had a great impact on the restoration of the Palestinian national spirit and was considered the first body to represent them, and the first compass of resistance to which they went.”

In 1964, the Fatah movement, in cooperation with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Democratic Front and later the People's Party, formed a Palestinian political organization that manages the affairs of the Palestinians in all their places of residence. With its 11 branches, it represents the aspects of the Palestinians' life. The PLO was founded, declaring that its charter was based on the liberation of historic Palestine through the armed struggle and the return of the Palestinian refugees to their stolen towns and lands. But the Palestinians' hopes were severely reduced after the 1967 war and the “Israeli” occupation of the West Bank, including East al-Quds, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and the Sinai Desert in six days. As a result, the Security Council issued Resolution 242, which calls on both Israel” and the Arab states to immediately cease fighting and that Israel” withdraws beyond the 4th June 1967 line. Thus, the Palestinian hope for the liberation of historic Palestine diminished to the liberation of the 1967 territories and the return of displaced persons to it (al-Sharif, 1995).

Rashid Khalidi (1997).saw the emergence of the Palestinian national identity as primarily related to the endings of the Ottoman Empire and the beginning of the second decade of the British Mandate over Palestine. He said: "The Palestinian national identity has undergone four stages: the first was confined to the educated, between the First World War and the Nakba. The second period is the cornerstone during the Nakba. The third period is the return of the Palestinian identity through the Palestinians outside Palestine after the Nakba. The fourth stage, since the Oslo agreement to this day.” He believed that the Palestinian identity since the Nakba has become firmly established and has not changed since then

At this point, Al-Qalqili (2014) said that at first, there was the Islamic identity. Then, as a result of the collapse of the Ottoman state, the various Arab identities emerged. Specifically, the Palestinians belonged to the eastern Arab identity. Later, the administrative divisions of the Arab Orient divided it to into regions. Palestine was annexed under the jurisdiction of the Levant. Despite the agreement of historians on the role of the Nakba in molding identity, they differed in considering it as a criterion for the establishment of the Palestinian identity, where al-Qalqili thought that "1948 cannot be judged as the basis to ignite the Palestinian identity, but it is a renewal of the Arab dimension regarding Palestine".

According to Saleh (2011), the 1948 Nakba is the basis of the origin of the Palestinian identity, where he said: "1948 was like a different beginning and birth emanated from the lines of fire, what existed in Palestine before the Nakba contained a people belonging to a civilization seeking an independent state like the rest of the Arabs at the time of colonization. What happened in the Nakba in 1948 uprooted the dream and abandoned the people who wanted it."

But Fouad al-Moghrabi disagreed with this view. In his article entitled "Observations on the Palestinian Identity" (2013), the Zionists falsely claimed that the Palestinian identity appeared only in response to the Zionist colonization of Palestine, but there is much historical evidence to prove the opposite. For example, a study entitled "Reconstructing Palestine," published by the Palestinian League Against Zionism in 1919 in New York, showed a strong Palestinian identity in the early years of the 20th century. This is what Jamil Helal (2006) agrees with: "The Palestinians' reaction to the Zionist settlement was based on previous identities that existed before Zionism. As a result, the Palestinians' connection to the land of Palestine gained a new expression when confronted with Zionism and the colonization of the British state".

In his study "The Problem of the Palestinian National Identity", Amjad al-Sayeh (2014) considered that the Nakba led to the demise of the political field enjoyed by the Palestinians before 1948. They returned to their major identities, such as the mother's Islamic identity and the comprehensive Arab identity. They resorted to the nearest strongholds of Arab national identity represented by Abdel Nasser and joined Arab nationalist parties. Palestine adopted the compass of the Arab parties as a basic goal of liberation. But the Arab reality on the ground, the experience of the diaspora, the social isolation and the Arab marginalization have led the Palestinians to restore the Palestinian national identity in their hearts.

