

# **Palestinian Nationalism in One Century**

**As'ad Ghanem – University of Haifa**

## Nationalism in the Modern Era

- Understanding Relations Between States
  - Understanding Inter-State Politics
  - Regional Politics
  - International Relations
- The Significance of Nationalism in the Post Cold War Era

- Nationalism as consciousness
- Changeable Nature of Nationalism due to Internal and External Factors
- Types of Nationalism – Ethnic Vs. Territorial
- Palestinian Nationalism as a reflection to Internal vs External Factors
- Napoleon, Ibrahim Basha invasions in the 19th century, and British Mandate; Zionism; Arab Nationalism\ Syrian in the 20th century

The meetings\clashes with three powers:

1- Zionism and Israel .

2- Arab Nationalism and local national movements

3 – The Meeting\clash with the British Mandate and the West in General

Basic components of Palestinian nationalism - What do we mean by “We are the Palestinians”?

- Territory

-Call for Self Determination

-Victimhood

-Rejecting Zionism

# Main Periods of Palestinian Nationalism:

- Before the Nakba
- After the Nakba Until Oslo
- Following Oslo and the Creation of the PNA
- In the post-Arafat period - "failed national movement".

- **Why is it important to try to understand and analyze the situation of the Palestinians Today?**
  - **The Stability of the Arab and Moslem world – The centrality of the conflict**
  - **The future of the Palestinians and Israel**
  - **The Future of the conflict in the Macro and Micro levels**

**Main Question: What is “Successful” and “Failed” National Movement”?**

In measuring success and failure, social-change (and political) movements may be deemed successful in light of their achievements as measured against their declared objectives.

# **Paul Schumaker proposes five indices for measuring success or failure (Schumaker, 1975):**

- Accessibility: the extent to which the target group or institution is willing to listen to the movement's demands;
- Response: the adoption by the countervailing group (the opponents) of the movement's objectives as part of its own objectives;
- A policy change that corresponds to the movement's objectives;
- The fruits of the implementation of its policy, in the wake of change that took place in light of its objectives; and
- Influence: the depth or breadth of its influence in light of changes in policies and the fruits of this change.



- The common case of successful national movements has absorbed the bulk of the theoretical and empirical discussion in the literature, leaving their failure unanalyzed.

# To sum up, Success is measured on three levels:

- A national movement's ability to organize and recruit members of the national group to support it and its national goals;
- Its ability to persuade the opposing side(s), or third parties, of the justice of its course and to compel it or them to accept its goals; and
- Most importantly, the extent to which a national movement achieves its objectives or goals.

- **The success or failure of a national movement depends on the strength or weakness of three factors associated with the national movement.**

- The internal strength of the national movement That relates to its internal organization, including whether it has developed a suitable organizational structure with central and provincial political institutions, etc.;
- The second element concerning the solidarity and strength of opposing parties or groups. It relates to the intensity of the resistance, both among the leadership and rank-and-file members of the group contesting the aspiring national group and its objectives;
- The third element has to do with the international and regional interests of external parties in promoting or opposing the movement's goals.

# failure may be manifested in two main ways:

- A total failure to achieve the national goals that the movement set for itself;
- Internal disintegration due to a substantive disagreement between two subgroups that are equal or closely balanced in strength and influence;
- and, above all, the high possibility that these two conditions coexist.

- Still, it is difficult to define the ultimate success or failure of movements in the social domain in general, and with regard to political processes in particular, for two reasons:

- The first difficulty is the diagnosis and definition of success or failure: what some consider being a failure may be interpreted as success by others. Success and failure are relative concepts and a matter of subjective judgment.
- Secondly, it is impossible to give a final verdict on the conclusion or the success or failure of an ongoing historical process, since unexpected intervention or calculated steps taken by the leadership may alter the national movement's situation and switch some indicators from success to failure, and vice versa.

- **Nevertheless, if we accept the argument that success means achievement of the national goals that the national movement has set itself, it is clear that failure is a situation in which the national movement does not achieve these objectives, especially after the elapsing of a reasonable period of time.**



Its failure is reflected by a number of basic indicators, they include:

- Internally, the Palestinian national movement has reached a stage of internal collapse.

- Concerning the relationship with Israel and Zionism, the Palestinian national movement has not achieved one of the significant goals that it set for itself over the years.
- Externally, the status of the Palestinian national movement in the Arab world and the international arena in general has plummeted.

# **Factors behind the Failure of the Palestinian National Movement**

- **Israeli Policies - From “Resolving the Conflict” to “Partial Arrangements”;**
- **Arafat's Heritage of Political Control - The seeds of the internal violence;**
- **The lack of Authoritative Leadership after Arafat;**
- **The Emergence of Hamas as a “National Alternative”;**

- **Is There a Way out of the Crisis?**
- **Three Alternatives:**
  - **Dissolving the PNA**
  - **Separation between the PLO and the PNA**
  - **Re-Building the PNM**