



**Arab American University  
Faculty of Graduate Studies**

**The Impact of Oslo Agreement on Palestinian National Identity:  
Political and Academic Perspectives in West Bank and Gaza Strip.**

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**This Thesis was Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
requirements of the Master's degree in Conflict Resolution**

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**Thesis Approval**

**The Impact of Oslo Agreement on Palestinian National Identity:  
Political and Academic Perspectives in West Bank and Gaza Strip**

**By**

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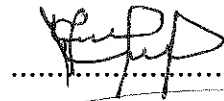
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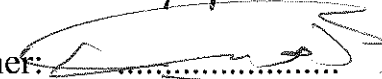
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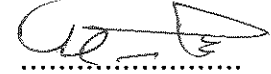
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## DECLARATION




I'm Fares Sabeeh Ragheb Salem , student of the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the Arab American University, aware of my responsibility of the penal law, declare and certify with my signature that my thesis entitled "**The Impact of Oslo Agreement on Palestinian National Identity: Political and Academic Perspectives in West Bank and Gaza Strip.**", is entirely the result of my own work. I have faithfully and accurately cited all my sources, including books, journals, handouts and unpublished manuscripts, as well as any other media, such as the Internet, letters or significant personal communication.

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Signature:

Date:

## **Dedication**

To my father and mother .....

To my brother and sisters.....

To my daughters.....

To all my friends and all those who supported me in this effort, I dedicate this work.

**Acknowledgment**

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Ayman Yousef, and to all those supported me from beginning. I would like to deliver sincers thanks to my colleagues and friend.

## **Abstract**

### **The Impact of The Oslo Accords on the Palestinian National Identity: Political and Academic Perspectives in West Bank and Gaza Strip**

**Prepared by: Fares Salem**

**Supervisor: Dr. Ayman Yousef**

This study aimed to identify the Impact of the Oslo Accords on the Palestinian National Identity in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The problem of the study was presented by raising by answering the main question: What is the impact of the Oslo Accords that were signed by the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel in 1993 on the Palestinian national identity?

The researcher discussed the main hypothesis of the study concluding that the Oslo Accords have negatively affected the Palestinian national identity and several, sometimes conflicting, factional, partisan, and regional identities have emerged.

The researcher also raised a main question and a set of sub-questions to prove the hypothesis of the study. The main question revolved around the impact of the Oslo Accords on the Palestinian national identity.

The researcher adopted the descriptive survey research and used personal interviews as a data collection tool. The selected sample for this study consisted of 12 politicians and academics in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

This study was composed of five chapters that discussed successively the topics related to the title of the thesis. The researcher, in the first chapter, reviewed the previous studies, and the importance of the study, its objectives, methodology, hypothesis, problems and questions were set and identified. In the second chapter, the theoretical framework of the study was reviewed, and the terms associated with the subject of the study were defined. The researcher, in the third chapter, tracked the stages of formation and development of the Palestinian national identity since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire through the Oslo Accords until the date of this study, 2021. The fourth chapter discussed the interviews the researcher conducted with the academics and politicians study sample, answered the study questions, and tested the validity of the hypothesis. The researcher, in the fifth and final chapter, presented the results and recommendations of the study, most notably:

The Oslo Accord negatively affected the Palestinian national identity, and divided the Palestinian people ideologically into two camps, one led by the Fatah movement and the other by Hamas.

The Palestinian national identity is the umbrella of the main principles that govern all Palestinian frameworks. After Oslo Accords, a disintegration occurred as a result of the division of areas depending on the level of control of the Palestinian National Authority over these areas.

After the Oslo Accords, all traditional structures were reinforced, and narrow sub-identities, whether regional, factional, or clan-based, were ingrained. Consequently, the national identity was weakened.

## VII

The most prominent recommendations made by the researcher include but are not limited to the rehabilitation of the Palestine Liberation Organization through its reform and inclusion of all Palestinian factions and movements, as well as the unification of the Palestinian liberation discourse and strategy.

The researcher also believes that it is a necessity to unify the political action, end the division and identify a unified strategy. In addition to reshaping the all-Palestinian national discourse towards occupation, liberation and means of resistance by a consensus agreement between all Palestinians.

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## **Chapter One**

### **Study structure and Literature review**

- 1.1 Introduction**
- 1.2 Study problem**
- 1.3 Objectives of Study**
- 1.4 Need and justifications**
- 1.5 Significance of the study**
- 1.6 Study Questions**
- 1.7 Study Hypothesis**
- 1.8 Methodology**
- 1.9 Limitations of the study**
- 1.10 Temporal Limitations**
- 1.11 Previous studies**
- 1.12 Conclusion of the Literature Review**

## 1.1 Introduction:

The identity of each nation determines the extent of belonging and commitment among its people. The national identity is fused with religious, national, ethnic and cultural visions to achieve a national identity in which all the components of the same people unite. The plans and efforts unite to promote the national level that promotes belonging and loyalty to the nation. This in turn affects the existence and stability, and emphasizes the importance of the Palestinian national identity since Palestine witnessed political and social changes in the first half of the twentieth century till now.

The national identity is the basis of the people adherence to their rights, and an important basis for the renaissance and advancement of these people and the attainment of unified strategies to preserve the existence of these people, especially under occupation. Although identity is a subjective state, it is generally influenced by substantive characteristics, such as territory, language, history and culture.

Identity formation and evolution are impacted by a variety of internal and external factors like society, family, loved ones, ethnicity and many others. It is not rigid or static, but can change from one period to another. From Khalidi's point of view, people are undergoing rapid changes in looking at oneself and others, and at looking at history, time and place<sup>1</sup>.

In the late of the Ottoman period, the main identity of Arabs in Palestine changed from an Islamic (and perhaps Ottoman) identity to an Arab identity (accompanied by a Palestinian

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<sup>1</sup>Khalidi, Rashid, ,( 1997) Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness. New York: Columbia University Press, p132.

identity) during the British Mandate<sup>2</sup>, and in the two decades that followed the 1948 war. After the June 1967 war and Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the Palestinian identity was strengthened by the Palestinians in the occupied territories, and also by Israel, until it became the strongest identity in the last two decades<sup>3</sup>.

Oslo agreement caused a crisis for the Palestinian as it did not include the refugees and the Palestinians of the occupied territories in 1948 in the right to self-determination, and led to the decline of the role of the organization and the absence of representative institutions of the Palestinians, in addition to the failure to turn the Palestinian Authority into a state that redefines the Palestinian national identity and the conflict over governance<sup>4</sup>.

Al-Aqsa Intifada of 2000 has had an impact on the Palestinian national identity. The Palestinian authority contributed in strengthening of the tribal, local and religious identities as sub-identities, while the national identity remains strong in the face of the sub-identities. Directly to public administration, and resorting to weaving relationships based on individual loyalty to him and the transfer of resources to his supporters<sup>5</sup>.

Al-Aqsa Intifada strengthened these already strong identities because of the Israeli policy of closing the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, imposing a siege on towns, villages and camps, and stopping movement between different areas. The Palestinian identity, as a sub-identity, was less

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<sup>2</sup>Budeiri, Mosa. (1995), The Palestinians Between National and Religious Identity, *Majallat al-Dirasat al-Filastiniyya, Issue 21*, Pp 7-8.

<sup>3</sup>Mi'ari, M., (2004), The Impact of the Intifada on Collective Identity in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, *Majallat al-Dirasat al-Filastiniyya, Vol. 15, Issue 58*, P.p 7-8.

<sup>4</sup>Abu, Rabma, I., (2017, Jan, 26), Division and the Identity Crisis, Al-Hadf News Portal, <http://hadfnews.ps/post/24965..>

<sup>5</sup>Hilal, J. (2006). The Palestinian Political System after Oslo: A Critical Analytical Study. The Institute for Palestine Studies and Muwatin, The Palestinian Institute for the Study of Democracy, Ramallah, Palestine, Iss. 2. P. 195-196.

than the traditional identities affected by the Intifada, due to the fact that this identity was very strong before the intifada<sup>6</sup>

The struggle for power in Palestine, which began with the victory of Hamas in the Palestinian Legislative Council elections in 2006, led to the division of all aspects of life in Palestine politically, economically, geographically, socially and culturally. The continuation of the division threatens the Palestinian identity with more erosion and oblivion. Palestinian nationalism in the sense of identity cultural and political, through ending the division and renewal of the structures of the national project, and generate a new vision that matches the people of Palestine and land and national project.

This study deals with the impact of the Oslo Accords on the Palestinian national identity which has passed through several stages mentioned previously and covers the period from the date of signing the 1993 agreement until today.

## **1.2 Study Problem:**

National identity is an inherent part of the state of commitment and belonging. It defines the individual's belonging to and loyalty to the country to which he belongs, and determines the extent to which individuals adhere to a unified approach to national issues by not looking at the issues of the country with a particularistic view of interests. " As the identity is the arena conflict between us and the enemy"<sup>7</sup>.

All people have an identity that unites them and their efforts to build a state for all the people, and make them cohesive people working to face the difficulties and dangers that may

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<sup>6</sup>Mi'ari, M., Op, Cit, P.11

<sup>7</sup><https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/1044839>, 2/3/2018, at 10 pm.

threaten that state, which stems from the belief of the people of one identity with their homeland and common destiny.

The researcher noted the change in the vision of the new Palestinian generations regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict. This change included the perception of the Palestinian society in general towards the Israeli occupation, and the converging of different viewpoints to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The researcher considers that this change of views is closely related to Oslo agreement signed between the PLO and Israel in 1993, which resulted in the existence of the Palestinian Authority and the entry of the PLO leadership into the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank. This agreement did not tackle the national identity, the issue of Palestinian refugees living abroad, and the geographical unity of the Palestinian land. Additionally, The Palestinian people have been deprived of their sovereign rights over their territory and resources for far too long. In the twenty years since Oslo, not only have Palestinians not realized their national aspirations, but they have seen their potential for economic, social and political development heavily impeded. Israel has implemented policies vis-à-vis the Palestinian territory that undermine the spirit of the Oslo Accords and which are intended to outlast any further negotiations.

### **1.3 Objectives of Study: :**

The ultimate aim of the study is to identify the impact of Oslo Agreement on the Palestinian national identity.

The Specific objectives of the study are as the following:

1. To recognize the concept of the Palestinian national identity among leaders of the political parties, government sectors and academics.
2. To know if there are differences in the definition of the Palestinian national identity and its components from the point of view of the Palestinian political leaders and academics.
3. To know whether there is a unified Palestinian national identity, and whether a joint Palestinian identity has been crystallized.
4. To know the role of the party in building the Palestinian national identity, and examine whether the party has established a national identity or partisan identity.
5. To know the role played by the Oslo agreement in re-shaping the Palestinian national identity, as well as its impact.
6. To identify the mechanism to formulate a unified national identity, and try to propose a mechanism and foundations for this purpose.

#### **1.4 Need and Justifications:**

In light of the fluctuation in the Palestinian national identity, and the distortions that occurred after Oslo agreement in terms of changing some concepts on how to deal with the Israeli occupation and the armed resistance that it undermines the Palestinian national project, and considering the bilateral negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israeli occupation as the strategy, it is best suited to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and to view peaceful resistance as a lever for Palestinian struggle at the local, national and international levels. Structural changes have taken place in the Palestinian national identity.

Since the conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis is a conflict not only on the ground, but a struggle for existence, the establishment of a Palestinian national identity is important for many reasons, which are: it demonstrates Palestinians belonging and loyalty to the homeland, commitment to the national cause and the building of the Palestinian state, and preserve the collective memory, which in turn is part of the struggle at all stages of liberation and state building.

The changes that accompanied the Oslo Accords in national and social concepts contributed to some extent to the distortion of the Palestinian national identity. In addition to the Oslo Accords, the occupation measures that undermine the confidence of the Palestinians themselves through the propaganda machine that works worldwide to spread the Israeli narrative. In light of the weakness of Palestinian and Arab propaganda, the Israeli narrative has the potential to spread at the global level, and unfortunately it penetrated the minds and thought of a number of intellectuals in the Arab countries. The justifications are summarized in the following points:

1. Changes and distortions on the structure of the Palestinian national identity after the Oslo Accords.
2. Change in views on how to deal with the Israeli occupation.
3. Israeli occupation measures to undermine Palestinian identity and undermine Palestinian self-confidence.
4. The weakness of the Palestinian propaganda machine in building a national identity.
5. The state of political division between the two parts of the homeland, which weakens the Palestinian national identity.

6. The absence of unity among the Palestinian intellectuals to work on finding a unified vision of the Palestinian national identity.
7. The absence of means and tools to build a unified identity.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study:**

This study is significant as it addresses the theoretical aspect since there is a lack of studies that deal with changes, which affected the Palestinian national identity in a specific period of time, from 1993 until the completion of this study. The study also fills a gap in the area that the researcher saw as a shortage, in addition to being an effective contribution to enrich the Palestinian academic and national library.

On the practical side, this study monitors the most important changes that affected the components of the Palestinian national identity, especially as it is a field study that adopts the opinions of researchers, academics, party leaders and government leaders. This study can produce results and recommendations that lead to the identification of mechanisms to formulate a national identity that promotes loyalty and the absence of a unified national outlook. The importance of the study can be summarized in the following points:

1. A specific period of time in which the Palestinian cause is in a state of attraction between the Fatah and Hamas movements at local and international levels, together with the escalating roles of some Arab countries that try to dictate some solutions to the Palestinian leadership. Furthermore, this study is important as it examines the escalating

role of the Israeli occupation in stealing the Palestinian heritage and dissolving the Palestinian cause.

2. This study contributes to enriching the Arabic library in general and the Palestinian one in particular in order to raise awareness on the importance of the topic being discussed.
3. The study monitors the most important changes that affected the components of Palestinian national identity after the Oslo Accords.
4. It depends on the views of academic researchers and government and party leaders on the Palestinian national identity in terms of its components and transformations, and the level of influence factors.
5. It formulates results that have an impact on decision-making centers politically, culturally and socially.

### **1.6 Study Hypothesis:**

This study assumes that the Oslo agreement has negatively affected the Palestinian national identity, and has emerged after several identities of factional and partisan and regional areas that appear at times conflicting.

### **1.7 Study Questions:**

The overall study seeks to answer the following question: What is the impact of the Oslo Agreement signed between the PLO and Israel in 1993 on the Palestinian national identity?

The sub-questions are:

1. What is the definition of Palestinian national identity?
2. What are the components of the Palestinian national identity?

3. What factors contributed to the emergence of the contemporary Palestinian national identity?
4. Is there a unified view on the Palestinian national identity?
5. How did the Oslo Agreement affect the Palestinian society's view of the Israeli occupation?
6. Does religion have a relationship in the formulation of Palestinian identity?
7. Is there a change in the Palestinian national identity after Oslo agreement?
8. What are the effects of the transformation of the PLO program from the option of armed struggle to the option of a political settlement on the Palestinian national identity?

### **1.8 Methodology:**

This research is qualitative one that relies on the descriptive survey study by using case study methods based on personal interview tool. Sample which selected of the study population as primary sources of information where it will be the number of members of the study sample 15 people selected from the political and academic community in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In addition to the use of previous studies and literature related to the subject of the study such as books, articles, studies, websites, magazines and newspapers.

### **1.9 Limitations of the Study:**

**Spatial Boundaries:** Despite the state of Diaspora living by the Palestinian people in the world, and the state of division between Palestine and the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the study will be conducted in the West Bank and Gaza strip for several reasons, which are:

1. The difficulty of communicating with the Palestinians abroad.
2. The availability of many researchers and academics working in research centers and in Palestinian universities in the West Bank and Gaza strip.

### **1.10 Temporal Limitations:**

The study is carried out in the period of time after the 1993 Oslo Agreement, which led to the entry of the Palestinian National Authority to the homeland in 1994 until the today, taking into account the tracing of the origin of the Palestinian national identity before this date. It also covers the period in which the Ottoman Empire, Balfour Declaration 1917 and Palestine were under the British Mandate in 1920, the 1936 Revolution, the 1948 Nakba, the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, the 1967 Intifada, and other events.

### **1.11 Previous studies:**

**Hadeel Marouf Zahran's study (2020): The Palestinian National Identity Transformations since Oslo<sup>8</sup>**

The study aimed to clarify aspects of the Palestinian national identity since the beginnings of its formation, and to highlight the impact of the Oslo Accord on this identity until 2018. The thesis illustrated the transformations that accompanied the Accords and studied the political, economic, social, and cultural effects and consequences of this Accord. This study addresses a main question: what is the impact of the Oslo Accord on the Palestinian National

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<sup>8</sup>Zahran, Hadeel., (2020), The Palestinian National Identity Transformations since Oslo Accords, Master's Thesis, An-Najah National University, Palestine.

Identity? and how was the resistance the overarching framework regulating the Palestinian national identity, while the negotiation approach played a different role in this field.

The study concluded that the Palestinian national identity is a renewed identity that was characterized by exchange and interaction, as the Palestinian people sought, through various historical stages and eras, to prove this identity through resistance and steadfastness. Moreover, it concluded that the Oslo Accord affected the overall Palestinian national identity, as the Palestinian national identity declined in favor of regional, clan, family and regional affiliations; strengthening alternative affiliations on the expense of national affiliation. Oslo Accords, from an economic field perspective, created a complete economic dependency on the occupation, creating new economic elites keen on their own interests. The study also marked the distortions to the Palestinian national identity that led to its decline as a struggle identity in its essence.

**Halah Mazen Ghanem's study (2019): The Impact of Israeli Educational Curricula on the National Identity of Palestinians Inside the Green Line (1948) Areas<sup>9</sup>.**

The study aimed to identify the impact of the Israeli educational curricula for the Palestinians inside the Green Line (1948) Areas on their national identity, and the study problem was represented by answering the main question: What is the impact of the Israeli educational curricula for the Palestinians inside the Green Line (1948) Areas on their national identity?

The study concluded the following results:

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<sup>9</sup>Ghanem, H., A., (2019), The Impact of Israeli Educational Curricula on the National Identity of Palestinians Inside the Green Line (1948) Areas, [Master's Thesis], An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine.

- 1- There is a clear impact of the Israeli entity's policies on obliterating the national identity by adopting a method of changing the educational curriculum for Palestinian students living inside the Green Line Areas.
- 2- The Israeli entity seeks to impose the Israeli curricula on educational institutions in the 1948 occupied territories in order to dissolve and integrate those Palestinians into Israeli society.
- 3- The Israeli entity is trying to erase the culture of belonging to Arab heritage, national and civilization values through direct intervention in the curricula established for Arab schools in the 1948 occupied territories.

The study recommended the following:

- 1- The necessity to conduct extensive studies on the impact of the Israeli educational curricula on the Palestinian national identity of the 1948 occupied territories' Palestinians due to its great impact on the 1948 occupied territories' Palestinians' national and Arab affiliation and belonging.
- 2- The necessity for the Arab sector's institutions in the 1948 occupied territories to expand their activities aimed at clarifying the objectives of the Israeli entity behind changing the curricula in Arab schools and warning and cautioning the 1948 Palestinian citizens of falling into the trap of the Israeli narrative aimed at obliterating the national identity.
- 2- The official bodies responsible for the issues of Arab citizens in the 1948 areas to prepare a comprehensive plan to confront these challenges and educate the Palestinians about the Israeli entity's malign objectives behind changing the curricula.

**Abd Alrahman Mohammad Saleh Aldarweesh's Study (2018): "The Role of High Follow-Up Committee for Arab Citizens in Preserving National Identity of the Palestinians in 1948 lands."<sup>10</sup>**

This study aimed at identifying the role of the High Follow-Up Committee for Arab Citizens in preserving national identity of the Palestinians in 1948 lands. The study problem is summarized in answering the following question: What is the extent of the success of the Higher Follow-up Committee for the Arabs in preserving the Palestinian national identity and enhancing the 1948 Palestinians belonging?

The study concluded that the main objective of forming the Higher Follow-up Committee is to embody unity on a national basis among all components of the political community, to resist unjust practices against Arabs in the 1948 territories, to preserve Palestinian national identity and belonging, and to counter the dominance of Zionist parties on the political scene in the Arab sector, and the policies of the Israeli institution advocating integration and coexistence with the Israelis.

The researcher made several recommendations, perhaps the most prominent of which was the need to maintain good relations with the Palestinian leadership and all other parties, as it is the largest representative of the 1948 Palestinians, which holds them to further assume their responsibilities and strengthen their ability to link all Palestinian events and act more effectively. The researcher also recommended to increase the interest on raising the Arab circles awareness on the need to preserve the Palestinian national identity through holding activities and gatherings

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<sup>10</sup>Aldarweesh, A., M., (2018), *The Role of High Follow-Up Committee for Arab Citizens in Preserving National Identity of the Palestinians in 1948 lands*, [Published Master's Thesis], An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine.

in which information related to the Palestinian situation and issues are published, and to carry out activities that contribute to strengthening the Palestinian national identity.

**JwanaGhalebHafi's study (2017): "The Higher Education Institutions Role in Promoting Palestinian Identity – Arab American University as Example"<sup>11</sup>**

This study aimed to identify the role of higher education in strengthening the Palestinian identity: The Arab American University - Jenin - as a study sample, after the crises and transformations that the Palestinian identity has undergone. The study focused on the Oslo era, which was characterized by the absence of an administrative organizational system and a decline in political awareness, as well as the adoption of an awareness related to the concept of peace and negotiations. Moreover, the consensus on the Palestinian national project was shattered, the political structure represented in the PLO weakened, and the presence of parties in political, social and cultural life was clearly reduced.

