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Metaphors Stemming from Nature in the Poetry of Mahmoud Darwish

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ABSTRACT
This is a critical paper inspecting metaphors, the most artistic device, in Mahmoud Darwish's poetry. This research classified metaphors into three basic categories: metaphors of trees and plants such as wheat, metaphors of animals and birds such as butterfly, hoopoe, and dove, and metaphors of concrete and abstract natural elements. This study reports the fact that Darwish was brought up in a rural community. His father was a villager who grew crops for being food secure. Consequently, that rural environment affected the poetry of Darwish through metaphors and symbolism. Thus, it can be concluded that these poetic metaphors are a logic outcome of that rural atmosphere.

Keywords: metaphor, Mahmoud Darwish, nature, resistance literature.

INTRODUCTION

Mahmoud Salem Darwish was born in a Palestinian village in Galilee. Due to the crimes of the occupation, he, with his family, fled to Lebanon in 1948. There, he got the General Secondary Certificate. Then Darwish, M.oved to Haifa where he joined the Israeli Communist party. He wrote for the newspaper Al-Ittihad and the magazine Al-Jadid, both owned by that Israeli party. Because he took part in some political events without an Israeli permit, he was arrested and imprisoned in 1961, 1965, 1967, and 1969. After travelling to Moscow and Cairo, he went back to Beirut where he became editor-in-chief of a Palestinian magazine. Then, he became a prominent member in the PLO in 1987. After the Oslo Accord, he moved to several Arab and foreign countries. He became editor-in-chief of Al-Karmeland magazine in Paris where he explored several world cultures. In 1984 and 1987, he was president of the Union of the Palestinian writers and journalists. Darwish died in 2008.

Darwish first wrote poems about his homeland. His poetry was translated into many languages such as English and French. He was honored with many international awards. He wrote al-Jidariya, expressing human issues. In addition, he wrote WardAqal which was "private verse". In these Palestinian poems, Palestinian people share love, grief, and future expectations with other world's peoples. Thus, Darwish became the poet of the Palestinian Resistance. His poetry contained metaphor and symbolism (Nader, U., 2010: Introduction).

Therefore, Darwish was a cultural symbol who played an important role in shaping Palestinian culture and awareness. He could recharge his language and universal topics. His merciless metaphors, lyrically addressing every corner of Palestine, are an aesthetic re-creation. The main subjects of his poetry are his nation and the crimes of the Israeli occupation.

Therefore, his poetry is viewed as a focal point for many scholars since his poetry is governed by cultural and linguistic laws. He also employed metaphoric devices written in a globalized world full of conflict.

Study Significance

The recent study highlighted some metaphors related to plants, animals, birds, and natural elements and how they are reflected in the poetry of Mahmoud Darwish, who used metaphors in his writing intensively within a political conflict between the Israeli occupation and the Palestinian people.

Literature Review

The researcher reviewed and tackled studies related to the topic of this paper. According to MASOOD, K. M. (2020), metaphors used in the poetry of Darwish are cultural and linguistic phenomena. Darwish focused on using metaphors related to nature. Darwish transferred Palestine into a poem. MASOOD stated that metaphor is a type of identity manifestation. Asli, C. (2017) studied the Palestinian discourse on exile and return through exploring Palestinian poetry. The researcher gave special attention to the work of Mahmoud Darwish because he was a leading figure of Palestinian poetry. The researcher also chose and reviewed different pieces of literature concerning theories on social identity and collective memory mechanisms. Belhadj H. (2018) stated that implicature stands as a paradigmatic example of the nature and power of pragmatic explanations of linguistic phenomena. He also provided an account of how it is possible to mean more than what is said or literally expressed by an utterance, and this is what semantic theories fail to explain and interpret because they do not take the multiple readings offered by pragmatic theories into account. Al Salem, M. N. (2014) analyzed the Arabic-to-English translation approaches adopted in rendering metaphors in poetic discourse, with specific reference to ten of Mahmoud Darwish's poems. The researcher chose six poems translated more than once. The researcher stated that this approach to selection provided a platform for a comparative/contrastive analysis between different translations. Mohamed, M. T. (2012) investigated the metaphors of natural phenomena in the Holy Quran. These metaphors fall into 5 major classifications: 1- metaphors of rain, 2- metaphors of mountain, 3- metaphors of wind, 4- metaphors of light, and 5- darkness. The study assigned a conceptual metaphor for each classification of metaphors. The study ended up with a key metaphor that related all the conceptual metaphors resulted from the analysis of different classifications of these metaphors.

