

The Palestinian American “Transnational Identity”

فلسطينيو الولايات المتحدة (الهوية العابرة للحدود)

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Received: 13/10/2019), Accepted: (2/2/2020)

Abstract

This research aims at studying the complicated nature of the identity crisis suffered by the second generation of Palestinian Americans. This goal has been further explored by referring to different theoretical perspectives and conceptual paradigms to understand and analyze this topic under investigation. Many models and approaches have been used to reflect on the experiences of the Palestinians living in the US as Diasporic communities, facing the hardships of refugeedom and the pain of Return dream to the homeland. Both researchers attempted to rationalize the usage of these western related theories to fit the Palestinian context by matching them with a set of other literary studies, resources and oral interviews with the second generation of the US-born Palestinian Americans. Methodologically, the current research is qualitative, descriptive and of analytical nature, benefiting from primary and secondary data available in various research areas. The two researchers conducted field interviews with the second generation of Palestinian – Americans that revealed that all these factors including occupation, seeking refuge, American democracy, the American press and stereotyping created an identity crisis to those Palestinians. However, that crisis can be solved in the long run if a real political transformation

took place on real ground at the level of the American – Palestinian relations and at the level of the relationship between Arabs and Israelis in the new Middle East.

Keywords: Identity, Diaspora, Palestinian Americans, Second-Generation.

ملخص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة الطبيعة المعقدة لأزمة الهوية التي يعاني منها الجيل الثاني من الأميركيين الفلسطينيين. تم استكشاف هذا الهدف بشكل أكبر من خلال الإشارة إلى وجهات نظر نظرية مختلفة ونماذج مفاهيمية لفهم وتحليل هذا الموضوع قيد البحث، تم استخدام العديد من النماذج والمناهج للتأمل في تجارب الفلسطينيين الذين يعيشون في الولايات المتحدة كمجتمعات الشتات، التي تواجه مصاعب اللجوء وألم الحلم بالعودة إلى الوطن. حاول كلا الباحثين ترشيد استخدام هذه النظريات ذات الصلة الغربية لتتناسب مع السياق الفلسطيني من خلال مضاهاتها مع مجموعة من الدراسات الأدبية الأخرى والموارد والمقابلات الشفوية مع الجيل الثاني من الأميركيين الفلسطينيين المولودين في الولايات المتحدة. من الناحية المنهجية، يكون البحث الحالي نوعياً وصفيًا وذو طبيعة تحليلية، مستفيداً من البيانات الأولية والثانوية المتوفرة في مختلف مجالات البحث. لقد أجرى الباحثان مقابلات ميدانية مع الجيل الثاني من الفلسطينيين الأميركيين، والتي كشفت أن جميع العوامل بما في ذلك الاحتلال، والبحث عن ملجأ، والديمقراطية الأمريكية، والصحافة الأمريكية، والقوالب النمطية، خلقت أزمة هوية لهؤلاء الفلسطينيين. ومع ذلك، يمكن حل هذه الأزمة على المدى الطويل إذا حدث تحول سياسي حقيقي على أرض الواقع على مستوى العلاقات الأمريكية - الفلسطينية وعلى مستوى العلاقة بين العرب والإسرائيليين في الشرق الأوسط الجديد.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الهوية، الشتات، الفلسطينيون الامريكان، الجيل الثاني.

Introduction

For centuries, Palestinians have experienced an identity crisis, not only in how they view themselves but also in how others view them Identity is the consciousness of the human being, his sense of self and his belonging to a national or religious human group, community, nation, sector, or group within the framework of general human belonging “It is our knowledge of what, where and where we come from and where we

go, and what we want for ourselves and others, and our position in the map of relations and contradictions and existing conflicts”⁽¹⁾.

Identity is a set of cultural features, common to all who belong, which allows people to know and characterize themselves as members of nations and groups. "Identity may develop with openness to others. It may shrink, be constricted, limited or spread, but it is undoubtedly enriched by people's experiences, sufferings, victories, and hopes. This issue is negatively and positively affected by the relationship with the other"⁽²⁾. Identity does not consist only of natural heritage and belonging but also consists of the continuous process of creation

The more one's ego identity is unambiguous, the more one can engage in an equal dialogue with the other on the cultural level. If the identity is problematic, it will be suspended, delayed or swaying, according to Adonis, who says that he cannot give it a description: Citizenship, nationality, language, creativity, and excellence, individually or collectively.

In his book “Palestinian Identity: Formation of Contemporary National Consciousness, Khalidi asserted that “The roots of Palestinian identity preceded the emergence of the Palestinian public consciousness.” Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the people of Palestine began to imagine themselves as a distinctive political unit. In 1908 Naguib Azouri⁽³⁾ proposed the idea of expanding the Sanjak of Jerusalem to include northern Palestine “because that is necessary for the development of the land of Palestine, as he put it”⁽⁴⁾. Al-Khalidi built his argument for a Palestinian identity on the theory of “Imagined

(1) Barakat, Halim- Arab society in the twentieth century, a former source, p. 62

(2) Jabri, Muhammad Abed - Globalization and Cultural Identity, a previous source, p. 298

(3) Negib Azoury, “Program of the League of the Arab Fatherland”, 1905, reprinted in Sylvia Haim’s Arab Nationalism: An Anthology, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1962): 81.