It could be seen that the beginning of the Palestinian national identity is linked to the dangers and loots that Palestine suffered from the mandate in the first place and then by the Zionist gangs, and the partial and total retreat of the Ottoman Islamic movements and the Arab nationalistic appeals, not to mention the increasing Palestinian awareness of the importance of their cause and its speciality.

#### **IV. PALESTINIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY FROM THE BATTLE OF KARAMEH 1968 UNTIL THE MADRID CONFERENCE**

By the end of 1967, the Arab world was facing a sense of defeat, As a result of the hit-and-run battles fought by the Palestinian fighters in cooperation with the Jordanian army against the "Israeli" army. The occupation decided to surprise them and they fought a battle in al-Karama area that exceeded 12 hours during which the "Israeli's" suffered heavy losses and lost military equipment estimated as 30 dead, and more than 69 missing and wounded, in addition to the dropping of aircrafts and the damaging of tanks and military mechanisms remained on the battlefield and were used by Jordanians and Palestinians later to commemorate this victory (Joseph, 2007). This is the first time since 1948 that Palestinians feel that their way to return is shorter. It's possible to say that the battle of Karameh formed a lever for national identity in the hearts of Palestinians for various reasons.

The battle of Karameh contributed to the brightness of the PLO and its leading positions in the meetings of the Arab countries. At the same time, this led to the marginalization of the role of the Arab states in which they existed. This resulted in civil wars between the organization and the Arab regimes which killed the Palestinian civilians and increased standards of exclusion and disregard of the Palestinians by Arab states. By mid-1968, disputes and clashes began to intensify between Jordanian forces and members of the PLO, including the storm forces and led to the final departure of the organization from Jordan and its return to Syria in 1970 after the Black September clashes between the organization and the Jordanian army. The organization left Syria in 1976 after clashes between it and the Syrian Arab Army known as the events of Tel Zaatar, and then moved to Lebanon and formed what was known as the state of al-Fakahani (Me'ari, 2008). The PLO was a state within the Lebanese state. It breached the laws and regulations and formed its own constitution, which separated it according to its desires. The organization did not stop intervening in the affairs of the Arab states internally. It involved itself in the Lebanese civil war and tried to win the interests of one party at another expense. Therefore, both the international community and the Lebanese society preferred the "Israeli" occupation to the "Israeli" occupation forces, which happened when Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982 and besieged the camps in order to eliminate the Palestinian resistance movement. With the intervention of international mediators, PLO members were allowed to evacuate Lebanon in return for the withdrawal of "Israeli" forces. The fighters moved towards Tunisia, and this was the most distant station from the homeland.

The Palestinian population in occupied Palestine was living under severe poverty, harsh living conditions and discriminatory policies towards them, not to mention attempts to displace them and seize their land, depriving them of the most basic rights to own and work. In addition to the collective punishment policies adopted against any attempt to restore Palestine in the memory of generations. More than five years' imprisonment will be imposed on anyone who proves that he owns the Palestinian flag in his/her home. "Israeli"

identity cards were also issued, the Arab names of the villages and towns were cancelled and replaced with "Israeli" Hebrew names.

These conditions continued to worsen gradually until the first Palestinian explosion in 1987, when an "Israeli" truck raided Palestinian workers, killing four of them and injuring others. This was the first spark of what was later called the Intifada (Mohsen Moh'd Saleh, 2008).

The Islamic Resistance Movement was the first to call this uprising as "Intifada" on 11 December 1987 (Ebhis and Wael, 2008), in which the word Intifada was used to describe the massive demonstrations that took place in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Later, as a result of the issuance of this uprising by children and young men and their primary weapon was stone throwing, it was called the uprising of the children of the stones. In the beginning, "Israeli" occupation faced the Intifada with severe repression. The youths were arrested, beaten and tortured. The curfew was imposed repeatedly, often for more than five days, let alone the economic siege, which prevented food and medicine from entering Arab towns and cities. Israel" declared that it would end the Intifada, even if it had to break the hands and legs of those who inflame it.

