

Social Alienation and Its Repercussions on the Palestinian Social System: An Analytical Reading of the Dimension of the Palestinian Identity

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Abstract

The study aims to identify social alienation and its repercussions on the Palestinian social system: an analytical reading of the dimension of the Palestinian identity. This study is organized in three axes, in addition to the introduction, results and references. The first axis deals with the concept of identity—by examining the theoretical text of this concept—and reviews the state of conflict between the Palestinian self and the Israeli other in establishing identity in the Bedouin village of Al-Araqib. The second axis addresses the issue of identity in the Palestinian collective consciousness, and the third axis displays the relationship between memory and the collective consciousness in the Palestinian social system.

Keywords

Alienation, Social System, Identity, Collective Consciousness, Palestine

1. Introduction

Talking about social alienation requires penetrating into a major aspect involved with this concept, which is the identity crisis, which naturally constitutes a starting point and a basis for researchers in political sociology. This is because addressing alienation touches on the essence of the collective consciousness, which in turn preserves identity and even preserves it from extinction and overcomes its crisis. It presents a functional appearance in the revival and consolidation of memory when this awareness is in danger of distortion and termination.

Since the Palestinian social system is the scene of the aforementioned effects,

the researcher decided to present several scenes that were included in these effects (alienation, identity crisis, and collective awareness) in a way that fuses with each other, and produces a social scene that preserves the originality of the place in its geography, which is full of pain at times and of hope at others. Time had its dominion over this geography showing with vigor the power of action and its dynamism in the Palestinian memory, which boasts of its ability to withstand more than seven decades ago, to confirm to the other his failure in ending it, and so the saying goes: fathers die and children forget.

The collective awareness is clarified in another scene, to form a clear presence in fixing the mental image that was formed among the Palestinians towards the Zionist other in successive historical contexts. This scene was linked to geography and the distortion of memory through the manufacturing of fear, violence, killing, assault, and the trampling of the rights of others, thereby producing a self with its unique image, such that this self formed a mixture of active forces, apparent at times, and latent at other times. It was able to awaken what was left of the memory, and was able to draw a self that has the ability to form and center around the place that is objectively absent from it, but emotionally present in it. It was also able to classify the other in its different dimensions, and to diagnose his identity in the scope of his action, and to further identify the feelings of the self towards the Israeli other, which were feelings based on complete rejection.

Through this track, this study came to monitor the features of identity, its crisis, its relationship to alienation, and the impact of collective awareness in overcoming this crisis and alienation through texts whose authors were inspired by the Palestinian reality, and showing the Palestinian self and its ability to confront the Israeli other, who was a real actor in targeting the identity and the original place (historic Palestine).

However, the weakness of the Palestinian self, the lack of a backbone to rely on, and the betrayal that was the basis of our ego in resisting others in the first Nakba, produced scenes of suffering that are difficult to describe in this study, and were even documented in history: scenes that were filled with fear and terror for more than eight decades ago.

In the context of this brief approach, the idea of conducting this study was born with the aim to examine the dimension of identity in the Palestinian social system, and the extent to which the idea of the national self and the collective consciousness is established by clarifying the image of the Zionist other, thereby presenting a stereotypical image being a product of the nature of the confrontation between the Palestinian self and the Zionist other, who bet on the dissolution of the identity of the self due to the passage of time, especially with regard to the cultural dimension.

In this context, the researcher agrees with the Egyptian sociologist Abd al-Wahhab al-Masiri in his saying: "Identity is the real arena of conflict between us and the enemy". It reflects within it the two dimensions of belonging and challenge. Place and geography wander in its essence. Moreover, through it, we read a collective awareness with a guiding compass that does not accept any interpre-

tation except for one, which is Palestine. The place embraced by the Palestinian memory and expressed by the collective conscience with its cultural identity in the poem, the novel and the drawing: Mahmoud Darwish, the son of the destroyed Palestinian village al-Birwa, which is still manifested in his conscience as he expressed in his identity card "Record, I am an Arab", Ghassan Kanafani in "Returning to Haifa", and the drawings of Naji Al-Ali signed with "*Handala*". The Palestinian circle is integrated in its geography, which eluded "those who pass between the fleeting words" to produce an identity of authenticity that extends its roots to the Palestinian Canaanite. This is identity and belonging, which form a dynamic relationship, and so the borders between them are not rigid, and may be subject to formation. These borders may appear sometimes and may fade at others, which indicates that identity can be formed according to the political and social context.

On the other hand, cultural change is not sufficient to change affiliations, especially at the group level. History is full of many examples of cultural influence that did not affect the previous affiliations of individuals and groups, and there are many cases that prove that cultural influence is a reason for strengthening affiliations, that is in addition to hostile acculturation (Devereux & Leob, 1943: pp. 133-148).

It is true that identity is given only once, as per Amin Maalouf, but at the same time it is molded in its objective contexts, and remains anchored on its shore from which it eventually sailed. Hence, specialists in the fields of philosophical, sociological, and political fields have emphasized that the issue of national identity comes at the heart of the Palestinian national concern, and is at the forefront of controversy, dialogue, research and studies, especially after all Palestinians have reached the conviction that the horizon is closed to the national project represented in the independent Palestinian state, return and self-determination. This particular issue is what threatens this project in its entirety (Shreim, 2002: p. 100). In light of this challenge, the Palestinian identity, with its multiple pillars, ascends to draw a scene that presented in its texts and movement an imagination that confuses the contingent and awakens the collective memory of all Palestinians, to make the place with its geography the mark that dropped their history that which is saturated with corruption.

