

Restoring Lost Awareness

(Translated)

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The fundamental problem in dealing with the Palestinian issue does not lie in the absence of tools, or the weakness of means. Instead, it lies in the cognitive framework that shaped the political minds of the sons and daughters of the Islamic Ummah during the last century.

Patriotism (al-wataniyyah) was never a project of liberation (tahrir). Instead, by its very nature and historical function, patriotism was a mechanism for reshaping awareness according to the vassal nation-state architecture, imposed by colonialist powers. Therefore, transforming the Palestinian cause into a “patriotic issue” was merely a step in the process of uprooting it from its natural context — the context of the Islamic Ummah, its awareness, and its beliefs — and incorporating it into a narrow political framework, designed from the outset to control populations, and manage the nationalistic borders of fragmentation.

Patriotism, in its essence, is a discourse devoid of philosophical or strategic content. Patriotism is merely an empty framework of belonging that offers no answers to the major questions concerning economics, politics, religion, or society. Patriotic nationalistic identity, with its unchecked flexibility, accommodates the secular and the religious, the democratic and the authoritarian, the liberal and the socialist without providing a vision that defines the purpose of political existence, or the place of the Palestinian cause within the structure of public awareness. This intellectual vacuum is what has allowed the Palestinian issue to be reduced to a negotiable administrative matter, decided by international powers, instead of a fundamental, civilizational issue connected to the very essence and meaning of the existence of Ummah.

Worse still, patriotic thought not only failed to produce a vision for liberation (tahrir). It actively contributed to entrenching defeat. It redefined Palestine according to the framework of political nationalistic borders, not the framework of its symbolic and ideological significance; reducing it from the arena of civilizational importance to the cause of a nationalistically defined people, awaiting recognition from the international order. However, this international order is itself a product of colonialist hegemony, and so the patriotic mind found itself operating within a framework designed to constrain it, not liberate it. Reality became the standard of the possible and international legitimacy the ceiling of aspirations, and negotiation became the end of politics, not its means.

The structure of patriotic discourse is based on replacing fundamental questions with peripheral ones. It ignores the question of the nature of the conflict and focuses instead on the question of what form an internationally acceptable solution will take. It bypasses the question of who constitutes the Ummah in favor of the question of who constitutes the government. It abandons the question of what is obligatory in favor of the question of what is possible. Thus, awareness is transformed from that of a person with an aqeedah (creed) and a mission to one constrained by an administrative function: improving the conditions of defeat, not dismantling its structure. Therefore, patriotic thought has

produced nothing but an emotional discourse that repeats the same slogans for decades without any explanatory capacity, intellectual or civilizational program. It is a diseased dependence on foreign forces and international legitimacy, a reliance on the whims of international powers, and an implicit acceptance that history is fixed, and current reality is an unalterable fate.

The crisis of patriotism is not merely political, but extends to knowledge of fundamentals. It is a model reproduced within the Sykes-Picot nationalistic borders, one that does not transcend the framework drawn by the colonialists. Instead, it operates according to their framework, reinforcing it and granting legitimacy to fragmentation. The framework of the nation-state is inherently narrow, so it reduces the Ummah to maps, identity to nationality, and conflict to negotiation documents. Patriotism thus prevents awareness from grasping the true nature of the conflict as a civilizational clash between two projects, not merely a dispute over geographical lines.

In contrast, the ideology based on the aqeedah of the Ummah does not treat Palestine as a mere patriotic issue. Instead, it treats Palestine as a fundamental component of the awareness, aqeedah, and identity of the Ummah. It restores Palestine's unique place in the religious and historical memory of the Ummah, rejecting its reduction to a "disputed territory." This ideology places the conflict in its true context: a confrontation between a unifying, civilizational Islamic project and a settler-colonialist project that seeks to dismantle the Ummah and strip it of its meaning. Therefore, the Islamic framework does not seek a solution that satisfies other. Instead, it seeks the restoration of the role and practical effectiveness of the Ummah, and the formulation of its civilizational project.

From this perspective, liberation (tahrir) is not merely a political process, but primarily an intellectual one. Liberation projects cannot emerge from an intellectual framework designed to manage division, nor can a civilizational project arise from a mindset that prioritizes patriotic, nationalistic borders over ideology, compromise over truth, and pragmatism over Shariah obligation. The restoration of Palestine is contingent upon first restoring its meaning, just as the liberation of the land is contingent upon liberating awareness from the conceptual framework imposed by colonialism.

History confirms that the liberation (tahrir) of Palestine has always been an act of the entire Ummah, not just a single country. The first conqueror of al-Quds was Umar ibn al-Khattab (ra), who came from the Arabian Peninsula, and its liberators came from outside its borders, both geographically and nationally: Saladin, Qutuz, and Baybars, followed by the Ottoman Caliphate, which protected it for four centuries. This alone is conclusive evidence that Palestine will not be liberated by the efforts of only a segment of the Ummah, but rather by the revival of the entire Ummah.

Within the framework of the Aqeedah of the Ummah, Palestine is not merely a defined patriotic homeland, but a symbol of Aqeedah, an integral part of the identity and mission of the Ummah, and a fundamental element of its awareness. In this sense, it is a cause of the Ummah, not simply an issue of a nationalistically defined people. Palestine is an issue of Aqeedah, not merely a political issue. Any project operating outside this framework will remain trapped in a structure of defeat, regardless of its organization, the banners it raises, or the slogans it proclaims.