The Intifada also revealed the extent to which the Palestinian leadership in exile has moved away from the movement in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The PLO leadership has underestimated the first movements and preferred to form the axis of Amman in Cairo to protect Yasser Arafat's position as the PLO's leader (Ebhis and Wael, 2008). The absence of Arab regimes also revealed the aspirations of their peoples. The Arab peoples went out for the first time in demonstrations that are supportive of the struggle of the Palestinian people and began campaigns to donate money and blood.

The years between the outbreak of the Intifada and the Madrid Conference of 1991 marked a milestone in Palestinian history, including the declaration of the independence of Palestine unilaterally in 1988. The PLO declared the establishment of a Palestinian state on the borders of 4th June 1967 in Algeria. The Palestinian flag was raised, and the national anthem was performed by the Algerian Orchestra to celebrate this occasion. After a few months, at the request of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, the disengagement was declared politically and administratively between Jordan and the West Bank. After Jordan annexed the West Bank to its territory at the end of 1949, the "Israelis" continued to pursue the policy of open bridges. The residents of the West Bank remained socially, administratively and organizationally dependent on Jordan, they were carrying Jordanian passports and birth certificates as well as "Israeli" orange ID cards. Thus, Jordan ended the relationship between the two banks. The representatives of the West Bank in the Jordan House of Representatives were exempt from their duties (Helal, 2002).

The period between the end of 1990 and the beginning of 1991 represented a new dimension in the relationship between the Palestinians and the "Israeli" occupation. After the end of the Gulf War launched by the United States of America with the support of its allies and some of the Arab countries against Iraq, and then the return of Kuwait to its independence. As a result of the dispersion and confusion that began in the Soviet Union, the remaining Arab opponents of "Israel" realized that it is difficult to reach a good military solution for them but not for "Israel", especially after the signing of the Camp David agreement in 1978 and the end of hatred between Egypt and "Israel" with the support of the Kingdom of Morocco. As a result, the Arab negotiations and concessions moved from the secret side to the public side, and the PLO sought in Tunisia to achieve a greater role on the ground and to take over the Intifada to take a step back to the arena of the event. Several initiatives contributed to this role, including the conversion of the National Charter in 1974 to the establishment of a secular democratic state on the borders of Mandatory Palestine, the declaration of Palestinian independence of 1988 which approved the two-state solution, the 242 resolution which was an implicit recognition of the existence of "Israel", the return of refugees to the 1967 borders, peace with "the neighbors" and that East al-Quds is the capital of Palestine (Helal, 2002).

As a result of these data, the Madrid International Peace Conference, under the auspices of the United States and the Soviet Union, came to end the Arab-"Israeli" conflict, represented by Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine, in accordance with the principle of land for peace and Security Council resolutions 242, 425 and 338. George HW Bush pledged to the Arab states to abide by the United States' commitment to achieve a just and comprehensive regime and to restore the political rights of the Palestinian people (Sharif, 1995). The conference opened after desperate attempts to persuade Israel" to sit at the same negotiating table with the Arabs and the Palestinians, after it demanded no full official representation of the Palestinians, but a delegation under the wing of the Jordanian negotiating team and the delegation does not include any Palestinian from the diaspora or a member of the PLO. The outcome of the conference was the opening of negotiations with Israel". At the end of the conference, the negotiations shifted from the Jordanian-Palestinian-"Israeli" negotiations to the "Israeli"-Palestinian negotiations and the Jordanian-"Israeli" negotiations.

As a summary of the Palestinian identity in the period between the battle of Karameh and the Madrid Peace Conference, three points can be pointed out as follows:

1. The battle of Karama, in addition to the October 1973 war, represented an important turning point in the Palestinian national identity. After the battle of Karameh, identity was revived in the hearts of the Palestinians in their various places of residence while Arab nationalism met with it as a result of the Arab victory against Israel” which suffered heavy losses and the restoration of territories under their control. These achievements lifted the roof of the Palestinians freedom and contributed to the spread of the glow of resistance and the nostalgia for the land.