Although the Nakba of 1948 and the usurpation of the land were not the only focus of the Zionist gangs, rather the brains of the political decision-makers were preoccupied with robbing and obliterating the features of the identity of the Palestinians who are still in their villages and cities inside Occupied Palestine. The Zionists succeeded in forming an identity, in some way, for the Arabs in the Zionist entity, but it was troubled in its form and content. The identities of this formation were linked to dimensions and elements that merged to produce one collective self, but the degree of prominence of these dimensions and elements differed from time to time. The local identity, which reflects the first social dimension and interaction over generations, was stronger than the other identities. There was also another sectarian religious dimension whose strength varied

from one group to another and from one region to another. As for the third identity dimension, it was the Palestinian. It reflected the national political dimension, but it was not particularly strong in the Arab minority, most of whom were far from the Palestinian social and political center in the main cities. The fourth dimension was the Arab affiliation, which is reflected in the common Arab culture with other Arab peoples, in which the language element emerges. Arabs in the Zionist entity were not given an opportunity to choose, rather group affiliation was imposed on them by the Jewish majority, which enjoys power, and controls the distribution of resources, including the use of names and terminologies, and defining the separation barriers and gaps between the two groups. On the other hand, Arab national affiliation existed and was practiced by Arabs through culture, language, emotional interaction, lifestyle and thought, that is in addition to the difference of religious affiliation from the Jewish majority. Hence, there is no room for discussing a new identity, rather the process of formulating and crystallizing the identity was a reinforcement of the belonging that existed, and that is practiced naturally, automatically and spontaneously by individuals. Therefore, the strengthening of identity in the first place is the strengthening of the cohesion that unites individuals through their sense of “collective self”, the practice of organized group affiliation, and the intentional, purposeful, and spontaneous individual action (Haidar, 1999: p. 706).

2. Aims and Scope

Since the early eighties, the majority of Palestinians define themselves as Arabs in the national and cultural sense, and that they are Palestinians in the national sense (Suleiman, 1995: p. 3). The issue of identity has gained special importance in the life of the Palestinians in the Zionist entity because of its transformation into one of the important elements in organization and political action, and competition between movements and political parties. Therefore, they began to highlight their Palestinian identity more than their Arabism, along with the integration of the Palestinian national identity. The Islamic religious feeling was developing, spreading and translating into a religious-political organization. Although this development meant strengthening the religious identity at the expense of the national identity and deepening the fundamentalist Islamic culture and isolation from Israeli society (Haidar, 1999: p. 711). The place was not isolated from the identity, for the relationship between identity and place is a relationship of identification at its highest possible level. Identity is always embodied, articulated, seen, and formed in the image of the place; just as it establishes its identity, as it lives and lasts, for there is no identity without a place, and there is no place without an identity (Al-Maleh, 2010). In the midst of this dialectic between place and identity, forced disturbances may occur that plunge identity into a crisis. The talk about the identity crisis stems mainly from the occurrence of any defect to which the problematic system between the individual and the group is exposed at any of its levels. In the event that the individual does not feel his identity, which in turn results in a crisis of awareness (Warness Crisis),

which then leads to the final loss of identity, thus ending his existence. This is what the Zionist establishment sought to achieve in obscuring the Palestinian identity with its originality and deep belonging to the components of Palestinian society. By fixing a stereotype that others derived from the falsehood of their feeble claim, which is acceptance of the *fait accompli*, and talking about the mental image necessarily leads us to stereotypes or preconceptions; a term derived from the language of printing technology, which is originally the metal plate that is used to print thousands of identical copies or images without the need for change (Barakat, 1984: p. 104). The famous American political commentator, Walter Lippmann, was the first to introduce the term stereotype into the social sciences when he used it in his book *Public Opinion* published in 1922. Lippmann defined the stereotype as the common mental image held by a group of individuals, which often consists of a simplified, incomplete or distorted opinion of individuals. Or it may be represented in an emotional attitude towards a person, an issue, or an event, and it can be said that the stereotype in the social sciences is a simplified or in-depth mental image or preconceived notion of all members of a group, thereby ignoring the individual differences between them (Mi'ari, 1990: p. 728).

The mental image is characterized by stability, especially when it comes to threatening or obliterating identity. The process of shaping this image often falls under the weight of compelling coercive factors associated with events that affect the structure and culture of the individual, and thus determine the features of his personality. The state of the Palestinian Nakba and its disastrous phenomena in the overall public life of Palestinians is the best example of the crystallization of the mental image through which Palestinian generations went through for more than seven decades. However, these mental images in the imagination of the Palestinian have their own characteristics for each of the successive generations. The objective, subjective, and geopolitical changes that the Palestinian went through had formed a movement in his imagination. This image was one of the repercussions of the establishment of a strange entity that was located on its land, only to find itself in a narrow geographical space. All these factors were able to produce a Palestinian imagination that was able to keep the place in his memory, and this place with all its components was able to dominate the mental image of the Palestinian individual. Hence the importance of conducting this study, which seeks to provide an analysis of the relationship between social alienation and its repercussions on the Palestinian identity crisis, and the role of the Palestinian collective conscience in preserving this identity, which the Palestinian memory incorporated in its originality, and overcame the exclusion factors that others have mastered in its formulation.

3. Methods and Design

Through these approaches, the idea of conducting this study emerged, which seeks to provide an analytical vision of the identity dimension in the Palestinian imagination, based on what was expressed by the Palestinian collective con-

sciousness and its unified and deep memory towards the specificity of place in the Palestinian memory.

To achieve this goal, this study adopted the analytical approach of some texts that addressed identity. The first axis dealt with the theoretical rooting of the concept of identity, during which it presented an image of the national movement in the Palestinian social structure within the Green Line, and presented in the same presentation an inspiring struggle model for the Bedouin village of Al-Araqib. The second axis reviewed the relationship of identity with collective consciousness as a systematic approach that is constructively in harmony with the objectives of the research, followed by space and memory in the human conscience.

4. Identity

The issue of identity in general attracts great importance in the fields of philosophical, sociological and political preoccupations, especially in light of the developments of globalization, and then in light of the civil and sectarian wars that ravaged the world (Musa, 2016: p. 14). It is also one of the central concepts that records its permanent presence in the social sciences with its branches, and one of the most common, used and permeated concepts in our daily cultural and social life. The concept of national identity is an extension and derivation of one of the ambiguous concepts, whether in the specialized sociopolitical literature or among interlocutors, writers, and social and political parties. Perhaps this is a feature of most of the concepts and terminologies of the social sciences inhabited by the divergence of visions of workers in their fields in terms of interest and ideology, especially when they are the subject of practice and application. Although the claim of belonging to a specific national identity among people represents an axiom for most of them as long as they belong to homelands that give them their nationality, or rather their identity (Al-Fatlawi, 2023: p. 58).