(4) Essam Nassar, "Rashid Khalidi, The Palestinian Identity: Formation of Contemporary National Consciousness, "Palestinian Politics Magazine, Volume 4, No. 18 (1998): p. 185.

was elected President of the Society. It was followed by Fouad Shatara, who was a treasurer”⁽¹⁾.

In the United States, there are between 150,000 and 250,000 people of Palestinian origin, Palestinian Arabs account for 10 percent of the Arab-American community while Palestinian Jews account for less than 4 percent of the American Jewish community. There are no reliable figures for the migration or census of Palestinian Americans because the US Immigration and Naturalization Service rarely recognized “Palestinian” as a nationality. In the 1980 census, only 21,288 people were counted as Palestinians. The Palestinian Statistical Abstract of 1983 lists 108,045 Palestinians living in the United States, but some speculate numbers in the range of 200,000-400,000. The last figure may be fairly high, but the 200,000 range seems reasonable. Whatever the exact figure, it is very small compared to other ethnic minorities. Little is known politically. A survey of the “Palestinian community in the United States indicates that while first-generation Palestinian immigrants tend to make a rapid adjustment in American society, they remain, to an extraordinary degree, among immigrant communities, very aware of and well aware of the economic conditions in their home country. More surprisingly, the second-generation of Palestinians born in the United States also shows a high degree of political awareness and ethnic pride”⁽²⁾.

It appears that the extent of political acculturation in this country affects awareness. America often demands immigrants to address American domestic affairs more than its native citizens. Unlike US-born Americans, immigrants must avoid criticism of any aspect of the “American system or risk the idea of incompetence, risk or questioning their allegiance. Unlike many immigrants from other nationalities, most

(1) From a letter Ali al-Judeh sent to fi listtin newsthesis about the association and its goals, activities, and elections that made him president. felistin newsthesis, 21 October 1924, p.4

(2) Census of Population: Supplementary Report: Encyclopaedia of the Population by State: 1980 (Washington: US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1983), 21.

Palestinians could not hide their political identity to become "Americans" in this sense⁽¹⁾.

Numerous Palestinians tend to stay in the United States, not as a political choice, but simply because there is nowhere else to go. For these Palestinians, the transition to America is negative because there is no alternative or better alternative. Other refugees, such as Vietnamese, Cuban, the former Soviet Union, and other countries, have fled to the United States due to civil wars or escape from the oppression of foreign occupation. They have shown little interest in the United States' relationship to their countries of origin. However, because Palestinian lands are under foreign occupation, and because the Palestinians refuse to live under this occupation, many feel that the United States is their only choice. The sense of something that has yet to come (the establishment of an independent Palestinian state) perpetuates the vision of the exile country as a temporary foreign homeland, thus distinguishing them from other immigrant Americans and even other Arab citizens.

"The second-generation of immigrants refer to children born to parents or children born abroad but brought to the host country before adolescence"⁽²⁾. However, "the normative definitions of the first and second-generations do not adequately reflect the complexities of the living experiences of some immigrants"⁽³⁾. Palestinian Americans are one such group. For example, the second-generation of Palestinians associated with the Nakba is the third generation born outside their homeland. However, the term "second-generation" is the term used in this study to refer to children

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- (1) Palestinian Statistical Abstract for 1983 (Damascus: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistic Ts, 1984), cited in Laurie A. Brand, *Palestinians in the Arab World: Institution Building and the Search for State* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 9.
 - (2) Portes Alejandro, Rumbaut Rubén G. *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second-Generation*. University of California Press; 2001. P.23.
 - (3) Mason, V. (2007). Children of the "Idea of Palestine": Negotiating Identity, Belonging and Home in the Palestinian Diaspora, *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 28(3), 271-285.

Palestinians and Ernest Gellner's theory

Ernest Gellner considers that “national identity is a way of life as a completely modern marvel, as a result of social development and creation” ideological, unexpected, and simulated. Gellner considers industrialization and related improvements in urbanization as essential elements in the formation of nationalism. The modern state must be the one that needs a modern mechanical workforce and a modern military force by a nation-state, where the framework of focused education encourages the formation of a unified collective culture.

Developed and focused Eventually, “the culture of “high”, these changes lead to a weakening of classical relations between the general public, and the creation of new social relations in the light of the national⁽¹⁾ According to Gellner, “It is nationalism that generates nations and not the other way around, and insists that nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-awareness: they invent states where they do not exist”⁽²⁾.

In the Palestinian case, there is no doubt that modernization - the spread of the modern educational system due to the Ottoman changes - has played a pivotal role in the development of nationalism in the Arab world. However, Gellner's theoretical framework seems to be very mechanical. It excludes human activity.