The study showed that there were statistically significant differences at a statistical significance of ( $\alpha = 05.0$ ) in the role of higher education in strengthening the Palestinian identity from the students' point of view. The differences were due to the variables of academic level, political affiliation, and college to which the student belongs, except for student movements in the variable of academic level and the role of university administration in the two variables political affiliation and student colleges.

The results of the interviews with the university employees indicated that the university administration should consider the focus on strengthening the identity and intellectual and

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<sup>11</sup>Hafi, Jwana, G.,(2017), *The Higher Education Institutions Role in Promoting Palestinian Identity – Arab American University as Example*, [Master's Thesis], Arab American University, Jenin, Palestine.

national awareness among students, by taking into consideration the importance of this, which equals the focus on scientific concepts and lectures. The educational freedom limits of the university grant the lecturers the freedom to address national topics through the elective courses that address the Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons and the history of the struggle, in addition to the fact that the Palestinian studies course is a compulsory university requirement for all university students.

**Amira Ghaleb Hassan Diab (2016): "The Role of Political Culture in the Palestinian National Unity (2007 – 2015)"<sup>12</sup>**

The study aimed to define the elements of the new Palestinian political culture after 1993, especially in 2007, and explain the role played by the new political culture in reducing the chances of achieving national unity. This study tackled the problem of the absence of national unity from the founding of the PLO until the year 2015, and this study assumes that the change in the values and elements of Palestinian political culture at different stages of the development of Palestinian political life and the accompanying social and economic transformations, An integrated political culture that supported national unity, despite its mixed elements, led to a culture of separation and fragmentation following the signing of Oslo Accords, which was encouraged after the 2<sup>nd</sup> election.

The study found that the political culture that prevailed during the pre-Oslo period was represented in the integrated policy pattern, which included the culture of resistance and liberation. It is a culture that supports national unity through its elements of culture, represented

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<sup>12</sup>Thiab, A., G.,(2016), *The Role of Political Culture in Palestinian National Unity (2007-2015)*, [Master's Thesis], An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine.

by the values of political pluralism, participation and development of political awareness, , The values of recognition of the other, the right of difference, the values of solidarity, the values of volunteering and charitable work, tolerance, sacrifice and altruism, and the political culture that prevailed after the period of Oslo agreement, Spyware separation and division has hindered the achievement of national unity and ultimately led to the cultural fragmentation.

**Amer Qabha study (2016): "The change in the Palestinian political culture after the Oslo agreement and its impact on the national constants"<sup>13</sup>.**

The aim of the study was to examine the impact of Oslo agreement on the Palestinian political culture and its impact on the national constants, according to the professors of the universities in the West Bank, and to address the concept of political culture in general and the characteristics of the Palestinian political culture in particular. The study was based on the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. It was based on a questionnaire of 250 randomly selected faculty members in Palestinian universities.

The results of the study indicated that there were not any changes in the Palestinian political culture after Oslo agreement, which was signed in 1993 as it was before the signing of the agreement.

1. The study found significant statistical differences related to the workplace.
2. Oslo agreement was considered by a large group of university professors a kind of prejudice to the Palestinian national constants.

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<sup>13</sup>Qabha, M., A., ( 2016),*Change in the Palestinian Political Culture after the Oslo Accord and its Impact on National Constants*, [Master's Thesis], An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine.

**Abu Rahma (2011): The Impact of the Political Settlement Process on the Palestinian Identity "A Study of the Trends of Palestinian University Students in the Gaza Strip"<sup>14</sup>.**

The study aimed to identify the attitudes of students of Palestinian universities in the Gaza Strip toward political settlement and Palestinian identity, and to reveal the possible relationship between the trend toward political settlement and the Palestinian identity. The study showed that the general trend towards the settlement process is negative, while the trend towards Palestinian identity is positive.

As for the Palestinian identity scale, the study showed that there were statistically significant differences between the average scores of students according to the university variable between the Islamic University and other universities in favor of the Islamic University in the Islamic dimension and between the Islamic University and other universities in the national and national dimensions. The main and strongest, but narrowly from the Islamic identity.

In light of the results of the study, the researcher recommended conducting more comparative studies to examine Palestinian attitudes in their various communities towards the Palestinian national identity and benefiting from these studies in the field of drawing up plans and procedures that would enhance the Palestinians' belonging to their collective identity. Moreover, it is recommended to conduct a comprehensive review of the path of political settlement and its implications on the political system and the Palestinian identity, and investigate the appropriate alternatives in order to build a Palestinian state.

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<sup>14</sup>Abu Rahma, I.,(2001),*The Impact of the Political Settlement on the Palestinian Identity*, [Published Master's Thesis], Al-Azhar University, Gaza, P. 43.

**Al-Qar'an (2010): "Jordanian Journalism in the Publication of National Values in Society"<sup>15</sup>.**

The study found that the importance of highlighting national values in the Jordanian press ranged between 2% and 5% and that the highest recurrence was the value of loyalty. It also showed that the value of adhering to Islamic constants came last.

The study recommended that the Jordanian press should exert more efforts to promote the values of society through the publication of press materials aimed at raising awareness among society in various fields of economic, political and social life and deepening the value system among the society.

**Abu Foda (2006) " role of educational media in strengthening the national affiliation of university students in the governorates of Gaza"<sup>16</sup>.**

The study aimed to identify the role of educational media in strengthening the national affiliation of university students in the Gaza governorates. The researcher came out with several results, the most prominent of which is that educational media has the ability to broadcast national values among university students in Palestinian universities in the Gaza governorates.

**Hanan Arafat Study (2005) "The Impact of the Oslo Agreement on Palestinian National Unity and its Reflection on Political Development"<sup>17</sup>.**

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<sup>15</sup>Al-Quran, Muhammad kamel Sulaiman., (2010), *The Jordanian Daily Press and its responsibility in spreading National values in society (2009-2010)*, Al- Rai and Al- Ghad newspapers as a model, master's thesis , Middle East University, Amman, Jordan.

<sup>16</sup>Abu Fouda, M., (2006), *The Role of Educational Media on Enhancing and Supporting National Affiliation of University Students in Gaza's Governorates*, [Master's Thesis], Al-Azhar University, Gaza, Palestine.

<sup>17</sup>Arafat, H., T.,( 2005), *The Effect of Oslo Accord on Palestinian Unity and its Reflections on the Political Development*, [Master's Thesis], An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine.

The study examined the impact of the Oslo agreement on Palestinian national unity. It also showed the degree of agreement and difference between the Oslo Agreement on the one hand and the Palestinian National Charter and the decisions resulting from the Palestinian National Council on the other hand. The researcher used the analytical descriptive method in her study. The most important results of this study were that the commitment of the Palestinian Authority to the Oslo Agreement was a major factor in the division of the Palestinian people. The Palestinian factions were a hindrance to national unity because of the party's intolerance. The degrees of national unity and joint action, and witness the popular cohesion that is falling apart in all differences.

**A study by Dr. Yair Hirschfeld (2000), "The Oslo Peace Formula"<sup>18</sup>.**

The study indicated that Oslo agreement is considered as a tool for negotiation and not as a goal for reaching a settlement with the Palestinians. The study found that there is a great victory for the policy of reprisal and absorption by the governments of Israel neutralizing the Arab and Islamic world of the equation of the conflict, and that the Palestinians have nothing but to engage in long-term operations as Israel seeks to impose conditions and dictates to any final political solution to the Palestinians.

### **1.12 Conclusion of the Literature Review:**

Previous studies on identity examined the views of media are reporting on the national identity. The studies related to the Palestinian reality analyzed the views of the students in the Palestinian universities and focused on the changes in the economic, political and social life in

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<sup>18</sup>Hirschfeld, Yair, (2000), Oslo Peace Formula, Yitzhak Rabin Centre for peace Research, Israel.

the Palestinian society. On the other hand, the previous studies did not address the structural impact of the Palestinian national identity and the changes that took place.

Some studies have dealt with the impact of the Israeli occupation in general. The impact of the Oslo agreement has not only affected national unity, division and the political structure of the Palestinian society. It has also killed the affiliation that contributes to the formation of a national identity.

The current study examines precisely the impact of Oslo Agreement on the Palestinian national identity. Since the signing of the agreement, the party identity has deepened and was manifested by the position of accepting or rejecting the agreement. Thus, the current study is the first of its kind, based on field interviews with a group that has not been exposed in the past, namely the leaders of the party and academics.

### **Expected results:**

The expected results of this study include:

1. Oslo Agreement has negative effectson the Palestinian national identity.
2. The Palestinian leadership has not succeeded in crystallizing a unified national identity for all Palestinians.
3. Party identities were clearly strengthened after the Oslo Accords, manifested by Palestinian division.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Theoretical framework: On the Nature of Identity**

- 2.1. Introduction:**
- 2.2. The Concept of Identity**
- 2.3. Identity Types**
- 2.4. Identity Formation Elements**
- 2.5. National Identity**
- 2.6. National Identity Formation Stages**
- 2.7. Palestinian National Identity (PNI):**
- 2.8. Palestinian National Identity Struggle**
- 2.9. Concluding Remarks**

## **2.1. Introduction:**

The concept of identity is key concepts addressed by scholars in their studies and research, as one of the most complex, intertwined and controversial concepts, due to its cognitive, cultural and conceptual overlap. This concept was influenced by intellectual and political contradictions as well as other sectarian, clan, class, religious and ideological factors. Identity is a concept of multiple meanings and elements and is of great importance to peoples and countries. This concept is one of the most dangerous weapons that can be used against a people during wars and conflicts. Without identity, there is no entity, and the weakness of an identity leads to the dissolution of its individuals into the strong, dominant identities.

Identity is something unique to each of us. Our identity is something that is unique to us that distinguishes us from others. Thus, identity refers to similarity and difference, and a relationship with a broader social group. For example, when we discuss national, cultural, or sexual identity we mean that our identity is partly related to what we share with others.

Identity refers to the way people answer the question, who are you? Who am I? Who are we? Identity also highlights the emphasis on personal or social contents, choices we make, goals we pursue, relationships with others, and friendly or hostile treatment of different groups of people.

The concept of identity has been amplified, and it is a concept that overlaps with many other terms such as belonging and citizenship. Identity also went through materializing and

development complexities as well as the various assumptions about the nature of identity, and the difficulties and challenges it faces.<sup>19</sup>

Identity is identified on the basis of social and cultural characteristics as well as shared values, personal and collective history, and interests. This concept bears the full weight of the need for the humans and the social entity to define who they are in light of the changes and social and political contexts surrounding any entity or society. Identity is also about life and death when it comes to self-determination and becomes a key matter when threatened and challenged as it then needs explicit affirmation and a struggle to resist oppressive narratives and liquidation attempts. The more stable societies are, the less focus on the identity matter.

## 2.2. The Concept of Identity:

Identity is a modern concept and developed and took shape after the French Revolution in 1789, when the leaders of the French Revolution raised the slogan of equality and transformed the French territory into a homeland. The concept of homeland, nevertheless, meant nothing for the residents of a village or city except that village or city. This concept became widespread in Europe during the nineteenth century. Later, the concept crossed Europe's borders into the world as the nation-state turned into a political unit within a new world order that was one of the First World War results.<sup>20</sup> As a result, the system of the global empire dead ended. The national

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<sup>19</sup>Bakr. Al-Murtaja& I. Bouham, (2009), *Bedouin Society, the Desert Regions and the Question of Identity*, [Master's Thesis, AbdelmalekEssaâdi University], Supervised by Dr. A. Bolifa, P. 3.

<sup>20</sup>Skafi, Ibtisam.,( 2013), *Palestinian National Identity in the Backdrop of Globalization, A Research on the Changing Statuses and Relationships*, Jerusalem, Palestine, P. 35.

nation-states were formed after the European countries demarcated once again the borders according to cultural and linguistic factors to a large extent.

The concept of identity is the system of standards by which the individual is known and defined, and this applies to the collective identity, society and culture. The concept of identity is one of the central concepts that records its permanent presence in various fields, especially in the field of social-nature humanities. Therefore, identity is a concept penetrating into the depth of our daily cultural and social life, and one of the most common and used concepts. Identity is not an entity that comes at once and for all, but rather it is a fact that is born, grows, ages and suffers from existential crises.<sup>21</sup> Identity is tied to the fate of a people, or a nation, and also relates to existence and the right to survive. Identity is an integral part of existence and struggle with life. Identity advances with the progress of the people and regresses with their retreat and is affected by their defeats and victories.

Identity is a system of material, moral, and social data that folds into a pattern of cognitive integration processes. Identity is not static, but a fact that develops according to its own logic, which is embodied in the processes of characterization and selection. Identity is ever changing to the point where it is able to identify the character of a person<sup>22</sup>. Some of the important stages in the formation and development of identity leave an unerasable imprint, of these stages are the important historical stages and the stages of group formation. The identity is an entity that develops and goes through structural stages to move towards a state of maturity and integration.

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<sup>21</sup>Mucchielli, A., *L'identité*, [Identity], (1993), Translated by Dr. Ali Wafā, Dar Al Waseem, Damascus, First Arabic Edition, P. 7.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, P.129-130.

Identity, linguistically defined, is a term derived from the pronoun he, meaning the qualities and reality of a person, and is also used to refer to the features and characteristics that distinguish the personality<sup>23</sup>. That is, it is like a person's fingerprint that distinguishes them from others, which means the uniqueness that distinguishes one from others. It is the code through which an individual can identify them self in their relationship with the social group to which they belong<sup>24</sup>, and the qualities they possess that creates their independent self. One of Al-Mu'jam Al-Waseet definitions of identity is the reality of the thing or person that distinguishes it from others, and it is also a card in which the name, nationality and birth of the person is proven, and it is called a personal card.<sup>25</sup>

Terminologically, identity is defined as a set of characteristics that an individual possesses, and that contribute to distinguishing them from others. These characteristics may be common to a group of people, whether within the community or the state. Another definition of the concept of identity is that it is everything shared by members of a specific group or social segment that contributes to building a general environment for a state, and these individuals are treated according to their own identity.<sup>26</sup> Identity is also defined as an entity that combines integrated affiliations, and the identity of the community gives its members feelings of security, stability and tranquility<sup>27</sup>. The emergence of multiple affiliations and unified loyalty in society creates problems and instability. Therefore, societies that have religious, ethnic or political

<sup>23</sup><https://www.almaany.com>dict>ar-ar>, 11/2/2018, 11 pm.

<sup>24</sup>Al-Shami, Rasheed., (1997), *The Problem of Judaism in Israel*, The World of Knowledge, Kuwait, P. 5.

<sup>25</sup>Ibrahim, Anees. et al., (1989), *Al-Mu'jam Al-Waseet*, (Vol. 1), Dar El Daawa, P. 998.

<sup>26</sup><http://mbenjema.blogspot.com/2013/12/blog-post.html>, 12/3/2018, 10:04 pm.

<sup>27</sup>Burhan, Abdul Rahman., (2010), *The Role of Higher Education in Enhancing Palestinian Identity and Its Impact on Political Development from the Point of View of Students and Workers at An-Najah University as a Model*, [Unpublished Master's Thesis], An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine, P. 18.

groups and sections must have a national identity that grants them a sense of tranquility, confidence and stability.

Identity according to the social identity theory is the self and one historical destiny by virtue of the common features and interests that determine people's orientations and goals for themselves and others and push them to work together in establishing their existence, preserving their achievements and improving their position and position in history and several groups. individual and collective identity.<sup>28</sup> The Palestinians are bound by a common destiny, they live in the same situation under occupation, the same common interests and goals, the same destiny, and the existence of a collective identity for the Palestinians that reflects itself with the national identity.

Identity is according to the theory of self-categorization, which defines the membership of a person within a particular social group, so that he is an active element in social identity. As individuals feel their membership in the group when they realize the similarities between them and other individuals, just as they feel their membership in the group when they realize the differences between them and others who are different from them.<sup>29</sup>

Abdul Rahman Al-Issawi defined identity as "an individual's feeling that they, themselves, are a result of the consistency of their feelings, the continuity of their goals and purposes, the sequence of their memories, and the connection of their past with their present and

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<sup>28</sup> Kanaana, Sharif, Palestinian identity to where? Al-Bireh, Palestine, Center for Heritage Studies The Palestinian Society, Family Revival Association, 2008.

<sup>29</sup> Zayed, Ahmed. The psychology of intergroup relations, issues in social identity and classification Self, Kuwait, International Group Printing Company, 2006.

future.”<sup>30</sup> The identity of any group or nation cannot be formed in isolation from its history or not be affected by the changes of the present, whether by confrontation or adaptation, and it continues for a future based on the goals of that group or nation.

The French scholar Jean-Pierre, starts his identity related book on the Policy Statement: The complex relations between cultural developments, political practices, popular methods of political movement and political imagination, which are the cause of the conflicts that fill the world, are due to identity. He sees that identity is only a political term, a result of political struggles as a response to foreign political struggles in order to preserve on the balance of power<sup>31</sup>. Hassan Saeed Al-Karmi defines Identity: “Identity is belonging, so it is said that this is of an Arab identity and that is of an Indian identity.”<sup>32</sup> Turki Al-Hamad adds and says: “Identity, before being a mental conception, is a practice and a behavior, and through practice the identity is formed.”<sup>33</sup>.

Based on the theory of intergroup conflict that focuses on competition between groups within society over limited resources, the theory of conflict considers social and economic institutions as tools of struggle between groups or classes, used to maintain inequality and the dominance of the dominant class.

Conflict theory has been used to explain a wide range of social phenomena, including wars, revolutions, poverty, and discrimination. Social inequality, the division of resources, and the conflicts that exist between different social and economic classes.

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<sup>30</sup> Al-Esawy, Abd Alrahman., (2002), *Personality Theories*, Dar El Maaref, Alexandria, Egypt, P. 16.

<sup>31</sup>[http://slailymohammed.blogspot.com/2011/10/blog-post\\_24.htm](http://slailymohammed.blogspot.com/2011/10/blog-post_24.htm), 25/2/2018, 9:30 am.

<sup>32</sup><http://addustour.com/articles/460824>, 1/3/2018, 9 pm.

<sup>33</sup> Al-Maraghi, Abeer., (2013), *The Israeli Occupation Impact on the Palestinian National Identity, Folklore as an Example*, [Published Master's Thesis], Middle East University, Amman, Jordan, pp. 46-47.

Many types of societal conflict throughout history can be explained using the central principles of conflict theory, and some theorists, including Marx, believe that societal conflict is the force that ultimately drives change and development in society.

Marx's version of conflict theory focused on the struggle between two basic classes, each class consisting of a group of people bound by mutual interests and a certain degree of property ownership.

Conflict theorists believe that competition is a constant and sometimes a fundamental factor in almost every human relationship and interaction, competition exists as a result of scarcity of resources including material resources, money, property, goods and more, in addition to material resources individuals and groups within society also compete for intangible resources, This can include leisure, dominance, and social status, and conflict theorists assume that competition is the default rather than cooperation.

One of the outcomes of this conflict is a revolutionary event, the idea being that the change in the power dynamic between groups does not occur as a result of gradual adaptation, rather it comes as a symptom of the conflict between these groups, and in this way changes in the power dynamics are often sudden and large in size rather than gradual and evolutionary.

According to this theory, since the end of the Ottoman rule and the Balfour Declaration, the Palestinians felt the danger of Zionism to the resources of the Palestinian people and their land, as well as the inequality during the British Mandate, which contributed to the formation and crystallization of their national identity competing with the Zionist identity.

Identity, as some see it, has no value in itself. Burhan Ghalioun states: "Identity has no value in itself or in the sense of privacy it creates; its value stems from the real opportunities for

progress and the expansion of the margins of the historical initiative of the peoples and groups that fall under its slogan as a result of the framework created by the identity.”<sup>34</sup>

Identity, from a national framework and relation to national identity perspective is “relativism and historical achieved by a people through their interaction, or through their dialectical social-historical relationship, where it gets defined. It is not a natural response.”<sup>35</sup> From a Marxist perspective, “class is the most important expression of identity, and class struggle is the main determinant of history.”<sup>36</sup>

The Identity definition from an Islamic context perspective, “it is a fertile identity that emanates from a true belief and solid fixed foundations unifies under its umbrella all of its members. It possesses a gigantic historical asset that is not seen at any other nation, speaks one Arabic language, and occupies a connected, intertwined and extended geographical area, it lives for one goal, which is to glorify and uphold the word of Allah “God”, and to worship Allah.”<sup>37</sup>

There are those who view identity from another perspective and say, “A person is defined by country, nationality, profession, and bloc, not by doctrine, culture, philosophy, or the ideological system. The Cuban is not defined as a Marxist nor the Indian as a Buddhist, especially since ideological and doctrine divisions are used to fuel memory, fuel animosities and create strife and wars.”<sup>38</sup> There are also two perceptions of identity presented: The first is positive, the second is negative. The first has been confirmed by studies in the field of social capital that the common

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<sup>34</sup>Ghalioun, Burhan., (1995), *Dialogues from the Era of Civil Wars*, Arab Institute for Research & Publishing, Beirut 1995; Ashkar, A., op. cit., P. 214-215.

<sup>35</sup>Al-Bitar, Nadeem., *The Limits of National Identity*, P. 11; Al-Barghathi, M.H., (2007), *Arab Culture and Globalization*, Arab Institute for Research & Publishing, P. 117.