2. The clashes and skirmishes between the Palestinian resistance and the Arab regimes on their territory caused a state of Arab animosity against the Palestinians. The Arab League's recognition in 1974 of the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinians did not alleviate this animosity. It should be noted that the annexation of both Jordan and Egypt of the West Bank and Gaza Strip did not affect the features of the Palestinian identity of the population, on the contrary, contributed to the Arab embrace in strengthening the relationship of the Palestinians, their land and their steadfastness.

3. There are stations where national identity, resistance and armed struggle have been overlooked at the expense of achieving peace and special interests of states and territories. These acts have harmed the Palestinians' feeling that there are those who protect their dream of returning to their land and that their representatives are in solidarity with them including the PLO'S changing of Its charter and the abolition of armed struggle as a means to liberate Palestine in 1973 and the Camp David Accords between Egypt and Israel”, which completely ignored the Palestinian rights.

In the end, the Madrid conference is the first Palestinian setback for the Palestinian national identity. It may be the first Palestinian attempt to kill the national identity. The recognition of the Zionist entity, the retreat of the liberation of Palestine from the sea to the river and the abandonment of the right of return of 1948 refugees and dropping them from any political settlement, not to mention the dropping of UN Resolution 181, which grants the Palestinians 45 per cent of Palestine, in addition to their right to access the holy sites and return to their land, and recognition of Resolution 242, which leaves Israel” to manipulate its formulation. These steps were the beginning to narrow down the Palestinian national identity.

## **V. PALESTINIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY FROM 1991 TO THE PRESENT**

Despite the “Israeli” intransigence in Madrid Conference, putting the responsibility for the Nakba of 1948 on the Arabs and its rejection of any attempt to withdraw from the territories it occupied, the conference opened wide avenues for Arab- “Israeli” negotiations and Palestinian-”Israeli” negotiations. The secret negotiations between Israel” and the Palestinians began. Eleven rounds of negotiations were conducted, which resulted in little or no results, especially in light of “Israel's” refusal to recognize the right of return or the willingness to withdraw from the 1967 territories. At the same time, the PLO opened a secret way for negotiations, which resulted in a final draft of an agreement later known as the Oslo Accords, sponsored by US President Bill Clinton, directed by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Secretary of the Executive Committee Mahmoud Abbas (Joseph, 2007). The basis of the convention was the exchange of a written recognition by the PLO of the state of “Israel” and its right to exist, in exchange for the recognition of “Israel” that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians and their commitment to finding a peaceful solution to the conflict with it. Accordingly, Oslo has guaranteed the Palestinians a five-year transitional Palestinian self-government and elected legislative council from the West Bank and Gaza Strip to reach a permanent settlement of the Palestinian-” Israeli” conflict on the basis of UN Resolutions 338 and 242.

The agreement also stipulates that the Palestinian Authority, which will be formed by the PLO, will form the nucleus of the future Palestinian state on the part of the historic land of Palestine, which is 22 per cent of the historic land of Palestine and will be occupied by 36.6 per cent of the Palestinians of the world. This authority will be able to form an internal police force to maintain security and order within its territory (Sayigh, 1999).

The Oslo Accords contributed to the creation of an internal Palestinian division by requiring the amendment of the provisions of the PLO's National Charter for the Liberation of Palestine by force, the renunciation of violence and terrorism and the obligation of the Palestinian Authority to preserve the security of Israel” and to prevent any violation of its borders or peace. As the news spread, Fatah announced its approval of Yasser Arafat's initiative and its blessing, while the other Palestinian factions ( Hamas, Jihad, Popular Front, Democratic Front, Liberation Front) refused to accept the agreement and considered it a trade in Palestinian blood that was bleeding in the first Intifada and to exploit the Palestinian street, especially as the functions of the authority will focus primarily on fighting the Palestinian resistance, arresting the Mujahideen, confiscating their weapons and restricting their movement (Abu Ghoush, 1994).