Gellner's approach has nothing to do with the Palestinian cause because the Palestinian state does not yet exist As the Palestinian state does not yet exist, Gellner would argue that nationalism is needed. Language is a part of the culture and maybe a factor in the rise of separate nationalism. However, a common written language may prove to be unfavorable to the idea of separate Palestinian nationalism. Arabic is not, in fact, a unique language for Palestinians. It is used in the entire Arab world emphasizing a more comprehensive Arab identity, not just Palestinian identity.

(1) Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), p55-56.

(2) IBIN.

Sykes-Picot agreement. “The Middle East was a single cultural union, but it formed various political, social and cultural societies that gradually gained their own lives, and these colonial boundaries contributed to the formation of national identities that were particularly relevant to Palestinian identity”

The rapid and successive major challenges throughout the period from the beginning of World War I to the British Mandate in Palestine in 1922 impacted the sense of political and national belonging for most political intellectuals and Palestinian civilians. The end result was a close and growing identification with Palestine. The Arab citizens began to “imagine”, as Benedict and Anderson put it, that they were part of a single political society with clear borders and sovereign rights. However, this identification was not exclusive because religion and local loyalties remained extremely important and continued to allow the Arabs in Palestine to see themselves as part of other larger and smaller societies at the same time. This identity certainly did not include all sectors or classes among the population, but it formed a new kind of identity, was not this type, simply, exists a generation or two ago, a new and limited shadow spread before the First World War.

After the First World War, the Arab nationalists and Palestinians opposed the separation of Palestine from the new Arab Republic of Syria. They adopted the identity and political agenda of southern Syria as a means of combating the Zionist threat, which denies their existence by raising the slogan of the Zionist propaganda known as “a land without a people for a people without a land”⁽¹⁾.

Therefore, the natural consequence of the issue of the limits established by Western colonialism in the region is that the new mapping has also transformed the new “imagined society” into a clear and tangible reality. The maps of Palestine within its mandatory borders are of great importance because they preserve the space lost in 1948.

(1) Khalidi, Rashid. *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness*. Columbia University Press, 1997 (P162-167).

The Palestinians and the Anthony Smith Model

Anthony Smith accepted “invent nationality as an ideological development, He defends the idea that there is a material ethnic core of modern states”¹(.

Smith emphasizes that “modern political nationalism cannot be understood without regard to these ethnic relations and previous memories, i.e., the collective memory, at one time, of these ethnic groups and identities that existed before”²(.

Smith's approach is especially useful for analyzing the rise of Arab nationalism and clarifying the Arab part of the various regional nationalities in the Arab world. Unlike the European situation, the cultural life of the last Arab lands has not disappeared under the influence of modernization. It has undergone the process of modification, formation, and differentiation to form the modern Arab national culture. However, these components do not serve to clarify the Palestinian identity as a separate nationality from Arab nationalism because it does not distinguish between Palestinians and Arabs. Smith analyzes that which distinguishes the Palestinians.

“Development of a specific identity as a result of a dispute between two groups in one geographical area”⁽³⁾. “The frequency, intensity, and duration of wars between rival governments is in itself an important factor in the formation of ethnic sentiment among the affected population, Smith says”⁽⁴⁾. The confrontation with the “other” always leads to raising the value of “self”; in this case, an emergent distinctive Palestinian identity.

(1) Anthony D. Smith, *The Problem of National Identity: Ancient Medieval and Modern? »In Myths and, by Memories of the Nation* (Oxford University of Oxford Press,1999), P102-105.

(2) IBID

(3) «Nation and Ethnoscape», in *(Myths and Memories of the Nation*, P149).

(4) Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford, UK: B. Blackwell, 1987) P38.

“The imagined society, in Andersen's view, transcends the borders of the state, yet the Zionist power of aggression, perhaps unwittingly, recognized the Palestinians as a different society from other Arab citizens in the Arab states. The Palestinian struggle was manifested by the longing for a Palestinian national state which was the primary goal for Palestinian nationalism after the First World War under the slogan Resistance to the Zionist threat.

Halbwachs and the Palestinians space memory

No identity without memory is the basis of all national identities. It promotes a sense of interdependence across time and space by pretending the remembering, and then, what is remembered is characterized as “the expected identity”. Each group embraces the memory of its past and in this way is distinguished by something different from other groups. As Maurice Halbwachs explained, Collective memory is a social construction and manifests itself in a particular social context, and in this capacity, is arranged as he calls “social structures of memory”. While people are not willing to think about the past, they do not remember the past as separate individuals; rather, the individual acts as an element in a group.

The memory function is the association of any group. “Memory is a channel that passes through options that either forget or remember and then send to the new generation; traditions are therefore modified as a modified group. Each community or social group builds a collective memory of its past and challenges the memory of an association of different groups. The social capacity of collective memory is to re-create the past and legitimize the present and the future”⁽¹⁾.