<sup>36</sup>Manna, Haytham., *The Identity Industry*, Mokarabat “Approaches” Digital Magazine.

<sup>37</sup>Bin-Ismail, M., (August 1998), *Our Islamic Identity between Challenges and Launching*, Al Bayan Journal, Issue 128.

<sup>38</sup>Harb, Ali., (September 2009), *Religious Identity Problems*, Maaber Digital Library.

identity in the same social group can facilitate and ease everyone's life in this group. Therefore, the feeling of belonging to a human group as described by a wise man, Identity can be a source of wealth and warmth. The second perception is that identity is a source of horrific violence, and this second characteristic of a crisis identity is that it becomes a horrific, merciless tool in many cases. A strong and absolute sense of belonging limited to one group can make with it a realization of the distance and difference from other groups, solidarity from within with a group could fuel the disharmony with other groups<sup>39</sup>.

Identity does not have a fixed static definition, as there are several factors that affect it, such as victories and defeats, conflicts and events, factors of impact and vulnerability, as well as collective and individual differences, all of which play an important role in shaping and the formation of identity, which is reflected on individuals and groups. The changing and different circumstances, whether past or recent, place identity as a conflict product of what the individual and groups experience. It is the expression of the individual and the group seeing themselves in the mirror of the other, the enemy, and the friend. It is the moral engine of individual and group movements at all levels, from emotional relations to revolutions for national patriotic liberation<sup>40</sup>.

Identity has dynamic multiple definitions affected by several factors such as occupation and liberation, the disintegration and cohesion of society, democracy and dictatorship, poverty and wealth, consensus and difference.

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<sup>39</sup>Sen, Amartya, (2008), *Identity and Violence*, (S. Tawfiq, Trans.), The World of Knowledge, Kuwait. (Original work published 2006)

<sup>40</sup>Ashkar, Ahmad., (2008), *Towards a Comprehensive Arab Identity, an Alternative to the Palestinian Identity*, "Palestinian National Identity, Where to Go?" Conference Papers, INASH ALUSRA ASSOCIATION, Center of Studies of Palestinian Heritage and Society, P. 212.

Everyone defines the identity from their own perspective, some of them through ideology, some through religion and others through the nation-state. Identity expresses how individuals and groups want to define and express themselves before others. It reflects the reality of a state and people or a dream of liberation, independence, survival and existence.

Identity is considered a vital matter for peoples, as it relates to their existence; thus, the concept of identity can be defined as what distinguishes a group from others and is the commonality for the members of this group. It is the symmetric behavior that determines the positions and the unified reactions towards the challenges and issues faced by the members of this group. Thus, identity is what binds the members of any group or people with one another and constitutes an impenetrable bulwark against fragmentation and disintegration and increases their cohesion.

### **2.3. Identity Types:**

Several studies have addressed the concept of identity in its general form and its various types. Where every subject has its branches, and where every branch has its subcategories, same applies to identity, where there are several types of identities, including: Nationalism, religious, ethnic, sectarian, etc., which are types of narrow identity. However, national identity is broader, as it includes more than one religion, and more than one race and sect. National identity expresses the broader affiliation to history, geography and common interests. I will present some types of identity, perhaps the most important of which are the following:<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup><http://mawdoo3.com/>, Identity Definition,25/2/2018,11 am.

1. National Identity: Refers to the homeland of the individual and what distinguishes the individual belonging to this homeland from others, and it is everything that demarcate any state and its people.
2. Cultural Identity: The identity associated with culture in any society, and language is considered one of the most important factors of cultural identity. The system of beliefs, standards, common values, customs, morals and daily life topics within a society contribute to the formation of this identity.
3. Age Identity: According to this identity individuals are classified into age groups such as childhood, youth and old age.
4. Religious Identity: Religious identity is formed through belief in a divine entity worthy of obedience and worship, and this belief is based on religious scripts that provide a set of identifying marks for this religious identity.<sup>42</sup> Several factors contribute to the emergence of religious identity, including schools' curricula, the family, the ruling regime, and the media.
5. Ethnic Identity: It is that which pertains to what the individual shares with other people, and which make the individuals differ from all other human beings, because they have certain characteristics.<sup>43</sup> The extended family and the surrounding community, language, religion and culture contribute to its emergence.
6. National Identity: It is a unitary tendency around the same language, same ethnic origin, same history, and the one culture.

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<sup>42</sup>Yaqoub, Nabeel. Sulaiman., (2017), *Who Makes My Identity*, Bab Touma Printing House, Damascus, Syria.

<sup>43</sup>Al-Shami, R., op. cit., P. 7.

7. Party Identity: It expresses the individual's affiliation with a political party.

## **2.4. Identity Formation Elements:**

The identity constitutes from several elements that develop the identity, crystallize its special features, distinguish it from others, and affects it. These elements can be divided into four main elements:<sup>44</sup>

First: Physical elements such as name, housing, clothing, economic and financial capabilities.

Second: Historical elements, some of which relate to historical origins, such as ancestors, creators, formation myths, early heroes, and historical origins. Others relate to important historical events and their effects, such as basic transformations, education and socialization, important stages of development, customs and traditions.

Third: Social cultural elements, including those related to the cultural system: Cultural premises, religions, cultural symbols, ideology, various forms of expression such as art and literature, worldview, cultural intersection points, and collective norms. These elements also include cognitive system elements, such as special psychological features, values, systems, and trends.

Fourth: Social elements that include:

1. Social foundations “name, position, age, gender, profession, authority, and social affiliations.”
2. Social Values: Efficiency, quality, and varying ratings.
3. Future abilities: Capability and ability, adaptability, and behavior patterns.

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<sup>44</sup>Mucchielli, A., op. cit., PP. 18-20.

## 2.5. National Identity:

The national identity of each people reflects the extent of belonging to the homeland, and the importance of adhering to the national identity and commitment to it stems from its great effects and repercussions on nations and peoples. National Identity, as a unifying factor, strengthens the social fabric, and serves as a fortified tower that protects the homeland from threats, and it is a major focal point for nation building and prosperity. National identity is defined as a set of common characteristics and features that sets apart a particular nation, community, or homeland, cherished by its members, and constitute the essence of its existence and its distinct character.<sup>45</sup> Each group has common characteristics that distinguish them from other societies and form their own identity and personality. The concept of Contemporary National Identity differs from other concepts of belonging and loyalty in that it represents a single political and administrative situation characterized by its collective nature, and depends on the conscious agreement between certain individuals to live together in a society that enjoys full sovereignty, and this agreement requires agreeing on basic elements, foremost of which is the identified geographical location, borders, single government and unified law<sup>46</sup>. However, the Palestinian national identity has a specificity resulting from the existence of the occupation, which the researcher will address later.

The concept of national identity is considered one of the most complex concepts due to the diversity of its social, political and cultural elements and due to the elements influencing the

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<sup>45</sup>Al-Shadouh, Waleed.M., Al-Safadi, H.M., (2016), "The Degree of the Deanship of Student Affairs at Jerash University Contribution to the Development and Strengthening of the National Identity of the Students, as Seen by the Students themselves," Jerash for Research and Studies Journal, Vol. 17, Iss. 1(s), P. 699.

<sup>46</sup>Abu Rahma, Imaad., (2011), *The Impact of the Political Settlement on the Palestinian Identity*, [Published Master's Thesis], Al-Azhar University, Gaza, P. 43.

formation of this identity such as history, customs, language, religion, land, common destiny, and state. The controversy in defining this concept stems from the multiple expressions at the local, national and global levels.

Some see that the nation-state is one of the most important conditions for the formation of identity, as it includes citizenship, rights and duties. Identity has been linked to citizenship based on this view. Others believe that identity is formed without the incubating state, and that nations that have lost their independence and state sovereignty have not lost their national identity.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, a group focused on the material elements of nation formation and others focused on the cultural and symbolic elements of national identity<sup>48</sup>. For each collective national identity there is sub-identities, which may be reflected by the family, clan, village, or ethnic groups, and belonging to a national identity does not necessarily cancel out minor affiliations, nor does it mean cultural similarity between groups. There are key identities, within every social entity, individuals accept and embrace at certain moments for psychological reasons or to achieve a benefit, as belonging to an identity is based on the benefits and positives of that selection.<sup>49</sup> Accordingly, the eminence of these identities is related to the social, political and economic conditions surrounding them. These conditions are strengthened and highlighted during internal conflicts where clan, sectarian, ethnic or regional dimensions intensify. However, facing external threats, all of these identities collide with the larger identities transforming into a collective national character identity.

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<sup>47</sup>Guibernau, Montserrat. (2004). Anthony D. Smith on nations and national identity: a critical assessment. *Nations and Nationalism*, 10(1-2), P.126..

<sup>48</sup> Smith, Anthony. (1991). *National identity* (Vol. 11). Reno: University of Nevada press. PP. 25-33.

<sup>49</sup>Sen, Amartya. (2012). *Identity and violence: The illusion of destiny*. (JADAWEL S.A.R.L Trans.) P. 68. (Original work published 2007)

The national identity expresses the reality of a people and is not a reflection of the perception of one group without the other. It does not express sub-identities as this would negatively affect the formation of a national identity. Thus, the national identity is a factor of political, social and economic unification in the homeland, and it promotes the emergence of a unified political entity for the state. The national identity is variable and the feature of symmetry in it is relative, and the specificity of minor identities does not cancel the common. The identity expresses itself by being distinct, not symmetrical, from others. Identity formation process is in the context of a symbolic and conceptual affirmation of the self in the face of the other.

## **2.6. National Identity Formation Stages:**

Identity formation, development and its predominant character are affected by geographical and historical factors, the family environment, general culture, victory or defeat, the individual's thoughts and orientation. An individual might, at times, identify themselves and their identity by his religion, or they might define their identity by their sect or race. However, when the homeland is exposed to aggression or a specific event, individuals see their homeland as their identity, where the national identity takes over other identities.

The following are the stages of National Identity formation:<sup>50</sup>

Stage I: Colonialism and the consequent establishment of a form of political entity in the colonized country. Individuals are classified according to their affiliation to that entity. During colonialism an army, laws, regulations, and administrative classifications that control individuals are seen. Individuals experience a new stage that has nothing to do with the colonialism prevailing stage.

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<sup>50</sup>Massad, Jozef. (2001). Colonial effects: The making of national identity in Jordan. Columbia University Press.

Stage II: Resistance until independence. This stage impacts the formation of national identity.

Partisan identity, religious or ideological extremism might prevail during this stage.

Stage III: Expansion and reduction. This may be geographical or demographic. Expansion by either annexing additional population groups or new territories, or by a part of the people separating geographically or demographically from the motherland. Both expansion and reduction affect the formation of the national identity.

Stage IV: The internal explosion, which may be in the form of civil war, revolution, sectarian or ethnic conflicts that aim to redefine the national identity according to the view of each group or party. At this stage identities join and attract one another, and at this stage also fragmentation and separation begin, where every group would deem themselves entitled to leadership, its ideology and programs.

## **2.7. Palestinian National Identity (PNI):**

The national identity is a set of moral and sensory common denominators shared between the citizens of a particular state, transmitted to them through the institutions of the state and society, represented by the political system, parties, groups, family and others. These commonalities and features are formed over time creating the fabric that links the individual identity to a collective identity, as well as to the national identity<sup>51</sup>.

The Palestinian National Identity (PNI) is what we need preserved and strengthened the most. Identity is “the specificity of a thing, its unity, its personification, its uniqueness and its

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<sup>51</sup>Al-Jarf, Faten. Ibraheem. (2018). *The Identity Crisis and Its Repercussions on Political Stability in the Arab World*, Dar Al-Jundi for Publishing and Distribution, Jerusalem, Palestine. P. 71.

singular existence in which there is no participation.”<sup>52</sup> We need unity and realization of our uniqueness to preserve our existence and our land confronting all of the Israeli occupation projects in order to achieve liberation.

For more than a hundred years, the Palestinian cause has been subjected to multiple attempts of liquidation aimed at completing the Zionist project of a complete control of the occupied Palestinian land, crowning Jews as the sole owner of the land and obliterating any existence of the Palestinian Arab people, the indigenous people of the land. The Israeli Occupation has sought and is still seeking to liquidate the Palestinian cause and impose a fait accompli through solutions imposed on the Palestinian people that do not meet their minimum demands, rights and aspirations. The occupation used all available means and methods of ethnic, spatial and temporal cleansing to liquidate the Palestinian national cause, perhaps the most prominent of its attempts is the obliteration of the PNI either by dissolving it or by liquidation. The PNI constitutes the most important and complex issue in light of the reality that the Palestinian people have lived and are experiencing since the end of the nineteenth century. PNI has gone through many different stages, atrophy and renewal, as well as decline and revival. The PNI, up to this date, is still going through many twists and turns due to the conflict on the ground, the struggle for existence, the new changes that the Arab world has witnessed, and because of the fear of the loss or distortion of the future of that identity.

The Palestinian National Identity is no exception, as it is a modern identity like other national identities, and its emergence is linked to economic transformations, the nature of demographics, and the struggle against immigration and Zionist settlement by the end of the

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<sup>52</sup>Al-Farabi, Abo Nasr. Muhammed. (Jumada II 1346) *Commentary*. The Ottoman Encyclopedia. P. 21.

Ottoman rule. These are factors that played varying roles in providing the preludes to the formation of the Palestinian National Identity<sup>53</sup>.

The PNI began to form by the end of the Ottoman rule in the region, as a result of the emergence of the Zionist movement's intention to establish a national home for the Jews in Palestine, but it considered itself an integral part of Greater Syria. On a general level, PNI was expressing itself as part of a broader Islamic association<sup>54</sup>.

The Palestinian National Identity began to take shape following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the geographical division of the Arab countries according to the Sykes-Picot Agreement in 1916, the Balfour Declaration of 1917, and the commencing of activities aiming at establishing a national home for the Jews in Palestine<sup>55</sup>. Palestine also witnessed several events that had an impact on the development of a special national identity, including the Al-Buraq Revolution of 1929, the 1936–1939 Arab revolt in Palestine, the Nakba of 1948, the establishment of the Zionist state and the consequent several years of occupation of the entire Palestinian land. Palestinians began to define themselves as part of an Arab nation with the emergence of nationalist tendencies<sup>56</sup>. The researcher will detail these stages address their impact on the Palestinian National Identity in the third chapter.

In his book "The Palestinian Identity: Creating Contemporary National Consciousness," Rashid Al-Khalidi asserted that the roots of the Palestinian identity preceded the emergence of

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<sup>53</sup>Hijawi, Sulafa. (2001) Palestinian National Identity Introductions and Problems. *Ruya Magazine, Vol 10*.

<sup>54</sup>Kayali, Majed., (2012). The Rise and Fall of Palestinian National Identity and Political Entity. *Majallat al-Dirasat al-Filastiniyya [Journal of Palestine Studies]*. Beirut, Lebanon. Iss. 90. P. 7.

<sup>55</sup>Brand, Lury.A. (1991). Palestinians in the Arab World: Institution Building and the Search for State. *Majallat al-Dirasat al-Filastiniyya [Journal of Palestine Studies]*. Vol. 30 Iss. 4.

<sup>56</sup>Hilal, Jameel. (2006). *The Palestinian Political System after Oslo: A Critical Analytical Study*. The Institute for Palestine Studies and Muwatin, The Palestinian Institute for the Study of Democracy, Ramallah, Palestine, Iss. 2. P.5.

the general Palestinian awareness of this identity, as the inhabitants of Palestine began to perceive themselves as a distinct political unit since the beginning of the twentieth century. This was evident when the writer Najib Azuri proposed in 1908 the idea of expanding the Sanjak (District) of Jerusalem to include northern Palestine, "As this is necessary for the development of the land of Palestine, as he put it."<sup>57</sup> Al-Khalidi, through this perception of identity, argued against Benedict Anderson's "imaginary groups" theory, which linked the emergence of media discourse and the beginning of awareness of one's self and the other. However, Al-Khalidi's main concern was to discredit the claims that the Palestinian identity was a response to Zionism. Even though he acknowledges the importance of the Zionism role in the formation of the Palestinian identity, considering the Zionism the other entity faced by the Palestinians, he tries to prove that the elements of the Palestinians' belonging to Palestine precede their confrontation with Zionism.

The Palestinian National Identity began to take shape after the failure to achieve the ambition of Pan-Arabism, and the dispersal of the Unified Arab Movement and the fragmentation of the latter into national movement. The Palestinian Identity shined in the face of the British Mandate and the danger of the Zionist settlement project without breaking its connection to the Arab movements, as Palestinians envisioned a Palestinian national identity linked to certain geographical and political borders, and they developed national institutions and raised national leaders that tried to contribute to spreading awareness and strengthening national belonging. The leaders derived their legitimacy from resisting the British occupation and the Zionist project. However, the sense of national identity among most Palestinians was not related

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<sup>57</sup> -Khalidi, Rashid. (1997), *Palestinian Identity*, op. cit., P.28.

to the contemporary political, social and legal connotations of the concept of patriotism, which was the basis for some political and intellectual elites. Disallowing the Palestinians to establish their own state or entity has deprived them the opportunity to govern themselves and their institutions. This had a major impact on the development of a Palestinian national identity, as that identity was not embodied in a single entity or recognized body.<sup>58</sup>

The Palestinian national identity has a specificity of struggle and that does not necessarily mean that it is of an isolationist nature. The special circumstances of the Palestinian people are being subjected to settler-replacement colonialism aiming to empty the land of its people and denying the existence of a people with a national identity of their own. This denial was evident through many claims, of which “A land without a people for a people without a land.”, “the Palestinian people have more than 20 Arab countries they can live in.”, and that “the Palestinian people have a Jordanian identity, and Jordan is the alternative homeland for the Palestinians.”<sup>59</sup> Therefore, it was necessary to preserve a Palestinian national identity in order for the Palestinian people to preserve their land, where stressing and highlighting the national identity is a struggle necessity to assert existence and therefore rights.<sup>60</sup> We have heard in the recent past about rumors about the Trump Peace Plan as well as the establishment of a semi-state in Gaza with the annexation of part of the Egyptian Sinai to it without mentioning the West Bank. We’ve also heard at times about the annexation of the West Bank to Jordan, as well as statements addressing the settlement of Palestinian refugees in their places of refuge. All of these statements, claims

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<sup>58</sup>Sayigh, Yazeed. (2002). *Armed struggle and the search for state: The Palestinian national movement, 1949-1993*. [B. Sirhan Trans.] Institute for Palestine Studies, Beirut, pp. 47-48. (Original work published 1997)

<sup>59</sup>Al-Qalqili, Abd Al-Fattah. and Abu Ghosh, A. (2012 April). *The Palestinian National Identity, The Specificity of Formation and the Regulating Framework*, Working Paper No. 13, BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights. P. 14.

<sup>60</sup>Al-Fatafta, Mahmoud. (2019). *Articles in Politics and the Media*, [Researchers Without Borders]. P. 15.

and attempts highlight the attempts to obliterate the Palestinian national identity or limit it to one part of the Palestinian land.

## **2.8. Palestinian National Identity Struggle:**

The struggle of the Palestinian national identity is not solely due to the occupation, but rather to internal fragmentation and association with other countries, in addition to interests and projects that are concerned with the abolition of the Palestinian National Identity. The Palestinian situation, as Al-Bishtawi expresses, “the beginnings between Palestine and the Arab countries are similar, and even share certain milestones, with the exception of the difference that the Palestinian was threatened with abolition and exclusion before the era of colonialism.”<sup>61</sup>. What sets the Palestinian National Identity apart from other Arab identities is that the latter were embodied in the form of states, while the Palestinian was embodied in its reflection of struggle and resistance of the occupier and all projects aiming to liquidate and dissolve the Palestinian cause. The Palestinian identity is linked to struggle, resistance and the pursuit of liberation. Identity is the compass that guides the Palestinian people towards liberation from occupation. In light of the current situation, the lack of any indicator of an independent Palestinian state, the fragmented geographical territories, the conflict with Israel and the latter's conclusion of agreements and the establishment of political and economic relations with other countries, it is necessary to embody our unified Palestinian National Identity and preserve it from dissolution and fragmentation.

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<sup>61</sup>Al-Bishtawi, Muhammed. (2008). *The Palestinian National Identity in One Hundred Years 1907 - 2007*, “Palestinian National Identity, Where to Go?” Conference Papers, INASH ALUSRA ASSOCIATION, Center of Studies of Palestinian Heritage and Society. PP. 36-57.

The dispersion of the Palestinian national identity is directly related to the Oslo Accords and the accompanying shift conflict-management with the Israeli occupation and the marginalization of an integral part of the Palestinian people, namely the 48-Palestinians and Palestinian refugees, followed by the Palestinian divide. The weakness and decline of the national culture have a negative impact and pose a threat to the Palestinian National Identity. Therefore, the continuation of the conflict and the inability of the Palestinian people to obtain their national rights and liberation from occupation makes resistance a necessary condition for national identity that makes the latter distinct from the well-known meaning of the national identity of other peoples and nations. Likewise, the relation between Pan-Arabism and Palestine would achieve the desired goals of the Palestinian people, which are liberation, the demise of the occupation, and the preservation of the national identity of the Palestinian Arab people.<sup>62</sup>

## **2.9. Concluding Remarks:**

The maintenance of the Palestinian National Identity was not linked to a specific political or state entity, rather, its growth was earlier and deeper than the growth of the political or state entity. This identity did not diminish with the disappearance of its political field and the deadlock in the formation of a Palestinian national political entity. Rather, the Palestinian identity had to continue, coexist and renew in the absence of a state or a unified political entity throughout the post-Nakba years until the formation of the Palestine Liberation Organization.<sup>63</sup>

The 48-Nakba and its consequences are considered a key struggle in face of the formation of the national identity. The 1948 defeat, which was called the Nakba, was not just a defeat in a

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<sup>62</sup>Al-Fatafta, Mahmoud. op. cit. P. 19.