As a result of the agreement, the PLO returned to the cities from which the “Israeli” army had withdrawn in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. For the first time since 1948, the Palestinians can stand before their Palestinian national anthem and raise their flags high. The Palestinian national spirit was high. The Palestinians began sewing the military suit for the police force that would represent them, sang the songs of the revolution,

organized visits to "Israeli" prisons that had been removed and touched the writings of their relatives on the walls of the prisons. Although the Palestinians did not know in the first place the great impact that the Oslo agreement would have on their future, they felt that part of their dream of freedom and self-fulfilment had been fulfilled. More than that, Yasser Arafat's speeches were loud, echoing the slogans of "Revolution to Victory", "A child of our children will raise the flag of Palestine over Al-Quds." He added: "My people in the diaspora and the camps, no one has the right to give up your right to return" (Al-Hroub and Qunis 2011).

A year after the Oslo Accords, the role of the PLO was sidelined at the expense of the role of the institutions of the Palestinian Authority led by Fatah movement. In fact, the Oslo agreement is a non-democratic treaty due to its ignoring of the opinion of the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and not involving them in the formulation of their demands. It also left the greatest impact on the Palestinian national identity, which contributed to reducing the demands of the Palestinian people. After the Palestinians lived on their freedom and dignity and called for the liberation of al-Quds and the return of refugees, they began to live on work permits and salaries of employees and to call for economic security.

According to al-Khalidi (1997): "The replacement of the struggle with negotiation as if it was just a dispute between two neighbours which can be resolved by mutual understanding and compromise and restores the cultural and psychological components of the Palestinian towards the acceptance of the occupation over the homeland and the rejection of the struggle against it and the recognition of its power".

The Oslo Accords also caused a class schism between the Palestinian people. The return of PLO members from abroad led to the emergence of a capitalist aristocratic class that took over the interests of the people and important government positions in the Palestinian Authority, in addition to the division and marginalization of the Palestinian refugees in the diaspora and the Palestinians from the 1948 areas (al-Khalidi, 1997).

Israel" has been able to besiege the Palestinian resistance. It has confined the organization in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and has been able to suppress and liquidate it without the need to invade other countries or violate its sovereignty to organize assassinations. This was clear in the second Intifada (Ebhis and Wael, 2008).

The significant change in the Palestinian national identity during the Oslo agreement is evidenced by the comparison of the data of two statistical surveys conducted before and after the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in 1944. The comparison shows that there is a decline in the control of the Palestinian national identity, and an increase in the Islamic identity and the narrow sub-identities "the identity of the family and the tribal".

However, the national identity remained the strongest identity by 90 per cent, but it declined in 1997. However, religious identity was equated with national identity. It is noticeable that the religious identity grew stronger before the outbreak of the al-Aqsa Intifada, but it retreated in front of the Palestinian national identity (Me'ari, 2008). The discussion leads us to attributed this result to the following reasons:

1. The Palestinian national identity is strengthened in the face of counter-identities, in the context of the Palestinian struggle against Israel", "Israeli" aggression, displacement and genocide against the Palestinians. The sub-identities decline in favour of the main Palestinian national identity.
2. The rise of religious identity above the national identity prior to the al-Aqsa Intifada is due to the increasing popularity of Islamic movements as a result of the decline of the peace process, the lack of access to results in support of the Palestinian right, the systematic repression against the opponents of the peace process and the tendency of the Palestinian Authority towards negotiations.
3. The decline in economic growth has also led to an increase in the popularity of sub-identities prior to the Intifada, such as tribal and family identity which has proved to be the safest and most supportive of citizens compared to government or national support.

At the end of 1994, Yasser Arafat returned to the Palestinian territories, and a new series of negotiations with the "Israeli" side began. In the same year, Jordan signed the Wadi Araba Agreement with the "Israeli's", ending 46 years of war and struggle against them, agreeing with them on security and mutual security, the demarcation of the borders and the economic and political peace between them. This agreement took place at a ceremony to promote the peace process followed in 1995 by the assassination of the "Israeli" prime minister, who signed the Oslo agreement with Yasser Arafat, Yitzhak Rabin. He was shot three times by an extremist Jew. This was the "Israeli" street response to the peace process (Ebhis and Wael, 2008).