This is also related to what Halbwachs offers about collective memory. He believes, ”There must be a social group to talk legitimately about collective memory. Another aspect of the theory is connected to Palestinians in the diaspora who did not know Palestine as a place or a

(1) Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980) 1-49.

homeland. Edward Said says this way: “Everything with the Palestinians that struggles to maintain its identity on at least two levels: first, as a Palestinian concerning the historic clash with Zionism and the rapid loss of the homeland. Secondly, as a Palestinian in the existential sense of daily life, and dealing with the pressures he faces in the country of residence”. The Palestinian does not have a state like Palestine, even if he believes that there is something that does not belong to it, the state in which he currently lives. “In Maurice Halbwach's view, space “gives us a sense of non-change over time and gives us the ability to find the past in the present”⁽¹⁾; it is the space that is somehow connected to collective memory.

Translational Identity development of Palestinian Americans second-generation:

Migrants and immigrants look to the country where they settled as their home, but what is the idea of “homeland” for the second-generation Palestinian Americans? Those born in the diaspora have little or no knowledge of their country of origin. They did not suffer directly as the suffering of the Palestinians inside their homeland? As noted by Mourid Barghouthi: “Until now we know little about our history ... The occupation has created generations of Palestinians who are strangers to Palestine, generations born and living in exile, and they are ignorant of their homeland and the homeland of their fathers and forefathers ... These generations were ruled by an invisible lover”⁽²⁾.

In a study entitled (The American Experience: Palestinians in the United States), Kathleen Christison recalls that “The second-generation of Palestinian Americans have a strong sense of belonging to their home country, be that as it may, they have a feeling that the United States is the main home in which they have lived. Previous research with Palestinian youth has uncovered conflict in the concept of home. The homeland is

(1) Edward W. The question of Palestine, Times Books, New York, 1979 (chapter 3).

(2) Barghouti, M. (1998). Songs for a Country No longer known. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXVII (2), 60-61. Web Page
<http://jps.ucpress.edu/content/27/2/59.abstract>.

characterized as the physical space and the emblematic impression of the spot to which the individual has a place. This worldwide recognition is reflected in their reactions to inquiries concerning the nation and the place they believe they belong to.”⁽¹⁾ Kathleen Christison worked as a political analyst for the CIA from 1964 to 1979.

Traditionally, the children of US-born immigrants usually reject their parents' origins in an attempt to be fully American. However, this does not apply fully to young Palestinians. There are exceptions to this rule: some cannot deal with the political stigma of identifying as Palestinian. This leads some young people to put their Palestinian consciousness in the background as an attempt to conceal their ethnic identity believing that this will lead them to success in working and integrating into American society. But others cannot bear the burden of balancing the identity of Americans and Palestinians. Often, the majority of the second-generation can easily deal with their dual identities. The first is the growing ethnic awareness of American society as a result of ethnic diversity throughout the country, and the second is the increasing prominence of the Palestinian struggle as a political and national issue at the international level.

The process of balancing two identities was not difficult for the families of Palestinian immigrants. Most parents do not make an effort or force to feed the Palestinian culture to their children but allow them to make their own choices. Especially those who marry Americans or non-Arabs, but even when both parents are Palestinians, there seems to be a realization that children grow up in a non-Palestinian culture and must adapt to it even if they maintain Palestinian consciousness.

The confusion between Palestinians, Arabs, and Muslims in American popular culture stem, in part, from how popular culture has historically reduced the enormous diversity inherent.

(1) Christison, Kathleen, *The American Experience: Palestinians in the US*, Summer, 1989, Vol. 18 No. 4, (pp. 18-36) DOI: 10.2307 / 2537495.

The deliberate combination of many American and Israeli policies "ostensibly based on the shared values and principles of democracy, the rule of law and strategic interests, among others, compared to Arabs and Muslims, reinforces these stereotypes"⁽¹⁾. The Palestinian identity indicates that this integration indicates that for many in the United States, the distinction between Palestinians as a distinct nationality and Arabs and Muslims, in general, is neither easy nor even necessary - especially in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict". In the absence of accurate information in popular culture and social and official institutions such as schools, this has been held and has been an obstacle to the ability of many Americans to see Palestinians as indigenous people who were expelled from their historic homeland through illegal occupation"⁽²⁾.

It is important to note that there is a general misunderstanding in the United States of terms such as "Arab", "Muslim", "Arab Americans" and "Arab-Muslim Americans." Such terms are often used interchangeably and reflect an inaccurate but common perception among many Americans that Arab Americans - regardless of ethnicity or religious affiliation, are the same. It is difficult to speak of the Palestinians without mentioning the implicit or explicit relationship that binds them to Arabs and Muslims. Because of the negative stereotypes associated with these two groups, Palestinians often suffer from bilateral duality. Palestinians are associated implicitly with acts of violence committed by Arabs or Muslims.