<sup>63</sup>Khalidi, Rasheed. (1997). *The Palestinian Identity: Creating Contemporary National Consciousness*. Colombia University Press. P. 7

series of battles between a liberation movement and colonial settler forces, but rather a defeat for an entire society that resulted in the fading of its existence as a social and cultural entity that lives and grows within the framework of a unified geographical incubator<sup>64</sup>. This means that the Palestinian people have undergone demographic changes as a result of diaspora and displacement; political changes as a result of the existence of an occupying ruling regime and its subordination to multiple political regimes in the countries of asylum; and other social changes. This resulted in the re-formation of Palestinian people on their land and in the diaspora within different political, social, cultural and economic variables and spaces. Therefore, the disparity in the development of the Palestinian national identity was the result of the fragmentation of land and society. In the countries that carried out exclusion and marginalization policies against Palestinians, as in Lebanon and Egyptian administered Gaza, the development of identity was faster, while the development of the Palestinian National Identity was delayed among the Palestinians in those countries that integrated and nationalized refugees, as was the case in the West Bank during the Jordanian rule, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the 1948 occupied Palestine<sup>65</sup>.

The identity of any group is affected by many variables and factors and is subject to change and development. Identity is not static and not an abstract concept, and it is subject to stages of development and descending, especially in our Palestinian case and what the struggle it goes through facing the Israeli occupation. Defeats and victories, the absence of an independent entity, annexation to the region, and global interventions in the region affect identity. Identity is

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<sup>64</sup>Hilal, Jameel. (1998 Summer). *A Reflection on our Modern History*. Al-Karmel magazine. Iss. 55056.

<sup>65</sup>Abu Nada, Ashraf. (2014 May). *The Imagined Palestinian Identity between Development and Crisis*. Al-Mustaqbal Al-Arabi Journal, Iss. 423. P. 87.

one of the most important elements of existence for any group, as it is their distinguishing mark and their existence. Identity is what distinguishes any group from others, and it is what brings them together to achieve their goals. It is a key basis upon which the path of struggle, liberation, and nation-building is laid.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Palestinian National Identity Evolution Stages:**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

#### **3.2 Phase I: Palestinian National Identity and Ottoman Rule**

#### **3.3 National Identity as the Antithesis of the Zionist Movement:**

#### **3.4 Palestinian National Identity During the British Mandate:**

#### **3.5 The Palestinian National Identity Post 1948's Al-Nakba**

##### **3.5.1 Palestinian Identity in Light of the Emergence of the Palestine Liberation Organization**

#### **3.6 The 1967 June War Defeat:**

##### **3.6.1 Land Day (Youm Al-Ard) 1976:**

#### **3.7 Palestinian National Identity After the Oslo Accords:**

#### **3.8 Concluding Remarks:**

### 3.1 Introduction:

In this chapter, the researcher will address the relationship between the formation of the Palestinian National Identity and the important events that had an impact on its formation in order to identify the emergence, development, influencing factors and characteristics of the National Identity. The researcher divided the development of the National Identity through into temporal phases in order to follow the historical context of the formation of the Palestinian National Identity and to identify the impact of each phase.

Studies indicate that **the First Phase** in the advent of National Identity in the Arab countries in general and in Palestine in particular was at the beginning of the Ottoman Empire collapse. The collapse of the Ottoman Empire was followed by the British Mandate period through which Zionist settlement on the land of Palestine was active, followed by Al-Nakba stage where the State of Israel was established on a part of the Palestinian land and thousands of the Palestinian people were expelled, and the Palestinians were scattered around the world. The First Phase also addresses the impact of the latter stage on the Palestinian National Identity as a result of different diverse regimes in the countries that accommodated the Palestinians. **The Second Phase** began with the key developments and events during 1948 with the formation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the launch of the contemporary Palestinian revolution, leading to the Six-day War defeat of 1967 and the loss of the entire Palestinian land. The researcher will trace the important milestones since the defeat of 1967 until the signing of the Oslo Accords in order to study the details of **the Third Phase** as it was eventful and dynamic encompassing the Yom Kippur War, the 1976 uprising, 1982 Lebanon War, the First Intifada of

1987, the Jordanian disengagement in 1988, and the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993. The researcher will address in **the Fourth Phase** the Post-Oslo Accords events, the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority, the Second Intifada (Al-Aqsa Intifada) and other events.

### **3.2 Phase I: Palestinian National Identity and Ottoman Rule:**

The Palestinians during the Ottoman rule of the Arab and Islamic worlds were, like other Arabs, similar in their view of the Ottoman state as a succession of the Islamic caliphate, and that the Islamic state was the union of all Muslims, including Arabs, where the Islamic identity was dominant among the Palestinians, like fellow Arabs. The Islamic State was seen through the Islamic Identity perspective as an all-state that everyone must contribute to serving it. Therefore, Palestinian National Identity did not exist<sup>66</sup>.

The Arab Identity, following the fall of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the First World War, the Arab identity took precedence over the Ottoman and Islamic ones. The Pan-Arab unity, or Palestine-Syria unity, was seen as the only way to resist and prevent the establishment of a National Home for the Jews on the land of Palestine<sup>67</sup>.

The Palestinian National Identity started, after the end of the First World War and the placement of Palestine under the British Mandate and its separation from Syria, which was under the French Mandate, and the increase of Jewish-Zionist settlement on the land of Palestine, to develop on the basis of belonging to Palestine as a separate unit from Syria, but the Palestinian National Identity was incapacitated during this Phase as a result of the strength of narrow

<sup>66</sup>Budeiri, Mosa.,(1995), The Palestinians Between National and Religious Identity,*Majallat al-Dirasat al-Filastiniyya, Issue 21*, Pp 7-8.

<sup>67</sup>Porat, Y., (1975), The Palestinian-Arab National Movement, in M. Curtis. ed. The Palestinians. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Books, Pp121-122.

identities, especially clan, narrow family, local and party identities. Moreover, the Arab National Identity was strengthened, which meant that the Arab countries surrounding Palestine became the decision-maker when it relates to the issues of the Palestinian people<sup>68</sup>.

### **3.3 National Identity as the Antithesis of the Zionist Movement:**

The Palestinians realized the dangers of the Zionist immigration and Jewish settlement, and were aware of the social, political, and even economic threats over their land and their existence as a people, as Palestine was, after the First World War, the aspiration, and the coveted prize of the Zionist movement. As a response, The Palestinian National Identity showed its early signs. Sensing external danger is one of the most important components that constitute the national identity of any people, where it outweighs any other sub-identity. The national identity in the Palestinian case represents a new and unique pattern that sets it apart from other identities of other societies, where the identity was and still is of great interest in terms of the mechanisms of its formation, and pattern and forms of expression, for a number of reasons, the most important of which are the following<sup>(69)</sup>:

1. The relation and connection between the emergence of Arab nationalities and lifespan of colonialism and the decolonization, which made the Arab nationalities a part of the historical formation associated with states and societies.
2. The clear influence by the state and nation transferring mechanisms and the formation of the modern states after 1945 in line with the Arab liberation movements becoming a

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<sup>68</sup>Brand, Lury., (1991), op. cit, p. 14.

<sup>69</sup>El Sakka, Abahir. (2013),Palestinian Social Identity: Its Fragmented Representations and Its Multiple Overlaps,*The Second Annual Conference Proceedings Series*, P. 46.

part of the international model of political forms that was dominant during that period in the world.

3. The Palestinian nationalism relation and connection with the historical process specific to the Palestinian context, which led to the emergence of nationalities after the Ottoman Caliphate, through British colonialism and the rise of Arab nationalism, which was similar to Turkish nationalism, which represented a simulation of struggle movements against other forms of Italian, German and European colonialism.
4. The rapid growth of the sense of patriotism among members of the Palestinian society due to the escalation of challenges with the Zionist colonial project.

Identity is based primarily on collective memory as a creator of identity despite other determinants, due to the identity's reliance on common denominators, which are language, customs, traditions, and the unified national case destiny. Moreover, there is the fact that identity is based on the difference between social groups, as a declared sense and feeling of belonging to a social group compared to another different or distinct social group within the same social component, which requires its members to state different and distinct social identities.

The specificity of the Palestinian identity lies in the fact that it was formed as a result of being targeted by the Israeli entity, through the latter targeting the Palestinian presence's civilization, cultural, social, economic and political aspects. The identity was formed in light of the great struggle that the Palestinian people fought in order to install their existence and attain their national and legitimate rights.

The Palestinian identity emerged as the antithesis to the Zionist identity. The latter is based on occupation, displacement, and destruction through the expulsion of the original inhabitants of the homeland and replacing them with new residents of a new character and identity. Therefore, the Palestinian identity materialized in the form of resistance to this occupation to establish existence in the face of the will of displacement and exile, which made it a struggle identity in its essence, subjected to liquidation if it abandons that struggle essence.<sup>70</sup>

The researcher believes that the national identity relates to individuals who belong to a specific place and are united under the same characteristics and traits. However, the Palestinian people identity is unique as a result of it surviving repression and Judaization by the Jewish groups, and yet maintaining its characteristics and singularity compared to other identities that have changed due to external factors and circumstances losing their features or having the latter altered as it transmits through the various generations.

### **3.4 Palestinian National Identity During the British Mandate:**

The importance of the Palestinian identity, which the Palestinian people needed, appeared despite the fact that it bears the historical Arab and Islamic identity due to the Zionist settler-occupier attack. The latter called for shedding a light and saving the Palestinian people and the Arab and Islamic nation from this occupation, which constantly seeks to obliterate all Palestinian features and replace them with a new reality that befits the occupation's colonial plans.

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<sup>70</sup>Al-Maraghi, Abeer., op. cit. p. 54.

Scholars differ when it comes to the emergence of the Palestinian national identity. Some consider that it arose in conjunction with other Arab national identities, but circumstances prevented its clear materialization. These circumstances can be defined as the political and social activities that emerged during the last decade of the Ottoman Empire's life. 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<sup>71</sup>.

On the other hand, other scholars believe that 1917 was the strongest point, historically, for the establishment of the Palestinian national identity, given the extent of the existential challenges that afflicted Palestine in that year following the British Mandate authorities issuing the Balfour Declaration, which grants the Jews the right to the land of Palestine, as well as the colonial countries contribution in defining Palestine as an Arab region situationally isolated from its surroundings. Nevertheless, the Palestinian identity emerged, on the ground and in the collective consciousness and collective memory of the Palestinians, and was optimally crystallized at a later stage following the British Mandate, the Great Palestine Revolution of 1936 and the Nakba, a stage during which Palestinians, shockingly, realized that they cannot rely on their Arabism to defend them and rescue them from Zionism, and there are no Arab doors that would open to their refugees, and that every country has begun to act in proportion to its own interests to preserve its own sovereignty in light of the ongoing challenges<sup>72</sup>.

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<sup>71</sup>Awayes, Ihab. (2016). *The Variance of the Concept of National Identity in the Palestinian Television Media*. Faculty of Arts and Humanities Dahr El Mahraz, Fez - Laboratory of Communication and Expression Techniques, P. 275.

<sup>72</sup> - Awayes, Ihab., op. cit, P.277

Among the indications of the beginning of the emergence of the Palestinian national identity is the Palestinians' adoption of the national anthem "Mawtini", which was composed by the late Palestinian poet Ibrahim Toukan since the thirties of the last century. It can be said that the features of the identity that emerged in that period were a major Arab identity and then a subsidiary Palestinian identity, both of which were anti-colonial. There's a lot of question marks over the emergence of the Palestinian national identity as previously mentioned, and one of the most important questions of these is the role of the Nakba in the emergence of the Palestinian national identity. Some believe the identity was the outturn of the Nakba, while others believe that the national identity was formed independently from the Nakba, British Mandate, and the Israeli occupation of Palestine, where it was formed in the same spontaneous way as Arab national identities that stemmed from the parent Ottoman Islamic identity.<sup>73</sup>

Palestine was divided, before falling under the British Mandate, at the end of 1917 into two parts: the first part included the northern regions, which consisted of the Acre and Nablus Sanjaks of the Beirut Vilayet. The second part included the southern regions, which consisted of the independent Mutasarrifate of Jerusalem (Sanjak of Jerusalem), which was directly under the authority of the Minister of Interior<sup>74</sup>. At that time, Palestine had no language, religion, borders, or history independent of its surrounding Arab environment. The Palestinians participated in the various Arab parties and associations that were established after the declaration of the Ottoman constitution in 1908.<sup>75</sup> Palestinians adopted the reformist nationalist ideologies that were based

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<sup>73</sup> Abu Anza, Muhammed., (2011), *The Reality of the Problems of Arab Identity: Between National and Islamic Theses" Study from an Intellectual Perspective*, [Unpublished Master's Thesis], Middle East University, Amman.

<sup>74</sup> Manna. Adel., (1999), *The History of Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period, 1700-1918 (A New Reading)*, Institute for Palestine Studies, P.179.

<sup>75</sup> Al-Qalqili, Abd Al-Fattah. and Abu Ghosh, A. (2012 April). op. cit, P.21.

on the virtue of belonging to the land and the homeland, because the Zionist danger gave the Arab movement in Palestine a special character, and contributed to the establishment of the first idea of the Palestinian national identity. However, this identity remained part of the Arab national movement until the second decade of the twentieth century, after which the Palestinians adopted the Arab revolution led by Hussein bin Ali, Sharif of Mecca in 1918 when Palestine was called at that time Southern Syria.<sup>76</sup>

The San Remo Conference of 1920, the collapse of Arab rule in Syria and its occupation by French forces in 1920, and the failure of Iraqi revolt of 1920 constituted a range of shocks that greatly affected the Palestinian national movement. As a result of the previous developments, the Third Palestinian Arab Congress: Haifa, 1920 was held, which did not indicate that Palestine is part of Syria, but rather called on to establish a national government responsible to representative assembly, whose members would be chosen from the people who inhabited the country, which means that this conference constituted the starting-point for the Palestinian national identity through a cross-country movement with specific goals, but not separated from its Arab and Islamic nationalism<sup>77</sup>.

### **3.4.1 The 1929 Palestine Riots; The Buraq Uprising:**

On September 24, 1928, which is the Day of Atonement for the Jews - the Jews set up a barrier like a curtain in Al-Buraq Square, calling for separating men from women during prayer.

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<sup>76</sup>Charif, Mahir., (1995), Al-bahth 'ankiyan (The Search for an Entity), Center for Socialist Studies and Research, Cyprus.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., P. 43.

The Jews resisted, and there were almost clashes between the two parties, but the British police forces intervened and prevented the Jews from setting up the barrier.

A major Islamic conference was held in Jerusalem in November 1928, headed by Haj Amin al-Husseini, attended by delegates from Syria, Lebanon and Transjordan. Among its decisions:

1. Responding with full force to any act or attempt aimed at creating any right for the Jews in the place of Al-Buraq Al-Sharif.
2. Demanding the government to permanently and permanently prevent Jews from placing any tool, temporarily or permanently, in that place, and to prevent them from raising voices and showing articles.
3. The conference negates the consequences of what may result from the Muslims' efforts to defend Al-Buraq Al-Sharif by themselves against the government, if it is slow to prevent any aggression from the Jews.
4. Formation of the Society of Guardians of the Holy Places.

In the summer of 1929, the uprising known as the Al-Buraq Uprising broke out.<sup>78</sup> Since the war ended, the Jews began to weigh their decisions and sought to establish broad rights for themselves and to purchase the vast endowment area surrounding and leading to Al-Buraq.<sup>79</sup> In the week of Yom Kippur, mid-August 1929, the Jews carried out a large demonstration in which

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<sup>78</sup> Al-Buraq refers to a place adjacent to the wall of the Al-Haram Ash-Sharif in Jerusalem, in which is the door through which the Prophet, Peace Be Upon Him, entered during his Isra 'journey from the Masjid al-Haram to the Al-Aqsa Mosque, riding the steed known as Al-Buraq.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, Pp.61-62.

they raised the Zionist movement flag and chanted the anthem of the latter. The Muslims, the following week, responded to it with an even more intense demonstration. The two parties prowled each other, then soon they engaged in Jerusalem and its environs to Jaffa and its environs, then to Hebron, Safed, and others. The simmering tensions continued for about two weeks.<sup>80</sup>

These clashes led to the following results:

1. An economic break between the Arabs and the Zionists.
2. Deepening the gap between the Arabs and the Jews and increasing the intensity of the conflict.
3. The British authorities were forced to issue the White Book in 1930.<sup>81</sup>

Al-Buraq Uprising constituted a terminal between two eras, and the stage of no return in Arab-Jewish relations that have been characterized by clear hostility and mutual violence. The Uprising witnessed the emergence of the Islamic component in the Palestinian identity. This Uprising also impacted the beginnings of the formation of the political identity; this was evident by the Palestine newspaper suggestion after the Uprising to adopt a flag and a national anthem in response to the Zionists raising the flag and the Jews chanting the Zionist anthem. The Al-Buraq Uprising also had an impact on the Palestinian cultural identity, such as poetry and richness, especially a poem "Min sijn 'Akka.", where after the Al-Buraq Uprising, Muhammad Jamjoum,

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<sup>80</sup> Al-Ahmed, Nageeb., (1985), *FalasteenTareekhanWaNedalan (Palestine, History and Struggle)*, Dar Al-Jaleel for Publishing & Palestinian Research, Amman.

<sup>81</sup>Darwaza, Muhammad Izzat, (1992), *The Palestinian Cause in its Various Stages*, Dar Yarob Publishers for Research and Distribution, Vol. 1, p. 73.

Fouad Hijazi, Atta Al-Zir were arrested and later executed. Their story turned into an important chapter in the Palestinian history novel and the popular Palestinian history.<sup>82</sup>

### 3.4.2 The Great Arab Revolt 1936-1939

During the period between 1931 and 1936, Palestine witnessed difficult political events and developments, the combination of which contributed to the outbreak of the 1936 revolution and influenced its course. The most important of these events and developments that caused the explosion of the revolution are:<sup>83</sup>

#### 1. The British Colonial Policy Aligned With the Zionist Movement:

The British Mandate authorities continued their cooperation with the Zionist movement in order to Judaize Palestine and implement the Zionist project. While the British authorities suppressed the Arab resistance, carried out the most severe military measures against it and refused to move towards achieving self-government (the Legislative Council), they cooperated with the Jewish Agency, and made it a government within a government, it turned a blind eye to the Zionists' smuggling of weapons, and facilitated their immigration and possession of Palestinian lands.

#### 2. Increased Jewish Immigration and Land Ownership:

Jewish immigration to Palestine increased steadily and suddenly in the first half of the thirties, and thus the proportion of Jews rose from 16% in 1931 to 28% in 1936 of the total

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<sup>82</sup>Kanafani, Ghassan. (1966). *Resistance Literature in Occupied Palestine 1948-1966*, Dar Al Adab, Beirut.

<sup>83</sup>Al-Kayyali. Abd al- Wahhab. (Ed. & Compiler), (1988), *Documents on the Palestinian Arab Resistance to the British Mandate and Zionism (1918-1939)*, Institute for Palestine Studies, P.475.

population<sup>84</sup> It was natural in the wake of these large numbers of Jewish immigrants who entered Palestine during this period, that the Jewish control over the lands would increase and the Jewish settlements and colonies would multiply.

Over time, the Palestinian situation started to manifest as a comprehensive revolution, where it was, at its beginnings, limited to sporadic and limited military operations, and the number of revolutionaries, who were mostly farmers, increased, and Arab volunteers from Transjordan, Syria and Iraq flocked to Palestine to join the revolutionaries. These volunteers were led by the well-known military commander, Fawzi al-Qawuqji, of Lebanese origin (from Tripoli), who declared himself the commander-in-chief of the Southern Syrian rebellion.

The 1936 Revolt was characterized by several characteristics that set it apart from other Palestinian revolutions during the Mandate period, the most important of these characteristics are:

1. Its intensity, spread, duration, and comprehensiveness of all sectors of the Palestinian people, despite that it originated in the countryside and relied on the deprived Palestinian farmers.
2. It was directed primarily against the British occupation authorities.
3. It included a long, continuous strike like never before, punctuated by tax withholding and civil disobedience.
4. The participation of Arab volunteers from outside Palestine in its events and activities.
5. It expressed the original and deep political aspirations of the Palestinian people.

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<sup>84</sup>Zu'aytir, Akram., (1986), *Al-Kaddeyya Al-Filasteneyya (The Palestinian Cause)*, Dar Al-Jaleel for Publishing & Palestinian Research, P. 173.

6. It marked the beginning of the Arab intervention in Palestinian affairs (Arabization of the cause) and revealed the extent of Arab dependence on the external will to solve the Palestinian issue and the extent of their opposition to the revolutionary action resisting the occupation.