The question of identity is one of the important questions for which we do not currently find a new, in-depth question in the Arab cultural space. Meanwhile, in the European academic field, we find very accurate sociological, anthropological and psychological approaches. It is no secret that the issue of identity in its personal and collective dimensions constantly concerns everyone, in the sense that identity is a moving process. It bears the characteristics of life in its transformations and re-formation according to several changes, because the individual has his own identity, which is summarized in the saying: "My identity is what makes me different from everyone else". The same also applies to his community identity and his cultural identity. The elements of identity in the sociological sense include both the elements of religion, language, customs, traditions and common history (Musa, 2016: p. 10).

Identity as a concept is considered complex, similar to the complex concepts for which scholars differed in setting a specific definition, given the novelty of this concept in the field of social sciences. Therefore, researchers did not resolve to set an agreed theoretical framework for its content, as they dealt with it from

different angles, which contributed to the multiplicity of its contents and study directions (Al-Fatlawi, 2023: p. 10). In this theoretical context of the concept of identity, the researcher will not delve into the linguistic details of it, nor the theoretical roots that many scholars emphasized, led by Erickson and others. Rather, this part will deal with the political conceptual framework of the concept of identity due to its connection with the subject and objectives of this study, followed by a summary of the reality of Palestinian identity and the fluctuations of its images that placed it within the framework of the crisis of belonging to a place and its ability to summon it and link it to its authentic geography and its Arab-Palestinian history.

Identity, as analysts in the political field perceive it, is that framework in which a person politically sees himself. Lucian Pye believes that the concept of identity is related to national passion and people's feeling that they are linked to each other by a general bond (Al-Fatlawi, 2023: p. 10). Burhan Ghalioun defines it as the group's self-image, which contributes to resolving the contradictions of the personality—the personality of the group—and helps it to reach its stability, balance, and clarity of its goals (Ghalioun, 1994: p. 9). Nadim Al-Bitar defines it as a set of characteristics that distinguish a people or a nation at a certain historical stage (Al-Bitar, 1980: p. 10). Abdul Majeed Amer addresses this concept through a cultural standpoint, defining it as a set of cultural characteristics that characterize a group in a certain period of time, which generates among individuals a sense of belonging to a particular people and an attachment to a particular homeland thereby expressing feelings of pride in the people to which these individuals belong (Amer, 1982: p. 15). Abu Anza emphasizes the cultural dimension in his definition of identity, as it possesses a cultural specificity which distinguishes one nation from another, whereby it being the unity of internal feelings that is represented in the unity of material elements, distinction, permanence, and central effort. Thus, identity is an integrated unit that makes a person distinguished from others (Abu Anza, 2011: p. 9).

Based on the aforementioned, researchers in the field of political science conclude with two observations, the first of which is that identity is not a fixed biological feature in the mind or the general psyche of a people since time immemorial. Rather, it has cultural and historical features that a people achieve through their interaction with their history. The second is that identity is not a static concept, but rather a dynamic one that changes with the movement of history and its transformations (Zayed, 2003: p. 14). This leads us to the content of national identity, which expresses the historical and social components of any society. It develops within the historical context as well as the economic, social and political structures through the stages of nomadism and conflict, and then stability and construction. It can be said that there are two types of patterns to form the national identity of any society, namely:

The first pattern: identity in traditional societies, which are societies based on conflict and the booty capitalism/economy. It is characterized by being based on an undeveloped consumer economy, inherited status, reverence for customs and

traditions, limited individual freedom, reverence for the family, tribe, and clan, and reliance on centralization in administration and governance.

The second pattern: identity in modern societies, which are societies based on cooperation and solidarity, and are characterized by having a developed productive economy and an acquired position. There is no sanctification of customs and traditions, and there are wide individual freedoms, and a reliance on decentralization in governance (Amer, 1982).

Therefore, national identity possesses cultural, religious, social and political features upon which the people in their homeland agree, and it is the result of a historical accumulation that has settled and entrenched in the collective mind and the general psyche of citizens through a long history of coexistence, which formulated their mentalities, shaped their feelings, and determined their behavior, relationships and methods of adapting to different living conditions. Naturally, identity is not a closed system that is not subject to openness to cultures, experiences, variables, and the data of the era in terms of influence, the giving and receiving, as it is in a state of continuous development (Al-Ansari, 2022).

Within the framework of the theoretical data in the previous texts, the mental map of the Palestinian identity is worthily determined by looking at its entity as a phenomenon ravaged by various political and social currents which tried to plunge it into alienation more than ten decades ago. This will be summarized in the following section.

5. The Palestinian Identity

A debate arose about the reasons for the crystallization and development of the Palestinian identity for a dispersed people without a state in the Palestinian political and social thought. However, the debate did not take up a wide space at this stage, despite its necessity on the cultural, political and societal level for the Palestinian people, especially with the internal division that it is going through, which undoubtedly affected the Palestinian identity (Abu al-Nada, 2014: p. 81).

In the Palestinian experience, the feature of differentiation and the highlighting of the peculiarity of identity do not seem to be a necessary foundation for it. It is a central feature of the socio-anthropological perspective. This is because the emphasis on national identity in the Palestinian context is a struggle necessity to affirm existence and thus rights, and the view of the historicalness of the Palestinian national identity—like other living identities—appears to be an important element in the national cultural perspective whether in terms of formation or in terms of the nature of the crisis. This is due to the fact that the historical formation of identity in the era of modernity as a reference that defines the nation is something that is politically manufactured and formed. Palestine is not an exception to this historical law, just as the nature of the crisis experienced by the Palestinian national identity is not a crisis of loss as much as it is a crisis of existence because its historical experience has not exhausted all its logical capabilities (Shreim, 2002: p. 11).