Theoretical framework

A metaphor was defined by Larson (1984) as a figure of speech constructing a comparison of some resemblance. Newmark (1988) defined it as the linguistic device used to give a definition to an entity or an event in a more comprehensive, concise, and complex way than using the literal language. He explained that metaphors show the likeness or a common semantic area between the two parts of the metaphor called the image and the object.

The metaphor is based on a cultural narrative. At a young age, we learn metaphor and rule our minds and our everyday behaviour. Lacoff and Johnason (1980) show that metaphors are merely literary or linguistic ornaments. But several scientists, Doucherty among others, contend that the mechanisms of human thinking are essentially metaphorical, and we can only understand anything through comparison. Our acts and our sense of right and wrong are formed by metaphors. An effective metaphor organizes the universe to define meaningful positions and acts that are prohibited or not conceivable since they are not in the scope of the metaphor

(Doucherty 2004). According to Cameron, understanding the mechanism of using metaphors may help us understand how people think and exchange speech and knowledge (Cameron, L. (2003: 2). Thus, a metaphor means transmitting a word to a new meaning, or to something that is considered representative or symbolic. Longman Dictionary (HANSEN, K. 1999) describes the metaphor as a way of describing something by referring to it as something different and suggesting that it has similar qualities to that thing.

METHOD

The recent study used the descriptive and analytical method to clarify the use of metaphors in Darwish's poetry related to nature and politics, to understand his innovative background and his faithfulness to the Palestinians. The analytical method was used to analyze the artistry and rhetoric metaphors of natural elements in this poetry to illustrate the importance of these metaphors and symbols.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Darwish's Metaphors

The early poetry of Darwish is described by using simple and everyday language. Then, he used modern themes in his poems. These themes included alienation, pessimism, and fragmentation. Darwish used symbols to escape the Israeli accountability (Darwish 1994: 19). He obtained strength out of such symbols like the sea, mountain, rock, and tree.

The poetry of Mahmoud Darwish is closely connected with his own life experiences, which extend from early childhood until pre-death times. The perplexity of separation, perseverance in his homeland, resistance, prison, exile torment, loss of identity, travelling and an eagerness for return characterized his life. This covered the years 1960 until the mid-1990s when these common and interrelated topics were covered by his themes. The metaphor was used during this time as "a way to remember an actual case" (Mansson 2003, p. 105). This resulted in the near encounters with the trials and tribulations of the time.

In his later works Darwish, M.etaphorically employed the natural and its components, such as flowers, butterflies, doves and springs. Mahmoud grew up on fields and farms, played grass, breathed fresh air and ate the produce of the soil. For instance, the sun and trees are used in his poem titled Ala'n Ba'dak (Now after You) metaphorically. The researcher relies on the versions of the poems of Darwish originally in Arabic.

"Now, after you, with an appropriate Rhyme
And exile, the trees improve their posture
and laugh.
The sun laughs in the street"

(Shaheen, M. 2009 P44)

The poet likes trees and the sun to people who laugh happily. The symbolism of the sun in the literary works, as mentioned in the symbolism and the light of Republic Plato, stands for being (Notopoulos, J. P 223)

Darwish, M.etaphorically uses birds and rivers in the poem *Tuesday, the Bright Day,* and says:

The birds snatch seeds from the shoulders of the river.
And I mutter, mutter in secret: Live tomorrow now!