On the practical level, many Americans are confused about whether Muslim is a religion or a race". The average American is nurtured by constant and sustained feeds from Hollywood stereotypes, which often depict Palestinians, Arabs, and Muslims as one. After all, there are two versions: Arabs and Islam and the version created by the Hollywood

(1) Smith, LC. & Haddad, L. (2002). How potent economic growth in reducing under nutrition? What are the pathways of impact? New cross country evidence. *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 51, 55

(2) UN Human Rights Council Report:
https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/A.66.53.Add.1_en.doc

group, Shaheen noted⁽¹⁾; Unfortunately, the disdain, fear, and misunderstandings of many Americans for Palestinians, Arabs, and Islam do not stem from personal contact and direct experience with these individuals, but from their portrayal of Hollywood, which translates into punishing a process suffered by Arab Americans (Christians and Muslims). (For example, the Iranian hostage crisis in 1979, the bombing of the US naval barracks in Beirut in 1983, the Gulf War in 1990, and the attempted bombing of the World Trade Center 1993, the 1995 bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City, the September 11, 2001 attack on the World Trade Center and other sites in the United States), “Many cases of racial profiling, workplace discrimination and hate crimes against Arab and Muslim Americans, or those who resemble Arabs or Muslims, have been reported. These practices are also common within American society, even in times of relative calm, but increase dramatically during times of crisis, reflecting the underlying fear, misunderstanding, and uncertainty that characterize the relationship between Arabs and American Muslims elsewhere in the United States”⁽²⁾.

Historically, “one of the consequences of stereotypes has been to adopt public opinion to allow the government greater freedom to apply discriminatory policies that violate US civil liberties”⁽³⁾. Many ethnic groups have suffered such practices, such as African and Native Americans, Latinos, and Asians.

In the case of the Palestinians and other Arab and Muslim Americans, “the adoption of legislation that the United States National in 2001, and that the people on racial profiling and the use of secret evidence with serious threats to public freedoms and civil rights”⁽⁴⁾.

(1) Shaheen, JG. (2008). *Guilty: Hollywood's Verdict on Arabs After 9/11*. Northampton: Olive Branch Press. P. 21

(2) Ibin Smith, LC. & Haddad, L. (2002).

(3) American Muslim Council. (1993). *American attitudes towards Islam: A nationwide poll*. Conduced by the John Zogby Group International, Inc. Washington, DC: American Muslim Council.

(4) Salaita, Steven. (2005). Ethnic identity and imperative patriotism: Arab Americans before and after 9/11. *Image Literature* 32 (2), 146-168.

Thus, the cumulative effect of such misleading information and stereotypes is often translated into real political and social consequences. As Haddad realized early on, this makes Arab-American Muslims feel that they are in a “theme park” in which they have to test new levels of defamation while living in an increasingly hostile environment for their ethnic origins and religious beliefs.

Smith points out, “that some people know the truth about the Arab world, Islam and Muslims”⁽¹⁾. Is being distorted for the political benefit of those in political positions. “However, such acts and generalizations are regularly conducted by senior government officials and opinion-makers and others”. Silberstein emphasizes that the discourse of occupation has focused in the Middle East on Palestine, the symbol of grievance and Western hegemony over some, to terrorize others, these kind of comments contribute to create an atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion between Arab-American Muslims and the large American society and lead to economic policies Political and social issues Its impact on all concerned. This is especially true for the Palestinians, charities, and organizations that have been established to assist them in everything from medical relief to food distribution.

The media are complicating matters by promoting “stereotypes of Islam and Arabs and equating them with extremism and terrorism. “The negative image of the Arab world and Islam has been distorted more by these Western commentators who have portrayed Islam in recent years as a triple threat: a political, cultural and demographic threat”⁽²⁾. For example, in the days, months, and years following the tragic events of September 11, “the situation was shaken by the fear and fear felt by many in Arab-Muslim American society. In particular, Israel benefited from the fear generated by many in the United States towards Arabs and Muslims, using September 11 as a means of strengthening relations with

(1) Haddad, YY. (2002). Muslim minorities in the West: Visible and invisible. YY Haddad & JI Smith (Eds.). Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

(2) Khan, MAM. (1998). Muslim and identity politics in America. In YY Haddad & JL Esposito (Eds.), Muslims on the Americanization path? Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press.

the United States and as justification for more harsh treatment of Palestinians”⁽¹⁾.

Stereotyping Palestinians

To understand how stereotypes influence people, you should understand the Palestinian people and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It is useful to have a sense of history in search of the US relationship with the Palestinians.

The term “stereotype” was first used by Walter Lippmann⁽²⁾ to refer to beliefs about ethnic groups, and Miller⁽³⁾. Stereotypes have been defined as generalizations about social groups that are strictly adhered to, derived illegally, and negatively. He also described stereotypes as ‘images in our heads,’ which constituted ‘a false representation that was acquired other than the direct experience of reality that they claim to represent’ Despite Leibman's research, “what has been demonstrated recently is that most stereotypes of known groups in society are of low value. In fact, the field of social psychology, in particular, has surveyed the elucidation of stereotypes, examined their impact on social cognition and behavior, and considered the motivational rules of bias”⁽⁴⁾. However, stereotyping is the result of communicative processes (such as public discourse, popular culture, and curriculum) that play a central role in acquiring stereotypes. Knowledge of cultural stereotypes is shared by people regardless of the cultural level of the individual.