The issue of the problem of identity and its crisis in contemporary societies represents one of the tools of the political and cultural struggle within the same society and with other societies, and it is usually employed by the enemies of a particular nation. Many contemporary societies are concerned about the future of collective identity and how to preserve it, fearing its decline and fragmentation into sub-identities. Hence, the occurrence of identity conflicts and attempts to separate and establish independent entities, especially since many societies and countries throughout history have witnessed such conflict and separation. The problem of identity and its crisis in society indicates the society's inability to achieve the political and economic goals and interests of its citizens, and its failure to integrate them on the basis of equal citizenship and participation (Abu al-Nada, 2014: p. 84). It calls for making a decision to meet the challenge it represents. The identity crisis is also one of the most dangerous crises due to its internal social roots. It also affects the deepening of other crises, such as the crisis of state building, participation and integration, among others, as the identity crisis is related to the problem of limited loyalties and their transformation into a greater loyalty. This situation applies to the Palestinians inside the Green Line, whereby the Zionist entity followed the policy of containment or Israelization with them after the Nakba. It is a policy used by the occupation when it fails to Judaize a particular region through displacement, uprooting, killing and destruction. The occupation controls the region and tries to contain its inhabitants by subjugating them to it (Allan, 2008: p. 11).

In this context, the researcher will not resort to the historical or political implications that affected the Palestinian identity since the Ottoman rule, through the British Mandate, and ending with the Israeli occupation of historical Palestine, as this requires a lot of theoretical texts for which there is no space in this study. Rather, the researcher will summarize a perception of the Palestinian identity within the Green Line, followed by an example of the identity struggle that the Palestinians of the Negev are waging with the Zionist occupier represented in the steadfast village of Al-Araqib that refuses to disappear and be obliterated.

After the catastrophe of 1948, the Palestinians inside the Zionist entity found themselves a strange minority in their homeland and isolated from the rest of their people and their nation. And since all the political, religious, economic and educational elites, who were stationed in the cities, were displaced during the war, this minority remained without a national leadership that takes care of its interests and defends its rights. The Israeli authorities have pursued a dual policy towards the members of the Palestinian minority, granting them, on the one hand, Israeli citizenship and legally considering them Israeli citizens, and on the other hand, tightening control over them by imposing the military regime that remained in force until 1966. Under this system, Palestinian communities were divided into a number of closed areas, and Palestinians were prevented from moving between them except with a permit from the military governor. The authorities applied the old colonial policy of "divide and conquer" to Palestinian

citizens, thus reinforcing the internal divisions among them according to religion, clan, and geographical area. It also succeeded in tearing apart the Palestinian minority and in reducing communication and social interaction among them. As a result, narrow traditional identities, especially local and kinship, were strengthened among the Palestinians within the Zionist entity. The Zionist policy removed the presence of any manifestations that express a Palestinian entity or identity and prevented its formation again. The Palestinian national identity consequently stagnated (Mi'ari, 2008: p. 3).

The identity of the Arabs in the Zionist entity was formed from a number of elements that merged to produce one social self. But the degree of prominence of these elements and dimensions differed from one period to another. The local identity, which reflects the first social dimension and interaction over generations, was stronger than the other identities. There was also another sectarian religious dimension whose strength varied from one group to another and from one region to another. As for the third identity dimension, it was the Palestinian. It reflected the national political dimension, but it was not particularly strong in the Arab minority, most of whom were far from the Palestinian social and political center in the main cities. The fourth dimension was the Arab affiliation, which is reflected in the common Arab culture with other Arab peoples, in which the language element emerges (Haidar, 1999: p. 704).

In the last three decades of the twentieth century, these periods witnessed a process of integration of the Palestinian identity among Palestinians inside Occupied Palestine in 1948. At the same time, there was a deepening integration into the economic, political and cultural life in Occupied Palestine. This process can be attributed to two main reasons: the first is the Zionist invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and the expulsion of the Palestinians from it. This deepened the aversion to Arab affiliation and strengthened the conviction that the political fate of Palestinians in the Zionist entity differs from that of the rest of Palestinians, especially the solutions proposed by all parties that exclude the Palestinians in the Zionist entity. It contributed to strengthening the conviction of unanimous integration between the active political currents and deepening cooperation between the local political leaders and the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (Haidar, 1995: p. 2). These developments on the Palestinian side convinced the majority of Palestinians in the Zionist entity that their fate is linked to this entity, and that they must search for ways to coexist, adapt, and even integrate into the Zionist society. As for the second reason, it is related to the maturation of some social, economic and cultural transformations and changes that resulted from the continuous dealings and daily interaction with the Zionist society, since there are wide segments among Palestinians whose economic interests are linked to the Israeli market. Large segments of Palestinians were also affected by the Zionist regime's lifestyles, adopted it and became involved in it. There is a high percentage of Palestinians who speak the Hebrew language and are proficient in reading and writing it, and use it in their studies, professional life, and communication with the outside world (Smootha, 1989: p. 42). Despite

these circumstances, this did not affect the national affiliation that was strengthened and entrenched in the structure of the Palestinian self. The best proof of that is the Palestinian national movement in 1976 and the rise and revival of the Palestinian identity. The collective consciousness that emerged from that confused both the Zionist security and political institutions. The Galilee with its cities and villages, Al-Naqab with its golden desert and the forearms of its people, declare their identity without fear that Palestine, the place, is the title of their memory. Araqib Al-Naqab records the history of glory and steadfastness in front of the Israeli demolition machine.

6. The Bedouin Village of Al-Araqib: A Model in Challenge and Confirmation of Identity

Al-Araqib is a Palestinian village located in the desert of Al-Naqab within the lands of 1948, and is constantly being demolished by the Israeli occupation forces. It has become a symbol of a battle of wills waged by the Palestinians of the 1948 in order to survive and preserve their land and identity from the policies of Judaization. The village of Al-Araqib is located in the Al-Naqab desert within the lands of Palestine that were occupied by the Zionists following the Nakba in 1948, specifically, north of the city of Be'er Al-Sabe'. The village extends over an area of 1050 dunums, and is about 110 km south of Jerusalem. Al-Araqib consists of forty houses, most of which are made of tin, and is inhabited by about three hundred people, most of whom belong to "Al-Turi" family, according to 2010 statistics. The residents of Al-Araqib say that their village was established hundreds of years ago, and that they possess certificates of land ownership ("Tabo") issued during the Ottoman rule, and they infer that the village's cemetery dates back to the beginning of the nineteenth century AD. When Israel occupied Al Naqab—which represents about half of the area of historical Palestine—in 1949, Al-Araqib became one of 45 Arab villages in Al Naqab that Israel does not recognize, and deprives of the basic services such as education, health, water, electricity and communications, as it considers them "illegal villages".