The 1936 revolution represented an important struggle stage in the history of the Palestinian cause and had a great impact on the formation of the Palestinian struggle identity, and the adoption of armed struggle against colonialism and Zionism. This revolution was a transitional stage for the Palestinian National Identity and organization, as it was a resistance movement packed with a mixture of old clan and partisan ideas and influenced by Islamic reformers such as Sheikh Izz al-Din al-Qassam and the Muslim Youth Association.<sup>85</sup>

Despite the real existence of the Palestinian people on their historical land, the calls for national identity did not receive clear attention before 1948, due to the presence of many circumstances that prevented the consolidation of the national identity. However, these conditions have vanished after the severe shock that led to the uprooting of the people from their land and the latter being controlled since the beginning of the British Mandate, which worked hard to facilitate the immigration of settlers to Palestine and to ensure the success of the Zionist project as well. This has led to increased interest in the identity and its dependence on the

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<sup>85</sup>Swedenburg, Ted. (2000). The role of the Palestinian peasantry in the Great Revolt (1936-1939) In Burke, E., (Ed.), Lapidus, I. M., (Ed.) *Islam, Politics, and Social Movements*, (Suliman, M. Trans.), Madbouly Bookshop for Publishing & Distribution, 467-502. **(Original Work Published 1988)**

changes that emerged as a result of the harbingers of the Zionist danger of establishing a nationalist belief for them on the land of Palestine<sup>86</sup>.

The researcher points out that the emergence of the contemporary Palestinian National Identity has been directly linked to the colonial-settler conflict, as it is the result of a long history of conflict that the Palestinian Arab people fought on the land of Palestine. The Zionist project was the main factor in stimulating the discovery and interest in the landmarks of the Palestinian National Identity, starting from its Canaanite roots until 1948, which constituted a clear qualitative leap in the destruction of the Palestinian society structure, where the conflict turned into a struggle for existence and a proof of Palestinian identity through the continuous struggle to protect and develop it<sup>87</sup>.

When the United Nations Partition Resolution 181 was issued on November 29, 1947, which stipulates “the partition of Palestine and the establishment of two Jewish and Palestinian states, the leadership of the Palestinian national movement rejected the decision, with the encouragement of the Arab countries whose armies entered Palestine. The matter ended with the Zionist movement occupying 78% of the land of Palestine.” In addition to signing armistice agreements between the Arab countries and the government of the State of Israel, which was announced in 1948.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Abu Seir, Samir. (2018), *Israeli Policies and their Impact on the Problem of Identity in Jerusalem*, [Master's Thesis] Al-Azhar University, Gaza - Palestine, P. 32.

<sup>87</sup> Abu Seir, op. cit., P.37

<sup>88</sup> Al-Kayyali ,Abd al-Wahhab, *A Brief History of Modern Palestine*, The Arab Institute for Studies and Publishing, Beirut, 2nd Edition, 1973. p. 300.

### 3.5 The Palestinian National Identity Post 1948's Al-Nakba.

There has been a serious discussion, as of the Palestinian Nakba and the fall of the country in 1948, about the issue of Palestinian representation, and the search for political identity, which could represent the Palestinian case. Many Palestinian conferences were held prior to that date, and many political structures were formed to advance the Palestinian situation and resist projects to liquidate the Palestinian cause, especially since the mid-1930s and shortly before the 1948 war.<sup>89</sup>

However, the fall of the country into the hands of the Israelis in 1948, the Israeli occupation of Palestine and the establishment of the Israeli state on 77.6% of the area of Palestine, and the displacement of nearly 900,000 Palestinians outside their homes, raises a question about the fate of the unoccupied Palestinian lands, especially the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as well as on the issue of the identity for Palestinian refugees residing in camps in neighboring Arab countries, noting that the Jordanian and Egyptian forces were present in these areas.<sup>90</sup> This problem was the subject of controversy between various political actors, whether Palestinians or Arabs. On the one hand, some of them considered that the establishment of a Palestinian state on the part that was not occupied means recognition of Israel, and the others considered that a Palestinian state should be established on the remaining part, and then work to liberate what has been occupied. On the other hand, the opponents consider the issue of

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<sup>89</sup> Al-Abbasi, Netham. (1984), *The Internal Policy of the Palestinian National Movement in the Face of the British Mandate and the Zionist Movement. 1918-1945*, Dar Hisham for Publishing and Printing. Irbid – Amman, pp. 81-139.

<sup>90</sup> The Palestinian refugees were distributed among the neighboring Arab countries. The vast majority of the Palestinian refugees had settled in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq. Jordan granted the Palestinian refugees political, social, and economic rights, while Syria granted them only social and economic rights, while Lebanon deprived the refugees of all their social, political, and economic rights.

establishing a Palestinian state was based on the extent to which this state was able to solve the problem of Palestinian refugees in Arab countries.

The development of the Palestinian National Identity features was not a sudden event, but rather it was done through a gradual process that took place in several stages. During some stages it would halt for specific periods as a result of the circumstances it was going through, but it soon would resume development. Crises and calamities that the Palestinian people went through has a clear impact on the current form of the Palestinian National Identity. The Identity's matured during the mid-1960's due to two main factors, namely the launch of the Palestinian revolution and the defeat of the national project in 1967, where the reestablishment of social contact among Palestinians wherever they were was an important factor in the development and strengthening of Palestinian National Identity<sup>91</sup>.

The Palestinian National Identity started to evolve and take the shape of a liberation struggle identity, especially after the Al-Nakba key event, where the direct engagement milestones formed pivotal joints in that evolvment. The first engagement milestone was Al-Nakba. the highlight of the said nakba was formation of All-Palestine Government in 1948. Gaza witnesses the second engagement milestone which was the Zionist occupation and then the withdrawal in 1956/1957. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), following these milestones, was established in 1964. The PLO's establishment was a transformational stage in the evolvment of the Palestinian National Identity as a liberation struggle identity, up to the point of

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<sup>91</sup>Sheikh, Abd al-Rhman., (2013), Palestinian Cultural Identity, the *Palestinian Gatherings and Their Representations*, The Palestinian Center for Policy Research and Strategic Studies- Masarat Center's Second Annual Conference Proceedings, Ramallah, Palestine, p. 81.

defeat in 1967 as a result of the defeat The Nasserist national project. As a result of the latter the Palestinian national consciousness transformed through the transformation of the Palestinian wing of the Arab Nationalist Movement into the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in 1967<sup>92</sup>.

The Palestinian National Identity forms and expressions varied amongst the Palestinian groups in Arab countries.

A new set of conditions to the reformulation of the Palestinian national identity after the Al-Nakba emerged, as members of Palestinian society were subject to the sovereignty of multiple countries and different political, legal, and administrative systems. These countries have taken a cautious and hostile stance towards expressions of Palestinian identity, dominating the political, social, and economic spaces, which controls the behavior and actions of the Palestinian society.<sup>93</sup>

The Palestinian National Identity expressions and forms varied in this era, because it was affected by a number of basic factors, which included<sup>94</sup>:

- The governmental policies pursued by countries in which there are Palestinian communities, indigenous citizens or refugees, and the extent of the impact of these policies in marginalizing or integrating Palestinians who have been deprived of their homeland in neighboring Arab countries varied. These policies varied in terms of the political and civil rights granted to refugees, specifically with regard to the right to obtain

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<sup>92</sup>Shreem, Kayed., (2017) *The Palestinian National Identity: The Argument of Reality and the Dilemma of Discourse, a Critical Analytical Approach*, Al-Istiqlal University Research Journal, Vol. 2, pp. 116-117.

<sup>93</sup> Abu Nada, A. (2014), op. cit, p. 87.

<sup>94</sup> - Al-Makli, Magdi, (2015), *The Palestinian Cause and The Future of The Palestinian National project*, Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, Pp. 8-9.

a passport (nationality and citizenship), the right to vote, stand for elections and participate in the political life of the state, and the right to participate in making state policies, distributing its resources, and obtaining gains, such as holding government positions and jobs, etc. Jordan is an exceptional case compared to other Arab countries receiving refugees<sup>95</sup>.

- The nature of Palestinians-receiving-communities' relations, including the remaining of the Palestinian society on their land in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and specifically the image of the Palestinians in the other party's society. Refugees did not only lose their land in 1948, but they also lost their social status, prestige, and self-esteem. Others, including non-refugee Palestinians in the West Bank, have formed a negative and inferior stereotype towards the refugees. Refugees have often been subjected to contempt and inferiority from the host communities, including the Palestinian community in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This has led refugees in the camps to socially isolate from their surroundings residents of cities, villages, and suburbs. Refugees' increasing dependency on family symbiotic and Jahatic relations in managing their daily lives was another consequence. Thus, refugees' social relations pattern was transferred from their original villages to the camps, which means that this state of marginalization did not per se produce a patriotism or nationalism among the Palestinians in the absence of the role of effective political forces and the organizational framework provided by the state.

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<sup>95</sup> Sheikh, Abd al-Rahman., (2013 ) op, cit, p 81.

However, it highlighted the manifestations of instability and severe social disparities that formed the basis for the emergence of the Palestinian national sense.<sup>96</sup>

- The various Palestinian social segments and the Palestinian elites in the diaspora and their economic status and interests in the receiving countries. These social segments were subject to various degrees of discriminatory policies that limited the political and economic opportunities available and the possibility of the development and growth of the social strata, which prompted them to hold into Palestinian patriotism. The feeling of deprivation of independence and state institutions that could protect the interests and provide the appropriate environment for investment and development for the social strata contributed to the latter's tendency to emphasize Palestinian patriotism, which was the common denominator between the various social strata in the diaspora. Palestinian patriotism was in the beginning under the umbrella of Arab nationalism. When the Palestinian diaspora did not have other options, they adopted the pan-Arabist discourse in the mid-fifties and early sixties and adapted Arab unity as the prerequisite for achieving liberation and return. The expression of the distinct Palestinian identity provoked sensitivity in most Arab countries, which delayed the official Arab approval until 1964; until the establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Despite the ambiguity of the Palestinian identity and entity during that period, the Palestinians awareness of their identity continued. Three main components aided the survival and growth of this awareness, namely<sup>97</sup>:

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<sup>96</sup>Sayigh, Yazeed. *op. cit.*, Pp. 106-108.

<sup>97</sup>Al-Qalqili, Abd- Altattah. and Abu Ghosh, A. *op. cit.*, Pp. 25-26.

- Discrimination and ill-treatment of Palestinians in Arab countries. For example, Palestinians in Jordan were less likely to be discriminated against than their counterparts in other Arab countries. From a legal point of view, they were Jordanians, in terms of having legal rights to own property, employment and investment, but in fact they had suffered discrimination in employment in specific fields, such as the army, and their regions also suffered from poor development.
- The Palestinians' awareness of their identity remained as a result of the public awareness among the Palestinians. The Palestinians who have lost their agricultural and industrial economic resources are left with nothing but knowledge to earn a living, and with the spread of education among the Palestinians, job prospects have opened for them in the Arab countries, especially in the newly formed Gulf states. Palestinians' awareness of their Palestinian identity enhanced as a result of the Palestinian diaspora work, open horizons, and being united together under one institution, despite the different environments under which they live.
- Israel's 1956-57 Occupation of the Gaza Strip, which revived the Palestinian identity among the Palestinians. When the military necessity required the withdrawal of the Egyptian army from the Sinai and the Gaza Strip, the Palestinians found themselves face to face with their historical enemy, subjected to killing, destruction and collective revenge. The Palestinians discovered their special role in direct confrontation with the occupiers, which formed the starting point for the Fatah movement, most of whose members were from the Gaza Strip or who had relations with the Strip.

The occupation resistance, despite Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in 1957, began a new stage where Palestinians found themselves face to face with their national responsibilities. The first years following Israel's withdrawal from Gaza witnessed the early earnest motions and developments of the Palestinian entity and the restoration of the Palestinian identity, where a number of Palestinian identity and entity's forms emerged, expressed through a group of different institutions. The most important of those institutions that appeared before the establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization are the following<sup>98</sup>:

1. The Palestinian Arab National Union, which was founded in Gaza in 1958.
2. Al-Ard (Land) Movement was founded in 1959.
3. The Palestinian Liberation Regiment, formed in cooperation with Haj Amin Al-Husseini with Abdul Karim Qassem in Iraq in 1959.
4. The General Union of Palestinian Students, which was established in Cairo in 1959.
5. The Palestinian National Liberation Movement (Fatah), which was launched by publishing its magazine called *Falasteinuna* "Our Palestine" in 1959, Then it announced its launch through armed struggle in 1965.

In general, the propagation over various political fields resulted in a variety of mechanisms and symbols for renewing the Palestinian identity according to the experience and conditions of each major Palestinian group. The Palestinian identity, in the diaspora, derived its material from the refugee camps life what it symbolized; a temporary residence awaiting the return to what politicized memory turned into the lost paradise. The Palestinian identity, on the other hand,

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<sup>98</sup>Gigan, Esra'a., Hassan, O. (2019), *The Future of Palestinian Identity in Light of the Duality of Occupation and Resistance*, *Midad Al-Adab Magazine*, Iraq, p. 1252.

derived its material in the 1948 territories and in the West Bank and Gaza Strip from the necessary to reconcile the requirements of daily life and the requirements of preserving their collective national affiliation. Regardless of the assumptions, attitudes, and assessments of the nature of national identity and its expressions in that era, it is certain that the experience of mass displacement and politically, economically and socially unstable exile, as well as the desire to return to the homeland made the sense of patriotism, i.e. the emotional attachment to the homeland and the place of birth, a common denominator between the Palestinians and the incubator of national identity regardless of the strength of the expression of this identity, and the extent of its regression in front of the sub-familial, class and regional identities imposed by the difficulties of the new life in exile and the necessities of adapting to the latter.<sup>99</sup>

The researcher points out that the Palestinian identity no longer expresses the socio-political life of the Palestinians with the exception of the cultural life in this era, due The researcher points out that the Palestinian identity no longer expresses the socio-political life of the Palestinians with the exception of the cultural life in this era, due to Palestinians linking identity to political issues, which led to the identity being reduced and limited to refer to the Palestinian refugees who now live in the countries of asylum and diaspora, meaning that the issue of Palestine was expressing solely the issue of refugees. Due to the diaspora refugee Palestinians inability to express their cause politically, or express their identity legally, or in a representative and institutional manner, this was compensated by their involvement in the framework of supranational, i.e. Nationalist, Islamic and communist political movements in that period.

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<sup>99</sup>Abu Haniyeh, Halema. (2016), Stages of Forming Identity Awareness among Palestinians, Research Center - Palestine Liberation Organization, Vol. 265, p. 135.

In the period of 1948 – 1967, the West Bank fell under the Jordanian rule, and was annexed to Jordan in 1950 granting all residents automatic Jordanian citizenship, while Egypt ruled the Gaza Strip, and the Strip was not annexed to Egypt. Some researchers assert that the Arab national identity was prevalent among the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, because the Palestinians at that stage considered Arab nationalism the only way to liberate Palestine, while the Palestinian identity in the Gaza Strip and the Jordanian identity in the West Bank came in second place; If the national identity of most people's has crystallized in the form of states, as is the case in modern nation-states, then the Palestinian National Identity has developed in the form of a struggle resistance to establish existence in the face of the will of eradication and exile, which makes it a struggle identity in its essence.

### **3.5.1 Palestinian Identity in Light of the Emergence of the Palestine**

#### **Liberation Organization**

The establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization in 1964 is the strongest expression of the Palestinian National Identity since the Al-Nakba. However, the Arab Higher Committee led by Hajj Amin al-Husseini clearly resisted it and questioned its expression of the Palestinian identity. As for the rest of the Palestinian political forces which existed at that time, although they unanimously agreed on the need to resurrect the Palestinian identity and entity, they did not agree on a clear vision on many issues, indicating an incomplete degree of awareness of identity and entity. The other political forces and movements only used general

concepts of entity, parallelizing the concept of entity to themselves and their performance of their struggle duties<sup>100</sup>.

National motives started to emerge along with the start of the confrontations between the armed Palestinian factions and the Israeli occupation forces. The Palestinian factions began to express the Palestinian identity through armed struggle and Fedayeenaction, and this was expressed by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine during the Fourth Congress by preserving the gains of the Liberation Organization as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and the importance of the organization as a national identity for the Palestinian people.

### **3.6 The 1967 June War Defeat:**

The 1967 defeat constituted a motive for the Palestinians to prove their existing identity, for the defeat meant holding onto the Palestinian self<sup>101</sup>.

However, the defeat did not weaken the entity building of the Palestine Liberation Organization, but rather increased its importance and strengthened its position, and gave a new impetus to the Palestinian National Identity. The challenge facing the Palestinians has become the embodiment of their national identity in an independent political institution in light of the complexities of the Arab political situation. This was achieved as a result of a number of factors, most notably the following<sup>102</sup>:

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<sup>100</sup> Abu Haniyeh, op. cit. p. 137.

<sup>101</sup> Abu Seir, op. cit., Pp. 44-45.

<sup>102</sup> Abu Rahma, Imad. (2011), *The Impact of the Political Settlement Process on the Palestinian Identity*, [Master Thesis], Al-Azhar University, Gaza - Palestine, pp. 102-103.

1. The strong momentous commencement of the Palestinian armed struggle after the June defeat, through Palestinian Fedayeen organizations that were able to attract large segments of the public. The armed struggle, theory, and practice, constituted the means by which the emerging Fedayeen movement asserts its legitimacy, and seizes the safe haven it needs in the Arab confrontation countries. The Palestinian Fedayeen organizations have sought to strengthen their presence on the front lines with Israel, especially in Jordan, taking advantage of the political vacuum resulting from the defeat, and after proving their ability to engage in large-scale actual confrontations with the Israeli forces and inflicting heavy losses on them, they succeeded in turning into a center of attraction of large sectors of the Palestinian and Arab masses.
2. The resounding defeat that Israel inflicted on the Arab countries and weakened them financially and politically made it difficult for the latter to move forcefully in the face of the Palestinian fedayeen groups that started to appear on the scene, which gave a strong impetus to armed action against Israel and liberated the Palestinian revolution to a large extent from Arab tutelage.
3. The control of the resistance factions over the Palestine Liberation Organization, which formally enshrined in the Palestinian National Council's session held in February 1969. After Fatah obtained the largest bloc of votes in the Council, Yasser Arafat was elected the President of the PLO marking the conclusive transition of the national leadership from the well-established middle-class elements to the next generation of activists with a petty-bourgeois background, who were essentially formed in the midst of forced migration and Arab alienation. This constituted a major step towards strengthening the

Palestinian National Identity, especially after the involvement of military and mass organizations in the PLO, which made it a comprehensive coalition formula that expresses Palestinian entity.

4. Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip laid the cornerstone for building a comprehensive Palestinian entity, as it united the Palestinians inside, allowed the communication of the three Palestinian communities, and created the objective conditions for launching armed action in the occupied territories amid broad popular support.

After the 1967 war, the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization was subjected to a violent shake in parallel with the defeated Arab regimes. Egypt, under the leadership of Gamal Abdel Nasser, and Syria, under the leadership of Al-Baath Party, were defeated. Since the two leaderships were nationalists and sought to achieve Arab unity, the image of Arab nationalism was shaken and with it the image of Arab nationalists. The 1967 June defeat was a strong blow to the nationalist ideology and led to its decline significantly, and the bearers and defenders of the nationalist ideology retreated. The defeat led to a loss of confidence in the official propositions issued by the Arab regimes<sup>103</sup>.

The most important political decisions in that period were the PLO as the umbrella that embraces all the Palestinian forces working to liberate the Palestinian land, and the replacement of the Palestinian Pan-National Charter with the Palestinian National Charter and adherence to it as a Charter for the PLO. The amendment of the Pan-National Charter was a political step that shaped new Palestinian official directions and approaches, most importantly is moving away

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<sup>103</sup>Sayigh, Yazeed. (2002). *Op, cit*, pp. 47-48.

from the Pan-national dimension in favor of the Palestinian-national dimension, and this led to consolidating and deepening the Palestinian National Identity, especially after the PLO became the Palestinian house that includes all Palestinian forces and parties.

The exit of the Palestinian resistance factions from the Jordanian arena and the concentration of their presence in Lebanon led to their losing the longest frontier of confrontation with the occupation, the Jordanian border, and the emergence of even instantaneous opposition with the Egyptian regime led by Gamal Abdel Nasser, and the emergence of Arab regimes opposed to the influence of the forces of the Palestinian revolution in the Arab street, forcing the Palestinian revolution to adopt “More peaceful and less radical solutions, by assimilating other forms of struggle, a trend that began to crystallize in the decisions of the eighth session of the Palestinian National Council held in Cairo in 1971, that armed struggle is “the main entity and not the only one in the struggle.”<sup>104</sup>

This developed in the aftermath of the October War of 1973, the exit of the Arab regimes, specifically in Egypt and Syria, from the knot of defeat, and the emergence of a role for the Arab oil states, foremost of which is Saudi Arabia, by exploiting its official position on cutting off oil and supporting the Arab war against the occupying state, which led to its ability (the Arab petro-states). ) to transfer its influence to the parties of the Palestinian resistance and build relations with them, which made it easier for them to impose an influence on the official policies of the Palestine Liberation Organization, which led to the resort of some of the resistance factions (the Democratic Front) and later (Fatah) to present programs that it called at the time the interim

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<sup>104</sup> Samoudi, Jihan, *Jerusalem in the Palestinian-Israeli Negotiations*, Master's Thesis, Arab American University, Palestine 2017.

program, considering it The most realistic program, which later formed the basis for the famous program called the Ten Points Program issued by the Palestinian National Council, which unfortunately made the biggest concession in the history of the Palestinian cause by declaring unilaterally the official acceptance of the partition of Palestine by seeking to establish a Palestinian national authority on any part that is liberated and then It was distorted to become a Palestinian national state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, establishing the acceptance and recognition of the occupying state as a fait accompli, all from one side and without the slightest bit. It was submitted neither by the countries sponsoring the occupation nor by the occupying state itself, which makes us able to say that this was a tragic prelude to the results that came later from the Oslo Accords by announcing the establishment of the Palestinian Authority.