Although typical research from the 1920s to the 1940s did not include Palestinians or even Arabs or Muslims, their images can nevertheless be drawn from news and films from that time. For example,

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- (1) Earsheimer, JJ. Walt, SM. & Rogers, D. Spotswood Collection. (2007). *The Israel lobby and US foreign policy*.
 - (2) Earsheimer, JJ. Walt, SM. & Rogers, D. Spotswood Collection. (2007). *The Israel lobby and US foreign policy*.
 - (3) Miller, A. (1982). *In the eye of the beholder: contemporary issues in stereotyping*. Westport: Praeger, P.3.
 - (4) Lippmann, Walter. "Public Opinion". Google Books. Link to resource. (accessed January 14, 2018).

the stereotype of Arab / Muslim during the early part of the 20th century was exemplified by Rudolph Valentino as featured in the film, *Sheikh* (1921). “These individuals were seen as ‘exotic deserters’, ‘brutal savages’ and ‘rogue elders’ to harm the defeated Western hero and seduce the fair Western heroine”⁽¹⁾. This image remained in the heads of the community as it was during the 1920s and 1930s, and formed the image of a whole generation of Arabs and Muslims. As Shaheen revealed, the Arab is not safe, and unlike the stereotypes of some ethnic groups, this picture has not been eliminated or replaced. Instead, they have been changed - with varying modifications - to be recycled and recreated in countless other movies. As one film producer pointed out, the image of the Arabs is a “stereotype ready” for exploitation. Thus, “Arab and Islamic stereotypes continue to serve a dual purpose. Easily recognizable by viewers with little or no effort, files are ready and suitable for screenwriters and producers who need fast stuffing”⁽²⁾.

The stereotype is thus defined as “a representation of a culture of learning that people in that culture are inferior in nature”⁽³⁾. This definition better reflects the stereotypes Palestinians (as well as Arabs and Muslims) face in the United States and reflects an idea of “reconsideration”⁽⁴⁾. “Individuals possess volatile characteristics (such as terrorists, fundamentalists, oppressors, greedy and violent) and that nothing can be done on their part to change this condition”⁽⁵⁾. The repercussions of such mistaken outcomes can be destructive to entities and groups. For example, although some Palestinians used violence to

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- (1) Devine, PG. (1989). Stereotypes and Prejudice: Their Automatic and Controlled Components. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 56, 5-18.
 - (2) Orfalea, G. (1988). *Before the flames: A quest for the history of Arab Americans*, Austin: University of Texas Press.
 - (3) Greenberg, BS. & Brand, JE. (1994). Minorities and the mass media: 1970s to 1990s. In J. Bryant & D. Zillman (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research* (pp. 273-314). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
 - (4) Alatom, BE. (1997). *Orientalist stereotyping in modern American popular culture*. Unpublished doctor dissertation, The University of Texas, Arlington. P. 24.
 - (5) Allport, GW. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Cambridge, Mass: Addison Wesley. P.9.

resist the Israeli occupation, the fact is that the vast majority of Palestinians use nonviolence regularly to assert their desire to be free. Similarly, while it is true that very few Arabs are extremely rich and obtain their revenue from petroleum, most of the people in the Arab world are poor and lack essential needs, such as access to clean water.

Given the nature of the stereotypical research of the early 20th century and the Arab and Muslim Americans at that time, it is not surprising that this segment of society is ignored. Immigration officials at that time had just begun to recognize the Arabs as coming from different countries”. What is surprising is that, despite the growing number of Arabs and Muslims in the United States, and despite the intensification of research on all aspects of human interaction and the tragedy of September 11, this group is still relatively excluded from such research?”⁽¹⁾.

Stereotyping as a psychological tool

While the effects stereotypes have on individuals are well documented, e.g. low self-esteem, self-concept, self-perception, and academic issues. Studies on this subject have expanded over the past few decades to include not only concern with the achievement of African American students but with greater recognition of groups of another ethnicity in the United States. Some populations, such as the Palestinians, are still not enough understood and unfortunately, Palestinian students were excluded from such research, because, unlike many other minorities, they are not seen as a group with historical ties with the United States. This is not surprising given that popular culture has consistently portrayed this segment of society as foreign. “In research studies, which tend to focus on adaptation issues, Palestinian American students are always treated as foreign students”⁽²⁾. This marginalization is

(1) J. (1998). The politics of exclusion. *Civil Rights Journal*, 3 (1), 42-48.

(2) Hewstone, M. & Brown, RJ (1986). Contact is not enough: An intergroup perspective on the contact hypothesis. In M. Hewstone, R. J. Brown (Eds.). *Contact and conflict in intergroup discrimination*. (pp. 1-44). Oxford, England: Blackwell.

surprising because the vast majority of these children were born in the United States. Moreover, “the Palestinian community is part of one of the ethnic and religious groups, the fastest growing in major urban areas where the distinctive patterns of migration have produced a variety of internally diverse attitudes and behaviors vary by birth, social class, the nature of culture's life”⁽¹⁾.