The Israeli authorities are working to demolish these villages and gather their residents into eight communities that they established for this purpose, based on a decision taken by the Israeli courts in 1948 that "the Bedouins have no ownership over their land", even though the total population of these villages is about 90 thousand people, and most of them existed before the establishment of the Israeli state.

Al-Araqib residents say that the displacement of their first occupation was in 1953. The partial displacement campaigns intensified after the setback of 1967 under the pretext that the area belongs to the Jewish National Fund, and sometimes, under the pretext of systematically controlling construction operations, in addition to the security and military reasons where the Negev Nuclear Research Center (Dimona nuclear reactor) is located in Al Naqab. Al-Araqib was subjected to complete demolition for the first time by Israeli bulldozers, and its

people were displaced on July 27, 2010 under the pretext of “building without a permit”. When its residents rebuilt it, the occupation demolished it again. The occupation authorities are calling on the villagers to pay a fine of millions of dollars for the vehicles that demolished the village and the forces that participated in the demolition.

The people of Al-Araqib continued to cling to their village and rejected Israel’s projects to gather the Bedouins, which they see as a plan to seize their lands, and rebuild—with the help of volunteers—the buildings made of tin panels after each demolition carried out by the occupation. “Al-Araqib Defense Committee” organizes a weekly demonstration every Sunday afternoon to protest against the demolition of the villagers’ homes.

The villagers are assisted by the “Higher Follow-up Committee for the Arab Masses”, which is affiliated with the Palestinians of 1948. It undertook the responsibility to rebuild the houses that were demolished in the village every time. Al-Araqib village has become a symbol of defense for the Palestinian rights; it represents a hot line of confrontation between the Palestinians of 1948 and Israel in regards to the settlement in Al Naqab.

Below is a presentation of some confrontations between the occupation and the people of Al-Araqib village:

1) September 23, 2009: Four residents of Al-Araqib village were injured and 15 others arrested during the clashes with the Israeli police. This came as a result of their confrontation with employees and workers of the “Israel Land Fund”, after they stepped into their land to confiscate it and plant trees.

2) July 27, 2010: Hundreds of Israeli police officers surrounded Al-Araqib to protect the Israeli bulldozers, which proceeded to demolish forty homes in the village under the pretext of building without a permit. This resulted in the displacement of about three hundred of its residents, leading to clashes between the village residents and the police officers.

3) August 4, 2010: The Israeli forces demolished houses again in Al-Araqib village, leaving the residents in the open without a shelter, after its residents rebuilt it by a decision of the Higher Follow-up Committee for the Arab Masses. The Israeli forces also arrested eight people who confronted them and transferred them to the Be’er Al-Sabe’ police station under the pretext of “obstructing the work of the police”.

4) August 21, 2010: The Palestinians of 1948 rebuilt the village of Al-Araqib after it was demolished by Israel for the fourth time in two months. They were determined to stay in their land, to defend their rights, and show solidarity through donation campaigns and solidarity visits.

5) January 16, 2011: The Israeli Occupation Land Department demolished, for the ninth time, the homes of the villagers of Al-Araqib, with the participation of large police forces from various branches. It also started the afforestation of their lands, which led the villages to confront with the police, resulting in the injury of ten people from rubber bullets, most of which were described as minor injuries.

6) July 27, 2016: The Israeli occupation bulldozers demolished Al-Araqib for the 101st time since July 2010, claiming that it was built without a permit. To this day, the Zionist forces have demolished Al-Araqib one hundred and forty-four times, which was followed each time by rebuilding it by the original inhabitants (Al Jazeera Net, 2019).

7. The Dimension of Identity in the Palestinian Collective Consciousness

Talking about the issue of collective consciousness in its general framework that is enveloped in the Palestinian national identity comes at this stage to present the idea of identity accountability, proposing approaches that were searched for and that are more than a study problem, especially when talking about various components and factors of repercussions that have affected this collective component that we call (identity). That is, seeing the constant and the changing part in it. The challenge of identity was born from the challenge of its denial, as the bet was that the displacement of the Palestinians from their homeland and throwing them into exile will lead to the dissolution of the Palestinian people and the erosion of their national identity, thus, they will have other homelands. However, this identity represented by its collective consciousness returned and derived its strengths from uprooting the Palestinian people in 1948 in a process of challenge to prove the existence and the national self, and the Palestinian national character. This was linked to the timeframe in which the Palestinian cultural, intellectual and artistic creations were prominent in the fields of research, planning, art, science and literature including novels, poetry, stories and cinema. Amongst the names that crossed the threshold of the Palestinian cause to humanity are Mahmoud Darwish, Tawfiq Ziyad, Edward Said, Ismail Shammout, Naji al-Ali, Edward Said, Emile Habibi, Anis Al-Sayegh and many others. These formed a solid base in the structure of the Palestinian collective consciousness, because they formulated the tributaries of the Palestinian national culture, supported the pillars of its identity, and fed it with a feeling of excellence before the others (Abdel-Al, 2018).

The structure of collective consciousness in the Palestinian social structure can be inferred through a closer look at the movement of the society and its social and cultural components over the past ten decades, which produced historical transformations that affected its context, transcended the factors and threats of alienation, charted the features of its future, and made it oscillate between strength and weakness, and cohesion and disintegration according to the political circumstances that it went through. It is noteworthy that anyone who follows the movement of Palestinian society will notice that it was linked in its movement to a collective framework with a set of visions that constituted a reference to the structural content of the Palestinian society, making it an arbiter in the event of its divergence and even convergence in many cases.

This cultural dimension, which expresses the society's identity, its past, and its present, has constituted the essence of the Palestinian collective consciousness.