The year 1974 marked a pivotal turning point in the history of the Palestinian cause in its official international dimension. During the Rabat Conference, the Arab League recognized the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Arafat arrived at the United Nations headquarters in New York and delivered his famous speech (The Gun and the Olive Branch), and in On the 22nd of the same month, General Assembly Resolution No. (3236) was issued, summarizing all the principles and rights previously approved by the General Assembly regarding the Palestinian issue, which considered the Palestinian people a major party in establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.<sup>105</sup>

Here we can summarize three dimensions that played major roles in the transformations that took place in the PLO and directly affected the Palestinian identity:

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<sup>105</sup> Smoudi, Jihan, *ibid.*

The first dimension: the defeat of the Liberation Organization in its struggle with the Jordanian regime, as the PLO realized that the countries surrounding Palestine had transformed from a land from which it began in its struggle with the Zionist enemy to a land that drains it and drains its forces.

The second dimension: the international dimension, as the PLO realized that there are requirements and transformations that it must necessarily make in its intellectual and political strategy in order to reserve a seat for it on the train of international and regional solutions.

The third dimension: The PLO considered itself more realistic in analyzing the balance of power with the Zionist enemy, as the balance of military, economic, and political forces became imbalanced in favor of the Zionist enemy, and that is by seeking to present itself as an acceptable force for the international community led by global imperialism. Where she rolled the concept of armed struggle from the only form of struggle with the enemy to the main form, and then to one of the forms of conflict, and ended up deleting it from the options for forms of struggle. Where we notice in the last decade that the forms of struggle adopted by the PLO are the political, the public and the diplomatic. This has affected the decline of the Palestinian national identity through concessions that are increasing year after year, as if the Palestinian is the occupier who wants to please the other, not the owner of the right who clings to the strength and solidity of his position towards his right and his land. Until we reached the point of limiting the tools of our struggle to endless negotiations, and we may find in the Palestinian popular mood of these negotiations the strongest expression of their nihilism.

### **3.6.1 Land Day (Youm Al-Ard) 1976:**

The events of Land Day first took place in the 1948 occupied territories on the thirtieth of March 1967 and then spread to the 1967 occupied territories, where confrontations began with the Israeli occupation over the entire occupied Palestinian land in protest against the arbitrary occupation policies, racial discrimination and the confiscation of lands from Arab villages in the area Galilee and the 1948 occupied territories. This event had an impact not only on the occupation, but on the Palestinian National Liberation Movement, which was at its prime and glory in the exercise of armed struggle in the Lebanon era. , The Palestinian National Liberation Movement possessed the unity of representation of the PLO and the national action resisting the occupation. The Land Day constituted a transformation in the formation and composition of identity, so that the homeland identity began to emerge resuming its role and place in the identity and the national movement. Palestinians affirmed, on that day, their adherence to their land and their steadfastness and the continuation of resistance to the occupation, as well as their insistence on obtaining their rights of return, freedom and independence. Thus, the military-action-driven outside-the-country's-boarders' national identity united with simple-tools occupied-homeland-based resistance.

### **3.6.2 Invasion of Beirut (1982)**

The 1982 Lebanon War created a complex regional situation, which prompted international and Arab parties to put forward projects for the establishment of a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East, the most important of which are:

1. US President Reagan's Initiative on Palestinian Self-Rule and link to Jordan on Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1982.
2. The Arab Peace Initiative at the Moroccan Fez Summit on the Independent Palestinian State within the 1967 borders, on the Sept. 6<sup>th</sup>, 1982.
3. The Soviet President Brezhnev's 6-point-plan on the International Peace Conference on Sept 16<sup>th</sup>, 1982.

The Soviet Union affirmed its call for holding an international conference, as stated in the Brezhnev Initiative in February 1981, in order to discuss the Middle East crisis, in which all concerned parties, namely the Soviet Union, the United States of America, European countries and Arabs, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, as well as Israel would participate. The initiative outlined the conditions for establishing peace in the region, which include:<sup>106</sup>

- A. Withdrawal of Israeli forces from all Arab territories occupied since 1967.
- B. Recognition of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, and the establishment of their independent state.
- C. Securing the safety and sovereignty of all states in the region, including Israel.

As a result of the invasion of Beirut, the Palestinian resistance factions were expelled from the borders of the homeland, and the Palestinians lost the direct lines of confrontation with the occupation. This had a great impact on the armed struggle from outside the country. Exiting from Lebanon was a strategic loss for the national movement in the diaspora, leaving it only to seek the help of the homeland, which led the homeland to assume a great importance, which affected the formation of a comprehensive identity for the homeland. Thus, the patriotic act in the

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<sup>106</sup>Shukri, Muhammed., (1990), The International Dimension of the Palestinian Issue, *Encyclopedia Palestina*, Volume VI, Institute for Palestine Studies, Beirut, p. 44.

homeland constituted the completion stage of the crystallization of the Palestinian National Identity.

### **3.6.3 The First Palestinian Intifada 1987**

The Intifada erupted on the ninth of December 1987, forty years after the Al-Nakba, which was marked by the loss of the land of Palestine and the displacement of its people in 1948. It also was twenty years after the Israeli occupation of the rest of the Palestinian land in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967.

The spark that ignited the intifada was that an Israeli military truck deliberately collided with a car transporting Palestinian workers from Jabalia camp as they were heading through the Erez crossing to their workplaces inside Israel, killing 4 Palestinian martyrs and wounding 7 others. On the next day, confrontations took place in the camp between the crowds who were participating in the funeral, and the Israeli occupation forces, as a result of which a Palestinian boy was martyred, and the Intifada spread to all cities, villages and camps of the homeland.

Although the Palestinian uprising was characterized by its spontaneity, it was not an accidental event in Palestinian history, nor was it just a reaction to the policies of the Israeli occupation and its oppressive practices against the Palestinians. Rather, it is a public uprising that was aware of its nature and objectives culminating a long procession of the Palestinian struggle dating back more than 80 years, during which the Palestinian people painted the most wonderful images of struggle and sacrifices, which are part of a continuous struggle that aims for independence, liberation, and the restoration of usurped rights. The wide public participation of

the Palestinian people, all its classes, sects and locations was the strong evidence of the awareness of those masses about the nature and goals of their national struggle.

### **3.6.3.1 The Uprising's 'Intifada's' Characteristics**

The first Palestinian Intifada had multiple characteristics, most important of which are:

1. Wide popular participation, where massive rallies and demonstrations took place all over the country.
2. Unity and solidarity of the Palestinian people in all their places of residence, as well as the cohesion of the Diaspora Palestinians and the 1948 and 1967 Palestinians.
3. The spontaneity of the uprising and its continuity, as it was not the result of an external decision<sup>107</sup> and its durability has exceeded all expectations.
4. Shifting the Palestinian political decision center of responsibility from the outside to the inside, especially after expelling of the resistance from Lebanon.
5. The widespread phenomenon of killing and persecuting occupation agents and collaborators.

The First Palestinian Intifada of 1987 contributed to the strengthening of the Palestinian struggle identity and the unification of efforts by the Palestinian people residing on their occupied land and the parties in confronting the Zionist enemy. It also contributed to unifying all Palestinian factions under one leadership, and it rehabilitated the Palestinian cause. However, so to speak, despite the strengthening of national identity in that period, we can consider the end of

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<sup>107</sup>Al-Hamad, Jawad., (1997), *The Great Intifada and the Development of the Palestinian Cause*, The Introduction to the Palestinian Cause, (Al-Hamad Ed.), Middle East Studies Center, Amman, p. 418.

the First Intifada as a prelude to the emergence of a factional partisan identity, especially after the 1991 Madrid Conference, which resulted in a divided Palestinian crowd and led to an ideological split, especially between the Islamist movement represented by Hamas, which started with the beginnings of the First Palestinian Intifada and the current that can be described to some extent as secular, represented by the Fatah movement.

### **3.7 Concluding Remarks:**

The Palestinian identity faced and still faces numerous shocks, and it went through various historical milestones and stages that affected its formation and prominence. During certain stages it got stronger, and during others it was subjected to distortion and weakness, and whenever the comprehensive national goal was absent, it was subjected to decline, fragmentation and transformation, as identity is not a fixed concept, but rather changes and transforms according to the surrounding factors and circumstances.

Evidently during the period of Ottoman rule, the Palestinian National Identity was affected, rather dissolved in the Islamic identity until the end of the Ottoman rule of the Arab world, and then it became part of the Pan-Arab identity in the post-Ottoman period and during the British Mandate period, when the Arab countries neighboring Palestine were the decision makers on Palestinian issues. The Palestinian National Identity during the British Mandate period was relatively weak due to the strengthening of narrow identities, especially the Hamili or clan identity, and this was evident in the dispute between the Husseini and Nashashibi clans over control of the leadership in Palestine, up to the stage of the Al-Nakba, which constituted a historical shock that dispersed the Palestinian people and expelled a part from their land turning

them into refugees in their homeland and in the countries of the diaspora. Thus, the Palestinian National Identity declined as a result of this catastrophe, because the Palestinian people lost the inclusive framework for all the Palestinians. There was no possibility of expressing a comprehensive national identity for the Palestinian people, and thus the Arab national identity remained the strongest. Palestinians, after the formation of the PLO and the 1967 June defeat, had a collective union that represented them, spoke on their behalf, and practiced the armed struggle that shaped the identity of the rebellious Palestinian resisting the Zionist occupation, so that the Palestinian would have their own national identity, which at that time was manifested outside the borders of the homeland.

The events of Land Day, the expelling of the Palestinian resistance from Lebanon and the first Palestinian Intifada are the most important stages in the crystallization of the united comprehensive national identity within the occupied territories and the strengthening of the Palestinian National Identity of the Palestinian people from within the borders of historic Palestine.

The Oslo Accords led to the dispersal of the collective Palestinian National Identity, leading to a dangerous and clear ideological division, and the emergence of sub-identities such as clan, family, and regional identities, the consequences of which were manifested in the Palestinian-Palestinian division.

## **Chapter Four**

### **The Impact of the Oslo Accords on the Palestinian National Identity**

#### **4.1 Preface**

#### **4.2 Palestinian National Identity After the Oslo Accords**

#### **4.3 The Palestinian National Identity and its components**

#### **4.4 Contemporary Palestinian National Identity Emergence Factors**

#### **4.5 The Impact of the Oslo Accords on the Palestinian Society's View of the Israeli Occupation**

#### **4.6 The Change in the Palestinian National Identity after the Oslo Accords**

#### **4.7 Palestinian National Identity Divergence Between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.**

## 4.1 Preface

The researcher, in this chapter, addresses a multitude of issues that demonstrate the impact of the Oslo Accords on the Palestinian National Identity. The researcher was keen to explore the opinions of some Palestinian political and academic figures on this subject, through a series of personal and phone interviews with figures interested and familiar with the subject-matter. These figures were of varying directions and trends to ensure that different opinions are presented with true objectivity. Thus, the researcher seeks to shed light on the impact of the Oslo Accord on the Palestinian National Identity by addressing the opinions of the interviewees on the concept of Palestinian National Identity and its components, in addition to the factors that contributed to its emergence and development, and then on to the main topic of this study, which is the impact of the Oslo Accords on the Palestinian society's view of the Israeli occupation, in addition to a set of other details that answer the study's questions and identify the opinions of the various interviewees regarding them.

The researcher relied on the descriptive approach, which is based on studying the problem of the study, describing it, and collecting the relevant information, for the information to be analyzed revealing the relationships between its various dimensions in order to explain it, and to reach the results of the study based on its set questions and hypotheses. The researcher used the descriptive approach that analyzes the contrast between the Palestinian National Identity in the West Bank and that of the Gaza Strip, in order to identify the changes to the identity following the Oslo Accords.

The interviews focused on a variety of issues and topics related to the topic of the study, which is concerned with presenting the different points of view on the Palestinian National Identity, the way in which the provisions of the Oslo Accord affected it, as well as demonstrating the role of religion in the formulation and development of the Palestinian identity. The researcher, through this chapter, also addresses the critical points of view related to the variation of the Palestinian National Identity as a result of the Israeli occupation and developments on the ground.

#### **4.2 Palestinian National Identity After the Oslo Accords:**

The leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization decided to engage in the political settlement process according to a set of conditions and foundations formulated by the Madrid Agreement. The Intifada had exhausted and was nearing its end, especially after the American invasion of Iraq, the security and military control of the Gulf region, and the fragmentation and division of the Arab system, with the exacerbation of isolation which was imposed on the PLO at the Arab and the international levels, which prompted it to accept the Oslo Accord<sup>108</sup> and the mutual recognition between the PLO and the Israeli government, as a good option to attain any possible achievement at the level of the Palestinian cause<sup>109</sup>.

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<sup>108</sup>The Oslo Accords are a agreement between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The Oslo Accord, signed in Washington, D.C., in 1993. The Oslo Accords marked the start of the peace process aimed at achieving a peace treaty based on United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and at fulfilling the "right of the Palestinian people to self-determination." The Oslo process started after secret negotiations in Oslo, resulting in the recognition by the PLO of the State of Israel and the recognition by Israel of the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and as a partner in negotiations.

<sup>109</sup>Abu Rahma, Imad., (2011), *The Impact of the Political Settlement on the Palestinian Identity*, [Published Master's Thesis], Al-Azhar University, Gaza, P. 111.

The Oslo Accord constituted a clear transformation in the Palestinian political field, one of the consequences of which was the great marginalization of the role of the PLO politically and the slacking redundant institutions at the public level. Moreover, the Palestinian National Authority assumed its primary role in organizing the political and civil affairs of the Palestinian society. One of Oslo Accords consequences was the weakness of the most prominent political entity of the Palestinian people, and the inclusive union that established, through its programs, national charter, institutions and factions, the unity of the Palestinian people at home and abroad, which was considered one of the most important components of the Palestinian National Identity. Massive social, cultural, political, and economic repercussions on Palestinian society in the occupied territories were a consequence of that. It also resulted in the marginalization of the impact and the role of the diaspora Palestinian communities and leaving them seriously concerned about their fate. Perhaps the most dangerous consequence of the new situation was weakening the unifying collective Palestinian National Identity that was reinforced and strengthened by the PLO during the long years of its factions' struggles on the basis of liberation and unity for a people displaced in exile and deprived of the right to self-determination<sup>110</sup>.

These conditions enabled Israel to reduce the moral, political and security burden of its occupation of the Palestinian lands and allowed it to consolidate its presence on most of the occupied Palestinian lands. At the same time, it appeared as though it was negotiating for peace while it was expanding settlements and establishing an infrastructure network of roads, electricity, and water in order to sustain the settlements. During this period, Israel exercised

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<sup>110</sup>Tamari, Saleem., (1997), Identity and State Building in the Palestinian Entity, *Majallat al-Dirasat al-Filastiniyya*, Iss. 32, p. 5.

greater control than ever over the Palestinian population and the occupied territories. The new control system entailed imposing stifling restrictions on movement, and many other measures that had profound economic and social effects on the Palestinians, knowing that the greatest impact was psychological, as all these measures are happening while negotiations are taking place ostensibly<sup>111</sup>.

Among the most prominent effects and repercussions of the Oslo settlement process on the Palestinian identity<sup>112</sup>:

- The emergence of a Palestinian National Authority (PNA) on its territory, which formed a national political field with its own features, relations, rulings, and symbols. This has inflicted special changes over the Palestinian National Identity after signing the Oslo Accords, as a qualitative change of the Palestinian political field has emerged, represented by the formation of a national authority on part of the Palestinian land in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip subject to the restrictions and conditions of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, and thus the main conflict focus shifted to revolve around the borders of this region and the form of sovereignty over it.
- The repercussions of the political settlement on the right of return, which greatly affected the Palestinian identity, as the acknowledgment of ending the conflict under the Oslo Accords represents an acceptance of the historical injustice suffered by the Palestinians and an acceptance of abandoning the unity of the Palestinian people in one homeland.
- Cancellation of the articles of the comprehensive Palestinian Charter, which played a cultural and national guiding role in the formation of the Palestinian National Identity. The

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<sup>111</sup>Abu Rahma, Imad. op. cit. P.115.

<sup>112</sup> Al-Masri, Rafeeq. (2016), The impact of official media on strengthening the Palestinian identity" PalestineTV- a case study, Master Thesis, An-najah National University, Nablus, Palestine.

cancellation and annulment of those articles had a profound impact on the collective awareness of the Palestinians and contributed to blowing the image of the leadership that responded to the demand to cancel the articles of the National Charter, which many considered a cancellation of an important part of the awareness's and political culture's, i.e., Identity's constants.

Hamas, after the signing of the Oslo Accords, declared its explicit rejection of it, and considered it "the most dangerous settlement project that has been proposed so far." The movement was keen to distinguish itself ideologically and politically from the factions of the Palestine Liberation Organization, by emphasizing its Islamic identity and jihadist resistance to the occupation and opposition to the Oslo Accords based on political considerations that had an ideological backing, where it considered that the principle of political settlement, regardless of the latter's source or terms, implies surrendering to the Zionist enemy the right to exist in most of Palestine, which is a matter that falls within the forbidden circle of Islamic jurisprudence 'Fiqh' and it is not permissible to accept it. Accordingly, Hamas refused to participate in the 1996 elections, and justified its position by linking the elections to the Oslo Accord settlement project. Hamas did not acknowledge the legitimacy of the PA and considered it an embodiment of the injustice and falsehood represented by the Accords. However, it participated in the 2006 elections and achieved a clear strategic surprise by controlling the Legislative Council. However, this led Hamas to fall into many events that eventually led to its control over the Gaza Strip and the establishment of its own government there, regardless of the effects of this on the Palestinian cause<sup>113</sup>.

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<sup>113</sup>Abu Rahma, Imad. op. cit. P.121

The Palestinian National Identity continued to rise through many historical milestones, the most important of which was the Algiers station in 1988, which formed a new juncture in the path of the Palestinian National Identity development through the Palestinian Declaration of Independence and the accompanying political statement. That led to the emergence of many new challenges mainly represented in seeking to complete national sovereignty within the borders of the Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which are problems that took over the Palestinian scene after the Second Palestinian Intifada in 2000, due to the failure of the Oslo road to accomplish an independent state, followed by the assassination of President Yasser Arafat in 2004, and then Hamas' takeover of the Gaza Strip<sup>114</sup>.

#### **4.3 What is the Palestinian National Identity and What are its Components?**

The concept of identity is one of the complex and intertwined concepts that relate to the thing itself and are connected to the reality of the thing; the reality that distinguishes it from others. As for the national identity, it is a set of common traits and characteristics that distinguish a particular nation, community, or homeland from others, and it is cherished as it constitutes the essence of the nation, its existence, and its distinctive personality. Therefore, the national identity represents a symbolic framework for the loyalty of members of society to the prevailing characteristics<sup>115</sup>.

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<sup>114</sup>Sheikh, Abd al-rahman., op, cit, p. 77.

<sup>115</sup>Al-Hafi, Muhammed. (2017), The Role of the Political Elite in Strengthening the National Identity of Palestinian University Students in the Gaza Strip, Al-Istiqlal University Research Journal - Deanship of Scientific Research and Graduate Studies, Vol. 2, p. 150.

Identity represents a set of basic qualities of a thing, whether inanimate, a person or a group. If identity ceases to exist, so does the thing it represents<sup>116</sup>. Identity is what an individual state about themselves, as it is what identifies that individual. An individual, in Palestine, would identify themselves as a Palestinian, a Palestinian Arab, or a Palestinian Muslim, where the word Palestinian encompasses all the other parts<sup>117</sup>.

The identity components of any society are manifested through two main components: The moral component through the general feeling, the national point of view and the view of self-values; and the material component through which the identity is embodied in the form of individuals, thoughts and specific actions<sup>118</sup>.

Culture reflects the reality of society, its path, development, conditions, and existing social relations. Culture is the sum of the efforts made by a people on the level of thought in order to describe, justify and enrich the system in which the people are formed and exist. Heritage forms a part of peoples' history as it depicts customs, traditions, folk arts, and traditional crafts that express the extent of the interaction of peoples with the surrounding environment. Palestinians also were able to be unique with a distinctive heritage pattern, despite not being isolated from their Arab surroundings. The Palestinians were distinguished by some customs, traditions, and handicrafts, which formed an essential element in the structure of the national identity, through which the Palestinians were able to reflect their activities and life practices. This was embodied in popular proverbs, folk tales, house designs, handicrafts, which

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<sup>116</sup> - 27-10-2021 مقابلة تلفزيونية مع الدكتور وليد المدلل، الجامعة الإسلامية، بتاريخ -

<sup>117</sup> - 9/ 6/2019 مقابلة شخصية مع الدكتور عبد الستار قاسم، بتاريخ -

<sup>118</sup> - 23-6-2019. مقابلة شخصية مع الدكتور رائد نعيرات، رئيس قسم العلوم السياسية ومنسق برنامج التخطيط والتنمية السياسية في جامعة النجاح الوطنية بتاريخ -

included making pottery, porcelain, wood, glass, and seashells, in addition to the social aspects within Palestinian life, which was embodied by the distinctive Palestinian dress for both men and women, and the embroidered Palestinian dress, which is considered an integrated folk painting of a picture, symbol, lines, colors and shapes. These are considered of the most important aspects expressing the Palestinian character within the geographical, cultural, and social borders, which Palestinians carries outside their borders to express their identity. Moreover, Language is one of the most important elements of identity that brings together members of the same group. However, some believe that the situation of the Arabic language in Palestine is between the hammer of English and the chisel of Hebrew, in light of the Israeli occupation, which is trying to obliterate the Arab identity in Palestine. This is evident through the use of series of Hebrew words during the daily conversation among the Palestinians, where those words now are more common than their Arabic equivalents, due to the great daily-life dependence on Israel in terms of work, products procurement and meeting the various needs<sup>119</sup>.