Between 1996 and 2000, many conferences, peace talks and bilateral and quadripartite negotiations were held without any significant development on the ground. The state that the Palestinians were promised to establish five years after the Oslo Accords was not established. Israel" has repeatedly postponed its commitment to the final status negotiations and refused to recognize the Palestinians' right to return to al-Quds. Israel's justification of that was that the Palestinian Authority did not act sufficiently to implement its obligations on the ground. At the same time, the authority of Yasser Arafat arrested its opponents and incarcerated them under torture without Palestinian or international accountability (Ebhis and Wael, 2008).

In the end of 2000, Ariel Sharon invaded the blessed al-Aqsa Mosque. This step ignited the second Palestinian Intifada. After the failure of the Camp David Summit in 1999 between the Palestinians and the "Israelis", the American and "Israeli" threats against the Palestinian Authority to take deterrent steps if it does not accept the offered options. Arafat refused to sign any agreement that waives the legitimate rights of Palestinians, especially al-Quds and the return. As a result, the Palestinian street became increasingly angry and became ready to explode. Sharon's invasion of al-Aqsa was the gesture (al-Tamimi, 2011).

The second Palestinian Intifada, known as the al-Aqsa Intifada, continued from 28th September 2000 until 8th November 2005. As the first Intifada, this Intifada was an uprising in the face of the "Israeli" attacks, the continued dodging of the negotiating table and the increase in settlements on the ground. In the beginning, the Intifada broke out in the city of al-Quds and spread in the cities of the West Bank. In the morning of the second day, it was in the entire Gaza Strip which suffered from the same thing and presented martyr after martyr. In the wake of the redeployment that resulted in the "Israeli" army retreating to the entrances of the cities in accordance with the terms of the negotiations, the angry masses began to turn to checkpoints and military points and attacked settlers' cars and buses. The Intifada re-launched popular boycott and refused normalization with the "Israeli" enemy and strengthened Palestinian national unity. The Palestinian factions were united in the face of the "Israeli" occupation. The Palestinian security forces started to support the angry demonstrators. Yasser Arafat declared that the Palestinian people are "the people of the martyrs, the powerful people, we are all seek the martyrdom, and we will only bow to Allah" (Saleh, 2008).

In mid-2003, the US administration launched another form of peace negotiations known as the "roadmap" in which it announced its intention to establish a Palestinian state by 2005, with Palestinians declaring their rejection of terrorism and pursuing anyone who threatens the security of "Israeli" security, holding fair and free legislative elections, appointing a Palestinian prime minister with full powers, establishing an unarmed internal police force, organizing the external relations of the Authority in order not to have relations with enemies of "Israel" and the normalization of relations with Arab countries. The roadmap was welcomed by the European community and Arab regimes. But the "Israelis" rejected the agreement and considered it a cover of Palestinian terrorism and its consequences. Sharon announced more than 100 amendments including the declaration of the Palestinians to renounce the right of return, the obligations and duties required from them before any "Israeli" conditions, the removal of the Saudi initiative from the text of the convention, the appointment of a Palestinian prime minister who is against terrorism instead of the current leadership, the closure and prosecution of Palestinian institutions that incite terrorism, the adoption of a non-specific time frame or geographical map of the future Palestinian state and leaving the task of borders, crossings and airports to the "Israeli" side (Darwish, 2010).

Among the results of the Intifada was the destruction of the infrastructure and most of the services and facilities that the Palestinian Authority brought to the Palestinian people. It also caused a state of instability and security chaos, not to mention "Israel's" exploitation of the Palestinian attacks as a justification for building a wall separating the 1967 and 1948 territories. It extends from 600 to 1,000 km, and 7–8 meters in height, and annexes lands within the future Palestinian state in a clear and final takeover and consolidation of the border. The Intifada also strengthened the Palestinian resistance structure through the battle of Jenin camp and the Battle of the Old City of Nablus, in addition to manufacturing the first Palestinian rocket and directing it towards "Israeli" settlements (Odeh, 2009).