(Translated by Mohammad Shaheen in Darwish, 2009b: 49)

Since Darwish depends on metaphors in his writings and the intended messages behind them, he used the word "metaphor" itself in his poem dedicated to his Palestinian friend Edward Said who spent many years in America as an emigrant. Darwish talks about identity, nationalism, self- disappearance, diaspora, and considering immigration as a key to salvation. All that deprived his poem (life) its sense and lost its metaphors by exile and diaspora. (Shtaya, Mo'ath)

The metaphor was sleeping on the bank of the river
Had it not been for the pollution,
It would have embraced the other bank.
(Translated by Mohammad Shaheen in Darwish, 2009b: 87)

In the poem *Iste'ara* (*A Metaphor),* Darwish addresses the absent 'other', where birds again are given as a metaphor for freedom:

You think you are higher than yourself,
Like a bird existing only in a metaphor.
The metaphor entices you to break away
From it and look at the empty sky,
(Translated by Catherine Cobham in Darwish, 2009c: 71)

Consequently, the natural elements that are used in Darwish's poetry as metaphors can be divided into three major categories: 1) Metaphors of plants and trees. 2) Metaphors for animals and birds. 3) abstract and specific metaphors of natural components. This demonstrates that Darwish is the son of the Palestinian land and community in which he was raised. In the following pages, the researcher discusses the three groups in depth.

Metaphors of Plants and Trees

The trees are part of the plants which are popular in Darwish poetry, including those of his dad's olives, figs, orange trees, lemons, grapes, palms and cactus that have not seen or only heard from his dad. The land and all memories are witnessed by these trees. (Ashour,2004:152)

Darwish said in his poem titled *Muhawala Raqam 7* (*Try No. 7*) the following lines

My horses slept on the land and the memories
My horses slept on the trees of memories
And I slept on the den of miracles
(Translated by the researcher, The Damascus Road)

Life comes from death, anger is born from damage, and prosperity and spring start. Darwish says about trees:

And I, if I'm broken…..... I saw
my days ahead
Gold on my first trees, I saw my mother's spring, O father
(Translated by the researcher, Canaanite Stone in the Dead Sea,)

The children's and first homes trees turn the country in the spring into a fertile one. (Al-Zubi Ahmed, 1995:38) Plants and trees are closely connected to the earth and together they represent a parallel line with similar signs and symbols. There are two plant symbols: first, the reference to vineyards, flowers, strawberry, wheat, grass, palm, jasmine, bushes, hibiscus, fig,

basil, pomegranate, red, cotton, oak, willow, roses, cypress, bramble, almond, etc (those of the desert: willows, brambles; those of the mountain: cypresses, pines, thyme, basil, olives; and those of the plains: vines, flowers, wheat, pomegranate, figs, oranges). Secondly, these plants are known symbolically as historically important plants. (for example, olives, sycamores, carobs, strawberries and oranges), and plants with modern significance (e.g. almonds, grapes, peaches, corn, wheat and roses).

By this diversity, the poet meant to let his poetry breathe the scent and
Identity of the homeland:

My roots……
Took hold before the birth of time
Before the burgeoning of the ages,
Before cypress and olive trees,
Before the proliferation of weeds.
(trans. by Denys Johnson-Davies, Identity Card, The Music of Human Flesh:10)

The Wheat Metaphor

Wheat is the first of the world's crops. Since ancient times, it has flourished in Palestine. Yemen and Ethiopia are believed to originate from it. At the time of the harvest, ancient Egyptians organized festivals, and then presented them to the gods. The priests presented corns of wheat and placed them on the head of Pharaoh (Ahmed Shawqi Ibrahim,2005,50-54). Wheat, in Darwish poetry, reflects hope and is related to the return of refugees to their homeland. After exile and suffering, Jerusalem invites its children to return and to reap joy and happiness. The Palestinians' dream is to make the tears truly happy. (Al-Rbeehat,2006:176)