The components of the Palestinian national identity are represented in a set of common elements that comprehend Palestinians, namely: One pain; the Israeli occupation challenge, the unity of the land on which they live; and the one common destiny. The elements that unite the Palestinians are numerous and various. However, the emergence of some other elements has led to disunity and conflict, on top of which is the Oslo Accord, where the recognition of the Zionist entity represented an explicit recognition of its right in a large part of the Palestinian land and the waiver of the rights of its owners<sup>120</sup>.

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<sup>119</sup>Abu Haniyeh, Halima, op. cit, p. 52.

<sup>120</sup>مقابلة شخصية مع الدكتور عبد الستار قاسم، بتاريخ 2019-6-9-

The Palestinian national identity crises manifested as a result of the failure of the Oslo Accords, the loss of the unified Palestinian umbrella under the frameworks of resistance, and the independence of the Palestinian people under the Israeli occupation's restrictions and conditions, which constituted a clear indication of the loss of the Palestinian identity as well as the constituting elements. The loss of the land and the loss of political representation marked a clear defeat of the unified Palestinian National Identity, in light of the occupation creating a false identity that has overshadowed the original Palestinian identity as a result of the occupation of the land, normalization and the absence of an official media that works to spread and highlight the facts<sup>121</sup>.

The Palestinian entity dimension suffers an issue that is distinct from other countries, where the existence of an entity is dependent on the state, land and sovereignty, and these components are missing in the Palestinian case. The Palestinian Liberation Organization remained the umbrella of the national project, although it has neither land nor sovereignty, and this continued until the signing of the Oslo Accord, which prompted the organization to recognize Israeli occupation and give up a many Palestinian rights<sup>122</sup>.

#### **4.4 Contemporary Palestinian National Identity Emergence Factors**

Palestine, before it was occupied by the British military forces at the end of 1917, within the borders of the Mandate, was divided administratively into two parts: The first includes the northern regions and consisted of the Acre and Nablus Sanjaks of the Beirut Vilayet. The second includes the southern regions and consisted of the independent Mutasarrifate of Jerusalem that

<sup>121</sup> مقابلة شخصية مع الدكتور عبد الرحمن الحج ابراهيم، دائرة العلوم السياسية، جامعة بيرزيت، بتاريخ 2019-7-1 -

<sup>122</sup> مقابلة تلفونية مع الدكتور خالد الصافي، محاضر في جامعة الأقصى، بتاريخ 2021-11-1 -

was directly under the authority of the Ottoman central government, and Palestine within its borders under the mandate did not have a language, religion, borders or history independent of its Arab environment in general and Syria in particular. The language of more than 95% of its people was Arabic, and Islam was the religion of the majority, followed by Christianity, and a Jewish minority that did not exceed 6% of the population, as is the case with its Arab surroundings (Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and Iraq). The Palestinians actively participated in various Arab parties and associations, which were formed after the declaration of the Ottoman constitution in 1908, and adopted their reformist nationalist ideologies, but their feeling of national belonging had a special character, the character of belonging to a specific land and homeland, put at risk of being lost due to Jewish immigration and settlement<sup>123</sup>.

On the other hand, there are multiple views linking the development of the national and pan-national identity to the establishment of the state/nation in Europe as a historical development dictated by objective requirements that imposed the transformation of serfs into citizens, and the transformation of the land that was nothing but a tool for exploitation and oppression of the downtrodden masses into a 'homeland' that the individual defends to death. Based on that, the Palestinian National Identity does not seem to be an exception. It is a modern identity like other national identities, and its emergence is linked to economic and social transformations in the East, starting with the formation of the Mutasarrifate of Jerusalem in 1871, through economic developments and the nature of the demographics, the struggle against immigration and Zionist settlement, and concluding with the challenges of the Syrian national movement cooperating

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<sup>123</sup>Jarrar, Saba, (2014), *Palestinian Sports Status: Historical Perspective and its Role in Re-enforcing National Identity*, [Unpublished Master's Thesis], University of Jordan, p. 63.

with the Zionist movement. These are factors that played varying roles being the rich soil for the crystallization of the Palestinian National Identity between 1871 and 1914. Therefore, the Palestinian national identity developed as a state of permanent transformation, especially in the face of the British-Zionist colonial project, a confrontation that expressed itself in the Palestinian popular uprisings and revolutions from the beginning of the twenties to the end of the thirties of the last century, until the First Nakba in 1948, where the Palestinian identity developed disproportionately as a result of the fragmentation of the land and society. Identity development was faster under the countries that practiced exclusion and marginalization policies against the Palestinians, as happened in Lebanon and Egyptian-administered Gaza, where the Palestinian identity development delayed in the countries that practiced integration policies, as the case in the West Bank, Jordan and the 1948's occupied Palestine<sup>124</sup>.

Throughout the past century and until now, the Palestinians have been exposed to multiple paths and directions and have been under the effects of complex factors that have affected their collective national identity, according to their place of residence. This identity has gone through, based on the political transformations and historical turns that the Palestinian people and their cause have witnessed, stages of degeneration and renewal, and stages of readiness and contemplation, through phases during which the Palestinian people have been subjected to a sustained state of oppression, fragmentation and attempts to deny their existence. There is no doubt that this identity is now going through one of the gravest turns, due to the intensification of the conflict over what remained of the land, the rapid transformations that Arab

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<sup>124</sup>Izzat Shraim, Kayed, (2017), The Palestinian National Identity: The Argument of Reality and the Dilemma of Discourse, a Critical and Analytical Approach - Al-Istiqlal University Research Journal, Vol. 2, p. 41.

societies are going through, and the multiplication of existential questions and fear for the future of the cause. Palestinians, since the middle of the last century, have been divided into multiple and varied social formations as a result of the political situation and the successive wars starting with al-Nakba and the 1948 war, which led to the fragmentation of Palestinian society and the displacement of nearly half of its population to the Arab-refugee hosting countries 'Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt', the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and isolating the rest of the Palestinian people in the 1948 occupied territories from the rest of the Palestinian society and neighboring Arab societies. Then was the 1967 June War, during which Israel occupied the rest of Palestine isolating the West Bank and Gaza Strip from the rest of the surrounding Arab countries, specifically Jordan and Egypt, which also negatively affected the unity of their social and cultural fabric. Then the uprisings followed, the last of which was the Al-Aqsa Intifada, during which Israel separated the West Bank from the Gaza Strip again, isolated the Palestinian governorates from each other, and isolated cities from their villages, which led to the destruction of geographical and societal contiguity, and the fragmentation of Palestinian society into scattered isolated geographical, social, and economic territories. Thus, the successive tragic political situations that the Palestinian people went through<sup>125</sup>.

Many factors and circumstances have contributed to the emergence of the national identity, including tragedies, sorrows and disasters that can befall any people pushing them to unite under a unified title. When an external aggression that threatens the interest of all occurs, everyone stands united for there is an interest that unites them, the interest is basically a gathering individuals and peoples. The Palestinian National Identity is characterized by a clear

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<sup>125</sup>Al-Makli, Magdi, op, cit, p. 9.

particularity as a result of the crises that the Palestinian people have been subjected to, which is the Balfour Declaration, the 1948 occupation, the 1976 aggression, and the establishment of settlements. This particularity helped crystallize the idea of Palestinian unity and national identity<sup>126</sup>.

The exclusion and isolation of peoples, pushing them into high debts and the shredding of the unified geographical borders contributed to creating a major threat to the national cause and the Palestinian National Identity. However, all these difficulties can be tackled through wise and resistance leaders that give hope to resume what has been stopped as a result of the peace agreements that have been signed<sup>127</sup>.

The Palestinian National Identity has been negatively affected as a result of the ideological and militarily division of the Palestinian people. The first division was led by the Fatah movement and the second by the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), which led to the Palestinian-Palestinian division and the distortion of the unified Palestinian National Identity as a result of the geographical division. This meant that the national identity suffers a clear crisis.<sup>128</sup>

The clan identity has significantly grown compared to the national identity, where the belonging to a clan has become more dominant than patriotism. The resurgence of clans is linked to the Oslo Accords and the nature of Palestinian society, which has become mainly dependent on

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<sup>126</sup> - مقابلة شخصية مع الدكتور عبد الستار قاسم، بتاريخ 9-6-2019.

<sup>127</sup> - مقابلة تلفزيونية مع الدكتور وليد المدلل، بتاريخ 27-10-2021.

<sup>128</sup> - مقابلة تلفزيونية مع الدكتور رمزي عودة، بتاريخ 28-10-2021.

clans' reconciliation and the national and Islamic movements that took control following the PLO's weakness<sup>129</sup>.

#### **4.5 The Impact of the Oslo Accords on the Palestinian Society's View of the Israeli Occupation**

The national political perspective is linked to the problems and questions of the Palestinian national identity within the new Palestinian national project; the Palestinian Peace Project, which was officially adopted by the Palestinian National Council in 1988, and which was expressed in the Declaration of Independence document in the same year. Its theoretical approaches stem from the same analytical premises from which the emergence of the Palestinian National Identity perspective is based. The study of the emergence, nature, and evolution of the Palestinian national identity, while intersecting with the legal perspective in its current realistic approach<sup>130</sup>.

The Palestine Liberation Organization played a major and historical role in the Palestinian cause, as it was considered the Palestinian house uniting the struggle and encouraging the ideas of liberation and resistance. However, the role of the PLO has clearly been compromised after the signing of the Oslo Accords, which led to the absence of a comprehensive national project due to the adoption of the two states for two neighboring peoples, which clearly affected the degree of commitment to the Palestinian national identity<sup>131</sup>.

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<sup>129</sup> - مقابلة تلفزيونية مع الدكتور بلال الشويكي، رئيس قسم العلوم السياسية في جامعة الخليل، بتاريخ 28-10-2021.

<sup>130</sup> Shraim, op cit, p. 41.

<sup>131</sup> - مقابلة تلفزيونية مع الدكتور وليد المدلل، الجامعة الإسلامية، بتاريخ 27-10-2021.

The Palestinian National Identity was the umbrella of the main principles that govern all Palestinian frameworks. After Oslo, the disintegration occurred as a result of the division of areas depending on the level of the PNA's control over these areas. The Israeli occupation did not comply with any of the terms of the Accord by permanent presence in it the areas agreed to be PNA's controlled and its oppressive practices against the Palestinian people within these borders, which led to a state of dispersion and lack of harmony among the Palestinians at the official or internal levels, which clearly affected the Palestinian values and the citizen's sense of identity<sup>132</sup>.

The Oslo Accord between the PLO and Israel was not just an interim agreement, but the end of the PLO's adoption of the armed struggle with the aim of liberating Palestine and the beginning of the stage of negotiations. Therefore, Zionism and Israel have turned from an enemy that must be eradicated into an entity whose legitimacy over 80% of the Mandatory Palestine is recognized. This also meant Israel turned from an enemy of the PLO to an occupier of a part of the land and a partner in the political settlement for the establishment of the Palestinian state through negotiations. This new approach brought about several changes in the political behavior of a large segment of the Palestinian people that cast a shadow on the Palestinian National Identity in its various manifestations and composition<sup>133</sup>.

Numerous disputes occurred between the Palestinians after the Oslo Accords leading to the emergence of internal fighting and bloodshed, to the extent that the national identity was no longer the unifying umbrella for the Palestinians, and other titles resumed the national identity's

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<sup>132</sup> - مقابلة شخصية مع سمر هواش، منسقة برنامج تمكين المرأة وناشطة سياسية وعضو مجلس بلدي وعضو مجلس وطني، حزب الشعب الفلسطيني، بتاريخ، 4-7-2019

<sup>133</sup>Zahran, Hadeel, op, cit, p. 21.

place, such as “West Bankers, Hamasian\*, Fatahian\*, Northern and Southern”. In fact, this is due to the domination of a specific group over the word National, mainly the PA or the PLO, prompting others not to define themselves through the national identity that should have been inclusive of all of them. It was to the extent that some consider the parties that signed the Oslo Accords as no longer patriots or nationalist having sided with the Zionist side and waived Palestinian rights in order to obtain simple rights that do not mean anything for the Palestinians, as they put it<sup>134</sup>.

The Oslo Accord had a significant impact on the 1948's Palestinians (Israel Palestinians) as a result of excluding them from the Palestinian integration and annexing them to the agreed upon borders of the Zionist entity, which led to the existence of new self-reliant formations in the absence of a political entity inclusive of these groups and sects. The PLO has forsaken this position as a result of the it is lacking a comprehensive political agenda compatible with the vision of all parties. Therefore, the PLO has been absent from the Palestinian arena as a result of its change of the counter-occupation mechanism after 1976. Thus, it was clear that the national identity was present and the political project that should have been based on it was missing<sup>135</sup>.

The Accords also contributed to changing the Palestinian national project after the latter having had lost its unifying compass as a result of the conflicting different interests that led to the weakening of the Palestinian national identity. The national liberal trend contributed to the creation of a collective unifying national identity in an attempt to reinforce steadfastness,

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<sup>134</sup> مقابلة شخصية مع الدكتور عبد الستار قاسم.

\*Hamasian: A member or affiliate of Hamas.

\*Fatahian: A member or affiliate of the Fatah Movement.

<sup>135</sup> - مقابلة شخصية مع الدكتور رائد نعيرات، بتاريخ 23-7-2019.

resistance, challenging and attacking, which pushed the identity into a state of fragmentation and disorganization<sup>136</sup>.

The future Palestinian national identity project according to the national cultural perspective is the complete antithesis to the current and future national identity project according to the national political and legal perspectives. That can be attributed to the fact that the national cultural perspective believes that there's no Palestinian national identity without the complete integration of all its elements; homeland, humans and the unifying tale and story. In this sense, the Palestinian and Arab national liberation movement are not separate on a first level, nor that Palestinian and Arab movement at the second level, nor that project and its central issue, the issue of identity at the third level. At the first level, the Palestinian national liberation movement formed the vanguard of the Arab national liberation movement in the face of the forces of colonialism, dependency, underdevelopment, and social injustice. Therefore, the Palestinian national liberation movement's project becomes an integral part of the Arab national liberation movement's project, and vice versa, because the political liberation and social justice projects are one project in reality, and it is a project whose central issue is the collective comprehensive identity both on a Palestinian and an Arab level at the third level, especially in light of societies that live in a state of structural dislocation and their internal unity is at risk.<sup>137</sup>

Hence, the researcher points out that the view of the Israeli occupation differed after the signing of the Oslo Accords, as the latter facilitated the opening wide doors to normalization and coexistence with the occupation. Thus, the establishment of commercial, economic, and social

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<sup>136</sup> - مقابلة شخصية مع عماد غياظة، محاضر في جامعة بيرزيت، ماجستير علاقات دولية، بتاريخ 1-7-2019.

<sup>137</sup> Shraim, op cit, p. 44.

relations with this entity occupying the Palestinian territories, which led to a rupture in the Palestinian fabric and the emergence of many features that constituted a clear change in the foundations of the Palestinian national identity.

#### **4.6 The Change in the Palestinian National Identity after the Oslo Accords**

The Oslo Accord divided the Palestinian people into three regions: The Palestinian diaspora, the West Bank and Gaza Palestinians, and the 1948 Palestinians (Israeli Arabs). On one hand, the Accords has excluded 1948 Palestinians from the circle of Palestinian action. The implementation of the Accords also led to an attempt to establish that the Palestinian is only the Palestinian living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and that the Palestinian land is to be considered only the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In some literature, the term Palestinian territories has been used to express the West Bank and Gaza Strip as if the latter were the whole Palestine. On the other hand, the weight gradually became in favor of the PA at the expense of the PLO, therefore, the diaspora Palestinians lost their political cover<sup>138</sup>.

One of the most prominent changes to the Palestinian national identity is the presence of a new generation and a large mass of the population who believe in peace and coexistence with the Israeli occupation, and even some view that the imposed status quo is not subject to change meaning that liberation is a myth and inconceivable. Therefore, the discussions and thoughts are only addressing improving the economic situation, coexisting with the fait accompli, and not paying any price for liberation<sup>139</sup>.

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<sup>138</sup>Zahran, op cit, p. 23.

<sup>139</sup> - مقابلة تلفزيونية مع الدكتور وليد المدلل، الجامعة الإسلامية بتاريخ 2021-10-17.

Moreover, due to the absence of Palestinian national unity, the absence of Palestinian media, and education that used to unite the Palestinian people, the current dominating identities have multiplied. Fragmentation has become the prevailing situation of the national identity, which means a fragmented, shattered, and absent unified Palestinian identity<sup>140</sup>.

Perhaps the absence of a Palestinian political system was evident as a result of the signing of the Oslo Accords, as the current system of Palestinian laws is violated, and all systems are linked to the terms of the agreement set by both America and Israel. Moreover, the deterioration of the Palestinian parties and movements' situation facilitated the degradation of the Palestinian cause status as a result of the parties and movements abandonment of their foundation political programs. This has contributed to the tearing and shattering of the Palestinian identity due to factional and partisan prejudices<sup>141</sup>.

Nevertheless, the Oslo Accord facilitated and allowed several matters related to national identity, for example, the Palestinian national anthem, which was not allowed before the Accord; the Palestinian passport, despite it being a travel document, it is still a definition of the Palestinian identity, in addition to raising the Palestinian flag on the various Palestinian institutions<sup>142</sup>.

It is evident to us that the clear and significant transformation in the programs of the PLO, which was based on the foundations of resistance to the occupation and sacrificed the martyrs, the wounded, and detainees for that quest, which led to a change in the national culture

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<sup>140</sup> - مقابلة شخصية مع الدكتور عبد الستار قاسم، بتاريخ 9-6-2019.

<sup>141</sup> - مقابلة شخصية مع الدكتور عبد الستار قاسم

<sup>142</sup> - مقابلة تلفونية مع الدكتور رائد الدبعي، محاضر في جامعة النجاح الوطنية، بتاريخ 7-11-2021.

of the Palestinian individuals. The transformation from resistance for the liberation of the whole Palestine to recognizing the Zionist entity marked a radical change of the resistance foundations and the reasons for the very existence of the PLO<sup>143</sup>.

Conceivably, the key transformations in the Palestinian identity emerged as a result of its transition from the project of confrontation and resistance in 1948 to the project of the diaspora and asylum, as the diaspora re-formed and reconstructed a national identity different from that established on the Palestinian land. The Palestinian identity concept changed again after the recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization as the only and legitimate representative of the Palestinians, as well as the political, social, and economic transformations the Palestinian cause went through. Then the Second Palestinian Intifada and the consequent divisions that contributed to the emergence of sub-identities based on different parties, which was a clear indication of the existence of a real crisis to the Palestinian national identity<sup>144</sup>.

The main reason behind the disintegration of the Palestinian national identity is the disintegration of the Palestinian people itself, as a result of the collapse of the PLO entity after the signing of the Oslo Accord and the erosion and fading of the Palestinian struggle and resistance values. The PLO did not develop a comprehensive political program capable of deepening the concept of Palestinian national identity among the Palestinian people who were dispersed due to the absence of collective action and the emergence of different parties that adopted different opinions and different work methodologies.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> - مقابلة شخصية مع الدكتور عبد الستار قاسم، بتاريخ 9-6-2019.

<sup>144</sup> - مقابلة شخصية مع الدكتور عبد الرحمن الحج إبراهيم، دائرة العلوم السياسية، جامعة بيرزيت، بتاريخ 1-7-2019.

<sup>145</sup> - مقابلة شخصية مع سمر هواش، بتاريخ 4-7-2019.

It is necessary, in order to preserve the national identity, to unify the field of political action, end the division and define a unified strategy, through a political will to address all existing issues and confront the Zionist project aiming to liquidate the Palestinian cause<sup>146</sup>.

The researcher, in view of the foregoing, points out that the Oslo Accord dismantled the national identity at the political level through its marginalization of Palestinian rights throughout history, which expresses a real attempt to obliterate the Palestinian identity.