Through its contexts and the analysis of its components, whether in literature, novels, poetry, or the structure of relationships that form a title for it, one observes the power that summons the collective memory in its sociocultural context. Displacement, the right of return, Al-Aqsa Mosque, Deir Yassin massacre, and other heritage-related material made the collective consciousness in a state of permanent revival. Even though this collective consciousness was sometimes dependent on various regional currents that made it lose its balance; it soon regained it due to the logic of the action and the strength of its elements and goals, as it was associated with fateful outputs that formed a common denominator between its actors.

We find symbolic indications of the identity that are included in the Palestinian collective consciousness such as the psychological dimension of the Palestinian human. These were expressed through the rejection of the temporal and spatial dimensions, which were demonstrated by Al Nakba. This is what we infer from the novel *Men in the Sun* by Ghassan Kanafani, which revolves around two main dimensions: the first is represented by the shadow of the destructive silence of the situation of the Palestinian refugees in a water tank in a sweltering desert, and it reflects a very reliable expression of the daily and impossible tension that accompanies the conditions of life and work for the Palestinians. The second dimension is represented by the state of objection and warning to this silence (Ben-Zvi, 1998), which is a reference to tingling the collective consciousness to rise from its slumber towards a more alert state that raises disturbing noises, which seeks through its survival and through managing its struggle with the temporal and spatial dimensions to find itself. This is what we find in the context of the novel when Abu Al-Khazairan thinks about dumping the dead bodies over the garbage dump and walks away, then he returns to strip them of their watches and money, and drives away with his car wondering in astonishment: Why didn't they knock on the walls of the tank? The desert echoes the call that confirms their negativity in facing death. They did not tap on the walls of the tank to be rescued, even if they were imprisoned, it will still be easier than death.

We notice a clear presence of the identity in the context of the Palestinian social awareness, which is facing Israeli piracy that includes stealing the symbols of the people and components of their identity, such as clothing, popular food and traditional songs, in an attempt to delude the world that Israel has roots in the region, and to compensate for the distorted and foggy identity experienced by the newcomers to the occupied Palestinian cities and villages in 1948. They tried to steal the Palestinian keffiyeh, which represents a title of struggle for the Palestinian identity since the twenties of the last century (Amer, 1982).

The Palestinian song had its abundant presence in the components of the Palestinian identity struggle. The "Mijana", "Ataba", and "Zarif al-toul" are meanings that awaken in the Palestinian the repositioning of his framework and the historical and geographical boundaries. The popular folkloric song which the generations took part in writing its words and formulating its rhythms to be-

come a vivid and lively picture of the forms and concerns of life, expresses the extent to which the collective conscience is linked to the smell of earth and soil stained with the blood of martyrs and the sweat of farmers (Jabr, 2009).

We note that the identity transcends the limits of alienation through its manifestation in poetry, as is the case in novels and songs. Samih al-Qasim expresses the resisting identity in his poem "Go ahead!" The collective dimension and its challenge are observed in the context of a historical period in which the Palestinian identity was able to form a historical axis of resistance that has few counterparts in the history of the Palestinian resistance. The period through which the collective consciousness rose was represented by the years of the uprising "the uprising of stones", which extended from the late eighteenth decade of the twentieth century until the first third of the ninth decade of the same century.

The collective consciousness is evident in Mahmoud Darwish's masterpiece, which appeared in a historical period prior to the first intifada. His poem *Those Who Pass between Fleeting Words* was the source of fear for the Zionist political establishment, with its right and left wings. The Israeli Knesset united in confronting this poem, until it came to the Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Shamir, to read excerpts from it in the Israeli Knesset (Qaraqe', 2008).

The Palestinian identity shines in its collective framework through the caricature drawings of Naji al-Ali, which are inspired by reality. This artist could extrapolate a future scene about a Palestinian reality that we live in nowadays.

At the end of this presentation, it can be said that the Palestinian identity expressed by the Palestinian collective consciousness was characterized by collective creativity, because the resistance act was characterized by collective and dynamic creativity, renewed in its form, multifaceted, and varying in its levels. The creativity in ideas is represented by the existence of a comprehensive vision that allowed the way for intellectual control to take over the existing reality and reorganize its relations. There is also creativity in the act that developed its tools and new methods of resistance. Moreover, there is the creativity of the mechanism, which is represented by investing in possible capabilities and capacities, and in developing them creatively. Finally, there is the creativity of value, which is represented by directing the effective action towards the achievements of current and future societal value (Sari, 1990).

Perhaps this act had its influence on the Palestinian memory, which was expressed by the collective consciousness in a constructive image that was rooted in the borders of the Palestinian place (geography) and time (history). In light of this dialectical relationship, the researcher decided to present a scene that is in harmony with the path that drew the features of the Palestinian personality, its identity and collective consciousness. So that it presents a movement full of vitality and smoothness, thus putting an end to all the scenarios that tried to undermine it and finish it off, especially that the Palestinian memory had a bright role in revealing the identity and its collective consciousness. This is what the following sections review.

8. Memory and the Collective Consciousness

The human relationship with the geographical place is existential, because the place preceded the existence of the human existence, which is linked to the land as a shelter, a home, and a source of its livelihood and strength. From ancient times until the present, the place was the visible and close stationery on which man recorded his culture, thought, arts, fears, hopes, secrets, everything related to mankind, and what he reached from his past to bequeath to the future. Therefore, man tried to embody abstract things with tangible things, and subject human relations and systems to the coordinates of the geographical location.

It can be said that the social, religious, political and general moral models of the world that helped mankind through the stages of his spiritual history give meaning to the life that surrounds him. These models always include spatial features, and perhaps it is natural that this spatial adhesion has relationships rooted in the depth of human experiences related to the innate knowledge upon which mankind is built, taking them as rationales for the formulation of concepts of moral, social, psychological and aesthetic values, since the place perceives a direct sensory perception through the human experience of his body, which is the repository of the psychological, mental, emotional and animal powers of the living being, and his knowledge of what surrounds him, starting from the infinitely small to the sprawling in the greatness (Al-Shufi, 2018: p. 1).