What is more concerning about the lack of research on the Palestinians is that the voices of these individuals are still unknown at a time when historically disadvantaged groups are demanding more accurate representation and inclusion of their culture and mission in society, in American culture, and curricula. Even multicultural education, which raised the voices of many marginal groups, has not adequately addressed the needs of this growing segment of students.

“This is ridiculous because although Americans regard Palestinians as members of the community, they are part of an "invisible" minority, but they are highly visible from a negative perspective in popular culture”⁽²⁾. Samhan observes, Arab identity in the United States “has historically been largely invisible and obscurely racist, located between the cracks of the white / non-white duo and not officially recognized as an ethnic identity”⁽³⁾ This negative vision has proved to be extremely damaging to the ability of many Americans to communicate with the Palestinians although Palestinian Americans are considered being the most racially assimilated in the United States (for example, they lose their ability to read, in their traditional Arabic language - after one generation only).

(1) Zogby, J. (1998). The politics of exclusion. *Civil Rights Journal*, 3 (1), 42-48.

(2) Naber, N. (2000). Ambiguous insiders: An investigation of Arab American invisibility. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 23 (1), 37-61.

(3) Samhan, Helen Atab, (1999), "Not only quite white: race classificat, and the Arab-American experience" *Arabs in America Building a new Future*, Ed. Michael W.Suleiman. Philadelphia: Temple UP, 114.

Integration or alienation

The idea of integration is an internal concept, an exceptional individual process, and it is difficult to make predictions about Palestinian-American change according to American culture. There is no relationship between Palestinian nationalism and the level of integration. The best Palestinian patriots are by no means less integrated into American life; the integration is more integrated or less national. Some families suffer from a basic lack of a strong sense of being Palestinian, lack of communication in Arabic at home, the ability to speak English and American dialectics, marriage from non-Arabs, and generally communicate with others as a coordinator t data on the merger, but despite all this, it is not they have to prove the absence of a Palestinian identity of the type of what they have.

“First and second-generation Palestinians adapt to English and succeed in engaging in American political and educational systems, but many Palestinians immigrants have fought Islamophobia in American society, especially after the events of September 11, 2001, in part because of the large American support for pro-Israel organizations within the United States, and thus groups such as the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee were created”⁽¹⁾.

Moreover, the state of alienation between Palestinian Americans is uncommon, yet it is reasonable to live in this nation while never becoming part of it. Social distance or cultural alienation is more common with Palestinian women. For example, in light of Arab social constraints, women are often reserved for integration with American culture. In her study on Palestinian women in the United States, Lewis Cainkar concluded that as women are the main defenders of Palestinian culture, they deliberately isolate the lifestyle and traditional American standards.

(1) Cainkar, L. *Palestinian women in the United States: Coping with tradition, change, and alienation*, 1989.

The theory of alienation can also be applied to the elderly, who have moved to the United States with their older children. “As these elderly people usually live with nuclear families, and never learn English, they do not work and rely on the family in their lives and mingle only with the family or members of the families of Palestinians around them”⁽¹⁾.

Persistence of stereotypes

“Allport was aware of one process that could contribute to the persistence of stereotypes. He used the term”⁽²⁾ re-foundation” to describe the strong tendency of people to evaluate the behavior shown by the exceptions in the group. It was also suggested that individuals should be judged to be members of an atypical and non-representative group that provided an effective strategy for maintaining preconceived beliefs.

Since then, other researchers have confirmed their findings, such as Schaller and others⁽³⁾. This idea of re-framing gives more insight into why some stereotypes about Palestinians (Arabs and Muslims) persist despite efforts to change them. Attempts to snoop on such perceptions by providing Americans with little chance of interacting with Palestinians and other Arabs / Muslims have not been successful. Zogby suggests⁽⁴⁾ that there is a fundamental shift in the environment in which such stereotypes are created, nurtured, and sustained (i.e., in popular culture and curriculum of LED anchored). Increased communication between these different groups may help overcome these effects, although it may not be enough.

Two private studies offer insights into what appears to be images of stereotypes about specific groups (such as African Americans, Jews,

(1) Christison, Kathleen. The American Experience: Palestinians in the US This content downloaded.

(2) Allport, GW (1954). The nature of prejudice. Reading: Massachusetts. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

(3) Bodenhausen, GV. & Wyer, RS. (1985). Effects of Stereotypes on Decision Making and Information-Processing Strategies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 48(2), 267-282. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.48.2.267>.

(4) John Zogby. Public Opinion Quarterly, Volume 74, Issue 3, 1 January 2010, Pages 570-584.

Palestinians, and Muslims) who continue to resist change over time. According to Schaller and Conway, some groups are more likely to be talked about than others. While there are many reasons why these groups are more prominent in dialogues on the subject (eg, visual appearance, dress, religious differences, community size), “it has been decided that the way people talk about others has a causal effect on stereotypes. That is, the more features are discussed, the more likely they are to be stereotyped”⁽¹⁾. In addition, these traits are likely to become more pluralistic, and remain, part of the stereotypes common to ethnic groups.