As the first Intifada, the Second Intifada reinforced the cohesion of the Palestinian people in the diaspora, 1948, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. It restored the dream of freedom and liberation from the Oslo Accords firstly and from "Israeli" occupation secondly. In addition, the growing international, Arab and Islamic support for the Palestinian cause and the media spotlight and focus on the "Israeli" violations against the Palestinian citizen.

In 2006, according to Kifah Odeh (2009) as a result of the state of consensus between the Palestinian factions, the second Palestinian legislative elections were held, which included the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Al-Quds. Most of the Palestinian parties and factions participated in the elections except for Islamic Jihad, including Hamas, which boycotted the first elections as a rejection of the Oslo Accords and the resulting Palestinian political system. The legislative elections were another turning point in the life of the Palestinian people. The second elections dealt with the mistakes made in the first elections. A specific quota was set for women, a quota for Christians to emphasize their presence and role in the election lists, their seats in the next council were established. However, the seat of the Samaritan minority was dropped from the new Palestinian Legislative Council.

Elections were also held in accordance with the mixed system, constituencies and lists, which resulted in the considerable diversity in the elected Palestinian Legislative Council. Hamas made significant progress at the constituencies level, while Fatah made progress at the list level. In addition, it was characterized by an increase in the number of Palestinian voters. "the participation of 78 per cent of those allowed to vote, which reflects their confidence in the elections as a means of expressing their opinion. Add to that the participation of

Palestinians in East al-Quds in both election and candidacy. The presence of international observers who witnessed the integrity of the elections, and the commitment of the Palestinians to the highest standards of the Secretariat” (Odeh, 2009).

The results of the elections were shocking to the Palestinian street, to the Palestinian parties and to the world alike. Hamas, represented by its "Change and Reform" bloc, won 80 seats out of 132 seats, compared to 43 seats for Fatah. The results of the elections have had a profound effect on the Palestinian street. The political polarization between the two main factions has become entrenched. Fatah suffered from a political crisis is, which has regressed from its position as a ruling party for the first time in its history to become the opposition chair. This means that the Palestinian public punish the movement for years of corruption and nepotism, and negotiations futilely, and may try an alternative option. The elections also constituted a critical stage for Hamas movement, which has not reached the throne of power before. Hamas was met with broad opposition from the Fatah movement and an indirect rejection of the handover of power, represented in presidential decisions that remove the powers of the ministers and the Legislative Council and restrict them to the Palestinian president (al-Khalidi, 2010).

In the end, it was not possible to achieve a smooth and peaceful transition of authority and to provide an international recognition at the same time of a Palestinian government, which was supposed to continue negotiations and coordination with the “Israelis”, but its electoral programme adopts resistance. As a conclusion of push-and-pull factors, the refusal of Fatah to participate in Hamas government and the loss of its powers, the “Israeli” and international siege on the government and the disruption of its ability to provide services and carry out its duties, the refusal of members of the security services to obey the orders of the new leadership, these factors led to the exchange of accusations and verbal quarrels, in addition to some clashes and an attempt to assassinate the leader of Hamas Interior Minister Said Siam, at the time, and the kidnapping of some individuals from both sides. Things gradually faded because of the Qatari mediation and a document of Palestinian prisoners and then Saudi mediation and the Mecca agreement (Toman, 2010).

In the middle of 2007 things broke out again in the Gaza Strip, and the clashes returned to the arena of the Palestinian street. Within a few days, the force was decided in favour of Hamas after the escape of members of Fatah movement from Gaza Strip, leaving their security headquarters, where Mahmoud Abbas hurried to dismiss Ismail Haniyeh and the formation of a new government. Since then, despite the various reconciliation and unification initiatives, the Palestinians have not succeeded in reintroducing the national class.