#### **4.7 Palestinian National Identity Divergence Between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip**

Despite the internal Palestinian controversy regarding the extent of the impact of the Oslo Accord on the Palestinian national identity, there are those who refuse to consider that the accord affected the national identity, since the Palestinians are still, to this day, clearly expressing their national identity, and that the totality of the variables argued does not go beyond the political dimension. However, a quarter of a century after the signing of the Oslo Accord, and despite the public recognition by both parties of the failure of this Accord, the outcomes of it still govern the relationship between Israel and the Palestinians on the one hand, and between the Palestinians themselves on the other. The extent of the effects of the Oslo Accords on the Palestinian national identity is undeniable, whether in its political, economic, social or cultural dimension. This is what the components of this chapter will be based on by discussing the most prominent effects of the Accords on these three components, whether in their form or in their contents. The researcher

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<sup>146</sup> مقابلة شخصية مع ماجده مصري، عضو مكتب سياسي للجبهة الديمقراطية ووزير الشؤون الاجتماعية سابقاً، بتاريخ 4-7-2019. -

resorted to conducting a series of in-depth interviews with stakeholders to deepen the extent of knowledge about these three issues, and how the various Palestinian elites view these effects<sup>147</sup>.

Some assert that there is no divergence in the Palestinian national identity between the West Bank and Gaza, but the degree of commitment to the national identity varies between these parties. The situation imposed on the Strip in terms of the daily-lived imposed siege and the constant references of the resistance have had an effect. The harsh conditions and the strict siege strengthened their response to the occupation despite the difficult living conditions. However, individuals in the West Bank have been attentive to their daily live requirements and their work in light of the numerous challenges that hinder the popular resistance of the occupation in the West Bank. Upholding national values is in clear decline as a result of the changing environment and the changing needs of the population<sup>148</sup>.

The Palestinian National Identity represents the true basis for national action and liberation, which united the Palestinian social fabric under one flag. However, the main obstacle is the general framework of Palestinian policies that must be applied on the ground, especially after the Oslo Accords, which constituted the main factor in the decline of the national project<sup>149</sup>. The Palestinian national identity diminished as a result of the PA's performance, the failure in the peace process, and the internal Palestinian division of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

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<sup>147</sup>Zahran, op cit, p. 25.

<sup>148</sup> - مقابلة تلفونية مع الدكتور وليد المدلل، بتاريخ 27-10-2021.

<sup>149</sup> - مقابلة شخصية مع سمر هواش، بتاريخ 4-7-2019.

Hopelessness is the prevailing Palestinian political situation due to the absence of political depth and the increasing national gap between the various factions<sup>150</sup>.

The political division was clearly mirrored in the intellectuals and educated ranks who are considered a major component of Palestinian society, in addition to the change in the nature of the Palestinian elites and their role as an incubator and a safety valve for the Palestinian people and their cause into elites that were produced and supported by the military arms of the Palestinian factions and the ballot boxes that the factions controlled and reaped during the Palestinian institutions' electoral pilots and trails, e.g., municipalities, Legislative Council, trade unions and party institutions. The armed Palestinian in-fighting was clear evidence of the decline of the Palestinian elites' role. The Palestinian division was used as an excuse by both Hamas and the PA, where Hamas suppressed opponents of its rule in Gaza, and the PA increased its pressure on its opponents in the West Bank who support Hamas' coup against legitimacy in Gaza. The siege and division also caused the spread of political corruption in partisan and governmental institutions alike, the increase in internal divisions and strife based on regional and tribal backgrounds, as well as numerous Palestinian political leaders' involvement in the business and investment sector. Thus, power-money pairing situation prevailed, where power serves economic interests and the power money of serves reaching and gaining power<sup>151</sup>.

The researcher asserts that the Palestinian National Identity has been affected by structural distortions resulting from the political behavior of the two sides of the division (Hamas and Fatah), where each party reflects a fragmented Palestinian identity different from that

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<sup>150</sup> - مقابلة شخصية مع ماجده مصر بتاريخ 4-7-2019.

<sup>151</sup> Al-Hafi, op cit, p.p 156 -157.

expressed by the other party. Various actors (employees, unions) have had benefited from the factional interests that fuel the division by appointing tens of thousands of employees in Gaza. All of that played a major role in the decline of the comprehensive Palestinian National Identity. Many parties blame the Oslo Accords for the regression of the Palestinian situation and the failure to obtain any new Palestinian rights, where the Palestinian state option retreated over all of Palestine in favor of the two-state solution which led to the internal Palestinian division, which clearly affected the features of the Palestinian National Identity<sup>152</sup>.

The Palestinian identity is linked to political theorizing, communication, and relations between members of society through the fabric of relations, therefore, the formation of a unified identity. Identity, in the Gaza Strip, suffered as a result of the occupation and was affected by the severing its relations with the external environment, in addition to the harsh economic conditions experienced by the residents, which contributed to the weakening of relations between the Strip and the West Bank. The weakened relations resulted in heterogeneity in many Palestinian issues. Hence, the political and geographical division and the loss of relations and communication<sup>153</sup>.

In contrast, the primary characteristics were not affected by the signing of the Oslo Accord, nevertheless, some common characteristics were, such as the issue of unity, especially the national unity and the unity of the Palestinian territories. The Israeli occupation encouraged the separation of the two parts; the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, despite that the relations can be described as severed and joint programs cannot be achieved. It is well known that

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<sup>152</sup> - 9-6-2019 مقابلة شخصية مع الدكتور عبد الستار قاسم بتاريخ 9-6-2019.

<sup>153</sup> - 28-10-2021 مقابلة تلفزيونية مع الدكتور رمزي عودة، بتاريخ 28-10-2021.

geographical unity is one of the identity characteristics, where Oslo Accords deepened the issue of geographical division<sup>154</sup>.

The internal Palestinian conflicts have clearly led to the dispersal of the Palestinian national identity, as a result of the geographical remoteness, isolating the Strip from the West Bank, and the growing cultural differences, as a result of the Strip being influenced by Egypt and the West Bank by Jordan causing differences in the educational system, as well as the absence of traditional structures as a result of the adoption of sub-identities.<sup>155</sup>

The Palestinian national factions represent the main lever and support for the national project, the factions bear the responsibility of preserving the identity and tackling the issues that may hinder the progress of the Palestinian cause. This requires the reformulation of the components of the Palestinian National Identity, restoring geographical communication between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and reactivating the role of the National Liberation Organization (PLO).<sup>156</sup>

The researcher points out that defining the distinctive identity of any people is always one of the most complex issues facing that people, especially with the presence of a number of threatening factors to that identity. However, the greatest threat to the Palestinian national identity is the Israeli colonialism repression and terror aiming to liquidate the Palestinian people's identity as an indigenous people living in their homeland and on their land. The Palestinian national identity has faced and is facing major shocks that affect its formation and the

<sup>154</sup> - مقابلة تلفونية مع الدكتور وليد المدال، جامعة الأقصى، بتاريخ 27-10-2021.

<sup>155</sup> - مقابلة شخصية مع الدكتور عبد الرحمن الحج ابراهيم، دائرة العلوم السياسية، جامعة بيرزيت، بتاريخ 1-7-2019.

<sup>156</sup> - مقابلة شخصية مع الدكتور عبد الستار قاسم بتاريخ 9-6-2019.

role entrusted to it at every stage. Moreover, the understanding the national identity of this people facilitates understanding their needs and requirements and strengthens their connection to the place they live in.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Findings and Recommendations**

**5.1 Introduction**

**5.2 Findings**

**5.3 Recommendations**

## **5.1 Introduction:**

The study addressed a multitude of issues that demonstrate the impact of the Oslo Accord on the Palestinian National Identity. The researcher was keen to illustrate the development of the Palestinian national identity since the beginning of the twentieth century until the present day, as well as shed light on the impact of the Oslo Accords on the Palestinian national identity by addressing the concept of Palestinian national identity, identifying its components as well as the factors that contributed to its emergence and development, then addressing the factors of the emergence of the contemporary Palestinian national identity, the impact of the Oslo Accord on the Palestinian society's view of the Israeli occupation, and the changes in the Palestinian national identity after the Oslo Accord.

## **5.2 Findings:**

The study reached several important findings, most notably:

- The emergence of national identity in the Arab countries in general and in Palestine in particular dates back to the beginning of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, which was accompanied by the emergence of the Arab national identity, followed by the British Mandate period during which the Zionist settlement on the land of Palestine was active, then al-Nakba stage when the State of Israel was established on part of the land displacing thousands of Palestinian people.
- Palestinians realized the Zionist immigration and Jewish settlement threat and were aware of the social, political and even economic danger that threatens their land and their existence as a people. Palestine after the First World War was coveted by the Zionist

movement, and as a result, the first precursors of Palestinian national identity were formed as the feeling of external danger is one of the key components and elements that constitute the national identity of any people and its superiority over any other sub-identity.

- The correlation of Palestinian nationalism to the Palestinian context historical process led to the emergence of nationalities after the Ottoman Caliphate through British colonialism and the rise of Arab nationalism. The latter was parallel to the Turkish nationalism, which reflected the struggle movements against Italian, German and other European forms of colonialism.
- The specificity of the Palestinian identity lies in the fact that it was formed as a result of being targeted by the Israeli entity, which targeted all of the civilization, cultural, social, economic and political aspects of the Palestinian presence. The identity was formed in light of the great struggle that the Palestinian people fought in order to prove their existence and obtain their national and legitimate rights.
- The Palestinian identity was the antithesis to the Zionist identity, where the latter was based on occupation, displacement and destruction through the expulsion of the indigenous people from their homeland, replacing them with new residents of a different character and a different identity. Therefore, the Palestinian identity crystalized as a resistance to this occupation to install presence in face of the displacement and expulsion will. Thus, the identity's was of a struggle essence, threatened by obliteration if it abandons its struggle essence.

- National identity is linked to individuals who belong to a specific place and share the same characteristics and traits. The Palestinian people's identity is unique from other societies due to the methods of oppression and Judaization Palestinians have been subjected to by Jewish groups.
- The components of the Palestinian national identity are represented in a set of common elements that comprehend Palestinians, namely: The existence of one pain, the challenge of the Israeli occupation, the unity of the land on which they live, and a common destiny. The elements that unite the Palestinians are many and varied.
- The Palestinians' adoption of the national anthem "Mawtani", which was composed by the late Palestinian poet Ibrahim Toukan during the thirties of the last century was of the precursors of the Palestinian national identity. It can be said that the features of the identity that emerged in that period was a main Arab identity, then a Palestinian sub-Arab Identity and both were anticolonialism.
- There has been a serious discussion, as of the Palestinian Nakba and the fall of the country in 1948, about the issue of Palestinian representation, and the search for political identity, which could represent the Palestinian case. Many Palestinian conferences were held prior to that date, and many political structures were formed to advance the Palestinian situation and resist projects to liquidate the Palestinian cause.
- The Palestinian National Identity started to evolve and take the shape of a liberation struggle identity, especially after the Al-Nakba key event, where the direct engagement

milestones formed pivotal joints in that evolvement. The first engagement milestone was Al-Nakba and its highlight was the formation of All-Palestine Government in 1948.

- The establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization in 1964 is the strongest expression of the hiPalestinian National Identity since the Al-Nakba. However, the Arab Higher Committee led by Hajj Amin al-Husseini clearly resisted it and questioned its expression of the Palestinian identity. National motives started to emerge along with the start of the confrontations between the armed Palestinian factions and the Israeli occupation forces. The Palestinian factions began to express the Palestinian identity through armed struggle and Fedayeen\* action.
- The 1967 defeat constituted a motive for the Palestinians to prove their existing identity, for the defeat meant holding onto the Palestinian self. However, the defeat did not weaken the entity building of the Palestine Liberation Organization, but rather increased its importance, strengthened its position, and gave a new impetus to the Palestinian National Identity.
- The leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization decided to engage in the political settlement process according to a set of conditions and foundations formulated by the Madrid Agreement. Due to the exacerbation of isolation which was imposed on the PLO at the Arab and the international levels, which prompted it to accept the Oslo Accord and the mutual recognition between the PLO and the Israeli government.
- The Oslo Accord constituted a clear transformation in the Palestinian political field, one of the consequences of which was the great marginalization of the role of the PLO

politically and the slacking redundant institutions at the public level. Moreover, the Palestinian National Authority assumed the PLO's primary role in organizing the political and civil affairs of the Palestinian society.

- That constituted one of Oslo Accords major consequences, which was the weakness of the most prominent political entity of the Palestinian people, and the inclusive union that established, through its programs, national charter, institutions and factions, the unity of the Palestinian people at home and abroad, which was considered one of the most important components of the Palestinian National Identity
- Massive social, cultural, political, and economic repercussions on Palestinian society in the occupied territories were a consequence of that. It also resulted in the marginalization of the impact and the role of the diaspora Palestinian communities leaving them seriously concerned about their fate.
- One of the main repercussions of the new situation was the weakening the unifying collective Palestinian National Identity that was reinforced and strengthened by the PLO during the long years of its factions' struggles on the basis of liberation and unity for a people displaced in exile and deprived of the right to self-determination
- The Palestinian national identity crises manifested as a result of the failure of the Oslo Accords, the loss of the unified Palestinian umbrella under the frameworks of resistance, and the independence of the Palestinian people under the restriction of Israeli and conditions, which constituted a clear indication of the loss of the Palestinian identity as well as the constituting elements. The loss of the land and the loss of political

representation marked a clear defeat of the unified Palestinian National Identity, in light of the occupation creating a false identity that has overshadowed the original Palestinian identity as a result of the occupation of the land, normalization and the absence of an official media that works to spread and highlight the facts.

- The Palestinian National Identity is the umbrella of the main principles that govern all Palestinian frameworks. After Oslo, the disintegration occurred as a result of the division of areas depending on the level of the PNA's control over these areas. The Israeli occupation did not comply with any of the terms of the Accord by permanent presence in it the areas agreed to be PNA's controlled and its oppressive practices against the Palestinian people within these borders, which led to a state of dispersion and lack of harmony among the Palestinians at the official or internal levels, which clearly affected the Palestinian values and the citizen's sense of identity.
- Numerous disputes occurred between the Palestinians after the Oslo Accords leading to the emergence of internal fighting and bloodshed, to the extent that the national identity was no longer the unifying umbrella for the Palestinians, and other titles resumed the national identity's place, such as "West Bankers, Hamasian\*, Fatahian\*, Northern and Southern". In fact, this is due to the domination of a specific group over the word National, mainly the PA or the PLO.
- The Accords contributed to changing the Palestinian national project after the latter having had lost its unifying compass as a result of the conflicting different interests that led to the weakening of the Palestinian national identity. The national trend contributed to

the creation of a collective unifying national identity in an attempt to reinforce steadfastness, resistance, challenging and attacking, which pushed the identity into a state of fragmentation and disorganization.

- One of the most prominent changes to the Palestinian national identity is the presence of a new generation and a large mass of the population who believe in peace and coexistence with the Israeli occupation, and even some view that the imposed status quo is not subject to change meaning that liberation is a myth and inconceivable. Therefore, the discussions and thoughts are only addressing improving the economic situation, coexisting with the fait accompli and not paying any price for liberation.
- The main reason behind the disintegration of the Palestinian national identity is the disintegration of the Palestinian people itself, as a result of the collapse of the PLO entity after the signing of the Oslo Accord and the erosion and fading of the Palestinian struggle and resistance values. The PLO did not develop a comprehensive political program capable of deepening the concept of Palestinian national identity among the Palestinian people who were dispersed due to the absence of collective action and the emergence of different parties that adopted different opinions and different work methodologies.
- The Palestinian national identity diminished as a result of the PA's performance, the failure in the peace process, and the internal Palestinian division of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Hopelessness is the prevailing Palestinian political situation due to the absence of political depth and the increasing national gap between the various factions.

- The Palestinian National Identity has been affected by structural distortions resulting from the political behavior of the two sides of the division ( Hamas and Fatah), where each party reflects a fragmented Palestinian identity different from that expressed by the other party. This played a major role in the decline of the comprehensive Palestinian National Identity.
- All traditional and conventional structures reemerged and were reinforced after the Oslo Accords, and narrow sub-identities, whether regional, factional, or clan-based were magnified.
- The Oslo Accord affected the Palestinian national identity negatively. The Oslo Accord divided the Palestinian people ideologically into two camps, one led by the Fatah movement and the other by Hamas, resulting in geographical division.
- The absence of rights and freedoms renders Palestinians incapable of expressing their national identity, which opens the door for parties and factions to limit the national identity to their own concepts.
- Tribalism, clan identity and other sub-identities weaken the unifying national identity.
- The different government regimes as well as the different political programs in the West Bank and the Gaza strip leads to a conflict and contrast in the concepts of national identity. This might later lead to the existence of two national identities, the identity of the West Bank and the identity of the Gaza Strip.

### **5.3 Recommendations:**

The study recommends the following:

- 1- It is necessary to unify the field of political action, end the division and define a unified strategy, through a political will to address all existing issues and confront the Zionist project aiming to liquidate the Palestinian cause.
- 2- Reshaping the all-Palestinian national discourse on countering occupation, achieving liberation, and agreeing the means of resistance through a collective Palestinian agreement.
- 3- Rehabilitating and restoring the Palestine Liberation Organization's status through reform, the PLO being integrated to all Palestinian factions and movements, as well as unifying the Palestinian liberation discourse and strategy.
- 4- The necessity to educate and raise the Palestinian national elites' awareness about the losses resulting from not ending the Palestinian division and the division's impact on the Palestinian national identity.
- 5- Conducting more studies related to the Palestinian national identity due to the significant and effective role in shaping Palestinian awareness and installing Palestinian national rights.
- 6- Using social media to circulate and raise the concept of Palestinian national identity away from factionalism and partisanship.

- 7- Increasing rights and freedoms granted so that the Palestinian will be able to express their national identity and eradicate the exclusivity of the national identity to one faction or movement.
- 8- Halting and ceasing the media exchange and the hate speech between Fatah and Hamas, which contributes to weaken the national identity.
- 9- Supporting student exchange in Palestinian universities between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to restore communication and cohesion to enhance the comprehensive national identity.

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## المخلص باللغة العربية :

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على أثر اتفاق أوسلو على الهوية الوطنية الفلسطينية في الضفة الغربية وقطاع غزة، وتمثلت مشكلة الدراسة من خلال الإجابة على السؤال الرئيسي: ما هو أثر اتفاق أوسلو الموقع بين منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية وإسرائيل في العام 1993 على الهوية الوطنية الفلسطينية؟ ناقش الباحث الفرضية الرئيسية للدراسة وهي أن اتفاق أوسلو أثار سلبيًا على الهوية الوطنية الفلسطينية في الضفة الغربية وقطاع غزة ونشأت بعده عدة هويات فئوية وحزبية وأخرى مناطقية تبدو متصارعة في بعض الأحيان.

كما حدد الباحث سؤال رئيسي وتفرع منه مجموعة من الأسئلة ذات العلاقة بموضوع الدراسة لإثبات فرضية الدراسة وتمحور السؤال الرئيسي حول أثر اتفاق أوسلو على الهوية الوطنية الفلسطينية. اعتمد الباحث المنهج المسحي الوصفي واستخدم المقابلة الشخصية كأداة لجمع البيانات، وتتكون العينة المختارة لهذه الدراسة من 12 شخص من السياسيين والأكاديميين في الضفة الغربية وقطاع غزة. تتكون الدراسة من خمسة فصول ناقشت تباعاً المواضيع المرتبطة بعنوان الرسالة، حيث راجع الباحث في الفصل الأول الدراسات السابقة وتم تحديد أهمية الدراسة، أهدافها، ومنهجيتها، فرضيتها، اشكالياتها وأسئلتها. وفي الفصل الثاني تمت مراجعة الإطار النظري للدراسة وتعريف المصطلحات المرتبطة بموضوع الدراسة. أما في الفصل الثالث قام الباحث بتتبع مراحل تشكل وتطور الهوية الوطنية الفلسطينية منذ انهيار الدولة العثمانية مروراً باتفاق أوسلو حتى إجراء هذه الدراسة 2021. وفي الفصل الرابع ناقش الباحث المقابلات التي أجراها مع عينة الدراسة من أكاديميين وسياسيين وأجاب على الأسئلة التي تم تبنيها لإجراء الدراسة والتحقق من صحة الفرضية. في الفصل الخامس والأخير استعرض الباحث النتائج والتوصيات التي خلصت إليها الدراسة ومن أبرزها:

- أثر اتفاق أوسلو على الهوية الوطنية الفلسطينية بشكل سلبي، وقسم اتفاق أوسلو الشعب الفلسطيني ايديولوجياً إلى معسكرين أحدهما تقوده حركة فتح والآخر تقوده حركة حماس.
- الهوية الوطنية الفلسطينية هي الجامعة للمبادئ الرئيسية التي تحكم جميع الأطر الفلسطينية، وبعد أوسلو حصل التفكك نتيجة تقسيم المناطق اعتماداً على مستوى تحكم السلطة الوطنية الفلسطينية على هذه المناطق.

- تعزز بعد اتفاقية أوسلو إحياء كل الهياكل التقليدية وتكرست الهويات الفرعية الضيقة, سواء المناطقية أو الحزبية الفئوية أو العشائرية التي تضعف الهوية الوطنية. ومن التوصيات التي يقدمها الباحث إعادة الاعتبار لمنظمة التحرير الفلسطينية من خلال إصلاحها وضمها لجميع الفصائل والحركات الفلسطينية وتوحيد الخطاب والإستراتيجية التحررية الفلسطينية. كما يرى انه لا بد من العمل على توحيد ميدان العمل السياسي وإنهاء الانقسام والعمل على تحديد إستراتيجية موحدة. بالإضافة إلى إعادة تشكيل الخطاب الوطني الفلسطيني الجامع لكل الفلسطيني نحو الاحتلال والتحرير ووسائل المقاومة بالاتفاق بين الكل الفلسطيني.