Darwish says:

Jerusalem sings, O Babylon's children, you soon will return to Jerusalem
you will harvest wheat from the memory of the land
tears will soon be spikes
and plays with harvest, spikes, and scythe
(Alshar',2006:176)

Bread is another form of wheat; both poor and wealthy need it. Darwish prides himself on the bread of his mother. In his poem "I am a mom's bread," his scent of bread (life) appears to be connected with his mother's smell. He combines battle with wheat. The production of wheat in the Canaan Land never ends destruction and war (Al-Zubi, 1995:40). Death was not the end of Darwish poetry, but the start of life.

Notably, the grain of wheat that Jesus plants in the earth and dies to bring new life is the analogy of his life: "Well, I tell you, it remains just one seed until a kernel of wheat falls and dies. But if it dies, many seeds are produced" (Davis, J. 12:24).

In his poem *Ila Umi (To My Mother)* Darwish says:

I long for my mother's bread
And my mother's coffee
And my mother's touch
My childhood grows within me

These lines represent his ingenuity in using his poetry as a metaphor. Concept-oriented formations which address the presence of the same experience in the hearings of the Palestinians include food, mother's touch, coffee, stove, clothing lines, daily prayer, etc. These

significances become dialogical when you look at the recognition of conceptual formations; Darwish, M.other's bread is built on a certain collection of cultural «artefacts»; the scent, the colour, the shape of a kitchen.

The poet lives practically in his own home country, he sings with birds and breathes with the trees and flowers. The blossoming of the almond trees shows this vibrant interaction with the homeland. In that case, it is not that of an individual who loves Nature that the connection between poet and plant is so organic, that national aspirations are involved.

Metaphors of Animals, Birds, and Insects

Metaphors of birds contrast their liberation with his abolition in Darwish's poetry. Darwish is not allowed to visit his beloved country. The poet is more like a bird kept in a cage, which cannot move and express himself freely. Darwish encourages birds to go wherever they want, sing and share a feeling of happy freedom in the poem *Al-Hudhud* (*The Hoopoe*):

You birds of plain and valley, fly
Fly swiftly toward my wings, toward my Voice!
People are birds unable to fly, O hoopoe of Words.
(Translated by Munir Akash and Carolyn Forché in Darwish, 2003: 31)

In one of his last poems *Kanary* (*The Canary),* Darwish again depicts himself and his compatriots under siege in Ramallah in the West Bank as birds in a cage. The cage is a metaphor for Israel's siege and the canary is a metaphor for an under-siege people.

We listened to the canary's words to me and you:
'Singing in a cage is possible and so is happiness'.
(Translated by Catherine Cobham in Darwish, 2009c: 139)

The Dove Metaphor

Darwish created this artistic metaphor on comparing peace agreed on by Israel and Palestine with two stranger doves. They shared crying. The stranger dove apologized to the weaker one. Hence, Darwish compared the two situations: the peace and apology, saying:

Salaam is the dove of two strangers sharing
Their last cooing on the edge of the chasm
Salaam is the apology of the mighty to the one
"The State of Siege", *The Butterfly's Burden*:171

In this stance, Darwish shares his personal views on the Palestinian-Israeli peace treaty. This picture indicates that this peace is meaningless, invalid and never achievable because the strength of both sides is not equal. They are, however, like strangers never able to meet. In this poem, Darwish is returned as a universal sign of reconciliation. He is thus shifting from the local to the universal. The work of Darwish, according to Mena, E. comprises a universality that is born of real misery that extends across language and country boundaries to include the national in the universal" (Mena, 2009:11).