From here, memory mechanisms intervene to begin formulating a comprehensive picture of the map of the place in a way that is directed to drawing the coordinates of this place. This necessitates a pure presence capable of doing that, as exile strived hard to undermine this memory. However, the act with which it was associated enabled it to create a group that is aware of itself, its development, its history, and its way of life since ancient times, and that is aware of its relationships with oneself, the other, time, and the world through its deep focus on its place and its essential impact on its formation, as if the community here is built on the place.

From this point of view, the first place in the Palestinians' lives was not only an absolute existential condition or a necessary field for the interactions of the life of the individual and the community, its framing and the formation of its identity, the consequent relationships of existence, interests, interaction and affiliation, and building a collective narrative of history and perceptions of the universe, but it also entailed the nature of the place and its Creator (Glory be to Him), who has provided it with two basic factors that are beyond the power of humans. These factors had the greatest impact on its cultural and political history from the dawn of history until the present day. A distinguished position is to be mentioned here, which no other country in the world has possessed throughout history. The first is geographical, where Palestine is a link between the three continents and multiple civilizations, and the second is religious, as it is the homeland of the three monotheistic religions (Al-Hout, 1991:

p. 481).

In addition to the advantages that these two factors entail in the history of the place and the life of the community that lived in it, and the unique worldly and spiritual importance they gave to it, they also brought to Palestine a geography full of spirit, sacredness, symbols and importance, and to the Palestinians—an indigenous people of the place—their unique anger, because the sacred factor and the genius of the place made it the subject of major and comprehensive disputes and conflicts, in whose contexts mythologies and ideologies clashed, and contradictory wills, interests, strategies, inconsistent symbols, and contradictory concepts of right were held by the conflicting parties over Palestine and their meaning (Farahat, 1998: p. 146).

In line with the previous proposition, this part will review a theoretical summary of two main dimensions that this study dealt with, namely memory and the collective conscience. Memory is an expression that refers to the meaning of storing events, news, experiences, and relationships that a person goes through in the stages of his life, and accumulates in a specific area of the brain, and then, evokes them as images at certain times based on a stimulus that may be an event, a speech, a question, or a shock. Psychological studies, especially psychoanalysis studies, have proven that individual memory does not evoke its past as it is, as images may acquire new colors and new meanings based on the challenges, questions and stimuli of the past. Hence, the historical memory is conjured up for justification, interpretation, and giving a new meaning to the change in the human life. As for the collective historical memory, what applies to the individual memory applies to it, whether in terms of storage and accumulation in the collective consciousness, or in terms of evoking images from that collective store according to stimuli, through which news of the group's experiences and the sad or joyful events that they are going through are disseminated (Kawtharani, 2006: p. 2).

The French sociologist, Maurice Halbwachs, was credited for discovering this concept in Western literature, which received interest to the point where it turned into a cultural and scientific field. This pushed some to talk about the dangers of excessive talking about memory, a reality of the situation in the West. As for the Arab reality, contrary to that of the West, there is a decline in studies on memory, one can even say that there are none available. This is partly due to only allowing the formal memory to show on the one hand, and the neglect that these subjects suffer from, especially on the part of the scientific community, which often submits works that are on demand, and characterized, most of the time, by a functional character or by the belonging of memory to the popular and oral tradition, which doubles its exclusion from the circle of public interest. Among sociologists, and chiefly Halbwachs, the study of memory fulfills several cognitive, methodological and utilitarian requirements that are recorded for a period of time in the local community's disavowal of universal history and their attention to personal history. There is no doubt that recalling memory is considered a preventive process, and a rescue, surrounded by a constellation of rituals

and an aura of glorification, especially in a space in which conflicting memories and even anti-memories proliferate. Through its presence, the past takes different manifestations, as it can be a historical form, a literary form, or lessons and proverbs, or personal narrative (Al-Arabawi, 2014: p. 146).

In this context, it should not be understood that memory is history, due to the different method of their selection. Even though their relationship may be strained and even conflicted, it is certain that they need each other. History questions memory, and the latter narrates its transformation through it. What is remarkable is that both of them are subject to be attacked. History suffers from the danger of falsification, forgery, exploitation, and manipulation for impure purposes. Likewise, memory suffers from the threat of assassination. They both tell the unspoken and reveal the silence (Al-Arabawi, 2014: p. 3).

The collective conscience is what constitutes the framework of both, as it serves as the true and honest guide for expressing what memory and its temporal associations reveal about place and its borders. The collective conscience has its theoretical roots in the literature of functional constructivism. The theoretical rooting of this concept goes back to the sociologist, Emile Durkheim, noted in his book, *The Division of Labor in Society*, where he defines it as the total sum of general beliefs and emotions among most of the elements of society, which in his opinion form a system that has a distinctive character, and this general conscience acquires a tangible reality, as it lasts through time and supports the bonds between generations (Amer, 2009: p. 25).

Durkheim asserts in his theory that the collective conscience lives among individuals and permeates their lives. It gains more strength, influence and independence when a specific type of clear symmetry is achieved among the members of society. This is because it is considered a product of human similarity. Perhaps this is the prevailing position in traditional societies that are characterized by mechanical solidarity, where this conscience dominates the minds and morals of individuals, and provides each individual with two consciences, The first is the one in which the group participates, which is expressed by the idea of society-society lives within us, and this perception is very similar to the prevailing theory today that is expressed by the idea of the internalization of culture (Timasheff, 1967: p. 173).

Society, from Durkheim's point of view, is considered the only trustee of objective knowledge, that is, collective representations constitute the discourse whose mission is to pass knowledge to the members of society, no matter the nature of this discourse, whether it be compulsive or hierarchical. This is what justifies the phenomenon of societal determinism, which Durkheim acknowledges in his interpretation of society as a whole, and its members, as a frame of reference for social individuals to build the truth and understand what is happening in their social circles. It aims to form what Durkheim calls the collective conscience as a form of involvement in basic social perceptions, systems and prevailing values (religion, law, morals) that are independent of individual perceptions. Hence, the collective conscience moves at the psychological level of the

group to the world of ideas circulating among the masses through their representations of these social systems practiced in social reality. The collective conscience in this context is considered the only collective actor in the formation and structure of collective representations, as it is a social practice on the part of society (Al-Mubasheri, 2009: p. 6).