The situation in the Gaza Strip has been worsened by repeated wars. In 2008–2009, “Israel” launched the war of Cast Lead, killing more than 1,400 Palestinians in 22 days. The Gaza Strip remained surrounded by “Israeli” planes and tanks. The Egyptian administration did not seek to open the Gaza Strip or to alleviate the siege or to transfer the injured, but it held the government of Gaza the responsibility of this attack. Later in 2012 and within eight days, "Israel" launched a new war called "pillar of cloud", but the change in the situation in Egypt, the popular revolution and the arrival of the Muslim Brotherhood to power pushed to the end of the war quickly, and forced "Israel" to allow fishermen to fish in the sea and to allow the farmers to farm their lands in the border areas and to resume visits to the prisons and to reconstruct the aftermath of the 2009 and 2012 wars. In addition, the Egyptian government has allocated the hospitals of El Arish and Rafah Crossing to transport the wounded, to treat them and to send food to the Gazans (Toman, 2010).

Overall, the status of the Palestinian national identity in the period after the Madrid Conference until today can be analyzed as follows:

1.The discussion of the period from the Oslo agreement to the present time are combined in a single period because of the absence of any real and tangible change in the Palestinian national identity during this period. In other words, there are no significant differences between the state of the Palestinian national identity after the Oslo Accords and after the RoadMap Agreement. The Palestinian situation was not fundamentally affected between the outbreak of the first Intifada and the outbreak of the second Intifada. Despite the existence of a Palestinian Authority in the current situation, many consider it no more than a caretaker authority.

2.Many historical stations on the level of the Palestinian identity from the periods of time have been omitted; only detailed and influential stations on the Palestinian national identity through their existence, evolution and decline are presented.

The Oslo Accords influenced the Palestinian national identity in two directions. The first is to weaken the identity by giving up the principle of the independent and complete Palestinian state on the borders of 4th June, and to agree on weak interim agreements, in addition to directing the fight towards the Palestinian resistance and the adoption of the principle of appeasement and negotiations to resolve the Palestinian issue (Ebhhs and Wael, 2008).

The subsequent stages proved that the achievements of the Oslo Accords were only ink on paper. The transactions issued by the Palestinian ministries were subject to examination by the “Israeli” side. The Palestinians were not allowed to travel and move unless the “Israeli” side agreed. The Palestinian state was cut off because of the continuation of settlements. The economic security of the Palestinians was not achieved, and

their lands were confiscated, their sanctities were violated, let alone the authority's tendency to arrest anyone who opposes it or violates its negotiating doctrine, which inflamed the Palestinian street and caused a kind of psychological defeat.

The Palestinian national identity has declined from a concrete need and a popular demand to an emotional dimension of the Palestinian cause, which is no longer preserved and protected with the associated determinants of priority in exchange for a living and economic security.

Between the two Intifadas, two conventions, and three wars, nothing contributed to the raising of the Palestinian national identity except the popular uprisings and the Palestinians' feeling that the occupation is seeking to expel, suppress and end their existence. However, in the field of true actions, negotiations and even peaceful resistance did nothing. While the development of the military capabilities of the Palestinian resistance factions led to a growing strength to respond to "Israeli" violations and to enhance the value and the price of the Palestinians and their blood.

The impact of the division on the Palestinian national identity was similar in its effect to the differences that the PLO had with the Arab regimes. The Palestinian status in the Arab countries and the world diminished, and it was called upon to resolve its differences before demanding the liberation of its land. In addition to the decline of national enthusiasm from the achievement of victory against the occupation to the achievement of victory and progress in political upheavals against the other political faction.

At the end of the Gaza war in 2014 and the entry of the Palestinians into the gates of 2016, the concept of national identity has been greatly reduced, and the Palestinians needed a new political push to bring them back to the basic rules of struggle and to bring the first glow of the national identity back to their hearts.

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IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) is UGC approved Journal with Sl. No. 5070, Journal no. 49323.

Ihab Ahmed Awais " The Conceptual Development of the Palestinian National Identity." IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS). vol. 24 no. 11, 2019, pp. 69-79.