Thus, the features identified are likely to remain stereotyped for a long time, especially if the features are part of a continuous conversation about a particular group. Because Palestinians and their images have been an integral part of Hollywood and popular culture for decades, it is logical that such stereotypes remain more vivid than the stereotypes of other groups of lesser interest.

For example, “one of the most common stereotypes of Palestinians that have existed over the last 60 years in American films is the image of the terrorist”⁽²⁾. This stereotype has been anchored in cinema, the media, and popular culture to the extent that many Americans are convinced that the stereotype is accurate.

“The keffiyeh is the most visible manifestation of this stereotype. While many Americans may accept stereotypes that the scarf is the embodiment of Palestinian terrorism (just as symbolized by the swastika of the Nazi and genocide bridles of consciousness), the fact that most

(1) Schaller, M. & Conway, LG III. (2001). From cognition to culture: The origins of stereotypes that really matter. In GB Moskowitz (Ed.), *Cognitive social psychology: The Princeton Symposium on the Legacy and Future of Social Cognition* (pp. 163-176). Mahwah, NJ, US: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

(2) Shaheen, JG. (2000). 'Hollywood's Muslim Arabs.' *The Muslim World* 90.1-2, 22-43.

Palestinians consider the keffiyeh a piece of cultural and national folklore, as worn by a few of them as clothing daily"⁽¹⁾.

How the stereotype users talk about individuals, they know little about the Palestinians or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this shows that the more stereotypes, the more likely they are to remain passive.

Given the lack of inclusion of Palestinians in stereotyped research, it is necessary to look elsewhere for evidence of such stereotypes. It was recognized early on that film was the most powerful tool to shape people's understanding of others. In the aftermath of the First World War and the lessons learned from the production of war propaganda, for example, the president of Paramount Pictures claimed that 'as a means of propaganda, as a conduit for the transfer of thought and opinion, the film is unmatched in terms of impact as a form of communication".

Over the years, three stages of Palestinian / Arab / Islamic stereotypes have developed in the film. While each stage is distinct in many ways, the three share many basic characteristics. Stereotypes during the first stage did not include a clear signal to the Palestinians. Instead, the male and Muslim stereotypes that emerged from Hollywood in the early 20th century were simply "primitive people living in shantytowns or tents, whose task was to arrest the blondes of their leaders"⁽²⁾.

Women have been portrayed as 'dancers' 'outside the veil ' or 'naked harems'. This was the kind of film produced by Hollywood at the time. Although it is worth recognizing that Hollywood did not necessarily create these holograms species, but they were inherited from the British and French colonial literature, but the American cinema, however, is responsible for making these stereotypes more widely known in American culture and world alike.

(1) Shaheen, J. (1988, November 10). The media image of Arabs. Newsweek, 126, 48-52.

(2) Ibid, Shaheen (2000).

The second phase of stereotypes was formed after the Arab-Israeli war of 1948. “While many stereotypes were included from the first stage, they also developed their own characteristics. Arabs and Muslims - especially Palestinians - have been seen as terrorists to kill Americans, Europeans, Israelis, and even other Arabs”⁽¹⁾. The Arab-Israeli war of 1967 contributed to the spread of this genre in films produced to this day.

Part of the challenge of understanding how stereotypes of Palestinians and/or Arabs / Muslims affect many Americans is linked to research conducted on the apparent influence of media on social beliefs. However, “while this is a more popular area of psychological study, few studies have examined the impact of the media on racist stereotypes, and even less on their impact on cultural, religious and political stereotypes”⁽²⁾. Given the three main ways in which the media may influence stereotypes, they provide some insight into the impact of these methods on the Palestinians. For example, minorities portrayed on US television and other American media are often under-represented with census data (except for Palestinians where the reverse is true) and are presented in selective situations only, often portrayed in stereotyped and negative ways. “Although it is difficult to determine the real consequences of the stereotypical roles of minorities in the media - it is impossible to examine these effects in isolation from the stereotypical effects of stereotypes - negative stereotypes (including gender, religion, ethnicity, and racism) have been shown in the media Act Negative by young viewers towards the group, as positive images lead to more positive views”⁽³⁾.

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- (1) Smith, LC. & Haddad, L. (2002). How potential is economic growth in decreasing under structure? What are the pathways of impact? New cross-country evidence. *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 51, 55 -76.
 - (2) Beasley, B. & Standley, TC. (2002). Shirts vs. skins: Clothing as an indicator of gender role stereotyping in video games. *Mass Communication & Society*, 5 (3), 279-293.
 - (3) Mullen, PE. & Pathé, M. & Purcell, R. *Stalkers and their Victims*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

political transformation took place on the real ground at the level of the American – Palestinian peace process and the level of the relationship between Arabs and Israelis in the new Middle East.

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