There is no doubt that the collective memory is a product of the collective consciousness, and is even considered its protector, and an honest guide to the cultural act that this memory can record, whether orally or in writing. It must be noted that if this act relegates away from its central framework, it does not rise to the responsibility of culture and the tasks expected of it, thus, threatening the components of this memory and distorting its vessel, and by that, we mean the collective conscience.

Therefore, the inspiration of memory and its connections and overlaps with the collective consciousness is not considered a past trend, but rather a conscious response to the challenge of the future and a rational willingness to adapt its shocks (Shaker, 2006: 2).

9. Findings

The researcher sees, through the previously presented study, that the Palestinian refuses to disintegrate and distort his identity, because the Palestinian reality expresses this inevitability. It is true that it was not easy to recall the place in the Palestinian memory, but it was time that inspired the collective conscious of Palestinians to direct their compass towards the place with its authenticity and purity. It is a memory characterized by nobility and transformation, which formed the mental map of the land with its Palestinian identity, and which uttered with great vigor its oppressors. The occupation was not sufficient to tamper this memory. It remained disobedient to suppress it, resulting in the painting of a collective scene with connotations linked to grains of blazing desert sand and grains of soil drawing almonds, figs, aloes, and grapes: a painting that expressed the identity of this land that eluded strangers. It depicted in its geography the features of the brown peasant and Bedouin, which was inspired by the masculinity of Arabism, and the personality of Islam. From this point, the identity was rooted in the collective consciousness of the Palestinians, and it worked hard to overcome its crisis that afflicted it for more than seven decades.

This analytical approach that links identity and collective consciousness, is unanimously agreed upon by researchers in the sociological field. Researchers also emphasized that there is a close link between identity and collective consciousness, as the concept of identity in philosophy refers to the reality of a thing in terms of distinguishing itself from others, and it is also called the unity of the self. Identity constitutes the container of collective consciousness, including the fixed components such as religion and language, and the non-fixed components such as habits and the ways of thinking. This consciousness is manifested through the society's sense of its identity, especially if it is subjected to aggres-

sion, because if it does not preserve its identity and its cohesion, it is easy for the other to obliterate and eliminate it (Al-Hayat newspaper, 21/12/2010). This reflects the situation of the Palestinians with all their geographical affiliations. The self is manifested in this context as a main dimension that reveals the depth of belonging, which in turn forms the general framework of identity. This Palestinian belonging confused the Zionist agenda over the course of seven and a half decades. Moreover, the Palestinian self was able to recover its identity, remove division from its shoulders, regain its strength, and transcend its alienation and impotence. The intrusive cultural change was not able to change the Palestinian affiliations towards their origins. This confirms, as proven by historical experiences, that national and ethnic identities are able to elude and evade pressures, and that they are both resilient and sustainable on the long run (Haidar, 1999: p. 701).

The process of formulating the collective identity and crystallizing the collective consciousness among the Palestinians was able to strengthen the Arab dimension, especially in the first two decades after Palestine's occupation in 1948, at the expense of other dimensions. This process was natural, taking into consideration the conditions for facing the challenge imposed by the Zionist majority, as it contributed to raising the importance of emphasizing this dimension and charging it with political, cultural and behavioral content. The estrangement between the Zionist majority and the Arab minority that resulted from the geographical and institutional separation, as well as the continued use of the Arabic language as a language of instruction in schools and traditional lifestyles, contributed to preserving the Arab cultural and national identity. The separation led the two parties to feel that they live in different social entities, a situation that won the approval and satisfaction of both sides because of the great differences in social and moral values, lifestyle, culture, and hostility. The absence one from the other's life led to a feeling of relief (Haidar, 1999: p. 706).

In light of the clash between reality and memory, the Palestinian identity, and the Palestinian collective consciousness rises to produce only one interpretation: that the oppressor has no place in the Palestinian Arab consciousness, despite the difficult circumstances to which they were exposed. The traumatic experiences that they were subjected to more than seventy years ago had their implications on the Palestinian's mental structure, as it refined their vision, and produced a personality that carried Palestine firmly in its memory. As it is said, what does not kill you, makes you stronger.

This memory is the identity that has proven its steadfastness to the test of time, and now it does not refer to the past except to the extent that it supports the movement of the present, guards the identity, formulates the dream, and enshrines the future. The Palestinian memory is the space in which the diaspora meets, the corpses heal, the generations gather, and the martyrs return to embrace their loved ones. This Palestinian did not only cling to his soul, he rather raised his situation to the level of existential symbols, and gave them a color of holiness that floats between the earth and the sky, until he feared that it bordered

national narcissism and an inflated collective self. He is the one whom the others assumed that the calamity, displacement, hunger, misery, and asylum would oblige him to be submissive, belittle himself, and suffice to seek concealment, and perhaps sympathy and pity. It seems at first sight that the afflicted is magnified by his calamity, the homeless loses his identity, and the wall of his dignity rises above the ordeals, tragedies, and calamities that befell him, until people are confused about him. There are those who are provoked by this image and see it as a kind of rebellion that is not commensurate with what is expected of the shyness of the exiled, fugitive and homeless, and there are those who look forward to it as a model of precedence, excellence, vitality and steadfastness in the face of adversity. Finally, there are those who are about to envy the Palestinian for his bleeding and the funerals of his martyrs, to the extent that they expose their contradictions: servility, complacency, and inaction. All are paradoxes, but they soon dissipate when the consciousness elicits. The soul of the Palestinian who is abandoned from his homeland was not disappointed because he carried it in his consciousness, memory and dream, and he never accepted that he is the lost paradise, or a refugee in exile. The land is a refugee in his wounds, as Mahmoud Darwish puts it (Saif, 2009: p. 1).

Because these wounds have not yet healed, loyalty and belonging remained parallel to them. On top of all of that, the Palestinian was able to overcome the state of alienation by awakening his collective consciousness and the strength of his memory, which preserved the system of national values that polished his Palestinian identity, and made it transcend the crises that befell him. This identity confirms the depth of belonging and the strength of attachment to the place that the Israeli other has eluded in the Palestinian memory.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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