Doves symbolize not only Palestinian nostalgia but also the psyche of the poet and the ideal world of which he dreamed. So, as much as the poet's self, the pigeon could represent the poet's land. Such an emotional attachment brings the poet and the pigeon together in an organic way to embody each other, thereby depicting what extends beyond the other's senses. In his poem *Yateer Alhamam* (*The Doves Fly*), in which poet and doves merge, the self unites with all the elements of nature.

The doves fly,
The doves come down,
Prepare a place for me to rest.
I love you unto weariness,
Your morning is fruit for songs
And this evening is precious gold
The shadows are strong as marble.
when I see my self
it is hanging upon a neck that embraces only the clouds
you are the air that undresses in front of me like tears of the grape,
you are the beginning of the family of waves held by the shore.
I love you, you are the beginning of my soul, and you are the end...
(Online translation by Adab.com)

Darwish turns the dove's emblem into an element in a world of alienation. The use of the dove is also reminiscent of Ibn Hazm's use of the pigeon, *Tawq Al Hamama* (*The Pigeon's Collar*). As a result, after flocks of doves were stampeded in search of survival, avoiding perdition, they became expatriates.

Nothing remains from me except
Ibn Rushd's script, dove's collar,
And the translations
I was sitting on the pavement of daisy yard and count the doves: one, two, thirty……

Thus, the poet could chirp among the flocks of doves, either in search of peace or in the hope of making a dream come true. The poet discovered an outlet for Palestinian self-expression in the doves' determination, bravery, devotion, and yearning.

The doves that fly and land, then fly and land represent the dream of peace that entices the poet and his lover, or that illuminates and flickers in the lives of Palestinians who wait for this flip-flopping peace to return to their homeland and end the nightmare of occupation. For a long time, the poet (the dove) has been circling the sky in search of his homeland, where he can settle down and reunite with his estranged sweetheart. However, after such a long wait, the doves are no longer flying, simply because they have left and will never return.

The Butterfly Metaphor

The butterfly is associated with beauty and tenderness, confusion, and irritability. In the past, the butterfly was seen as a pertinent symbol of the spirit as it started as an earthbound larva which died later. However, it came back to life with beauty and wings (Raine, 2002: 183). Darwish used this creature to construct several poetic forms. In the *poem Maq'ad fi Qetar* (*Seat on a Train*), Darwish has only the "rightness of butterflies" as a recompense for his ever-shifting life:

All the passengers return to their families,
But we don't return to any home.
We travel in search of nothing,
So that we may achieve the rightness of butterflies.
(Translated by Munir Akash and Carolyn Force)

In this stanza, Darwish begins to draw a picture of reality, but soon he goes beyond the tangible to the abstract. He starts with a concrete topic (travel), and then he takes the reader to fathom the abstract significance of the travel (the impact). The linkage he establishes between

the goal of travel and the 'zero' suggests the wandering condition resulting from the loss of identity. The poet tries to overcome this state of vagrancy to start over again from scratch.

In his building of the meaning, the poet developed his native butterfly to become a symbol of the land:

And on the roof of women's joyful trilling come planes
The planes
The planes snatching the lover from the butterflies embrace
(Translated by Denys Johnson-Davies: 67)

The 'butterfly lap' involves several meanings, each depending on the context. The lap could refer to the woman, but it can also denote the land.

Butterfly! Sister of yourself, be what you desire
Before and also after my nostalgia
Let me be your wing so that my madness might remain fevered.
Butterfly, born of yourself.
Don't let others decide my fate. Don't abandon me.
(Translated by Munir Akash and Carolyn Foreche:89)

In this poem, the butterfly is more than just an insect. The definition includes a whole life with various stages: once it breaks free from the cocoon, it is free to follow light until it burns out.

In another poem titled *Kana Yanqusuna Hader*, Mahmoud likened the peace which Palestinians hoped for too long to an illusion. Thus, the wind destroyed this hope for independence. Darwish said:

The butterflies have flown out of sleep as a mirage
Of a swift peace that adorns us with two
Stars and kill us in the struggle
Over the name between two windows so,
Let's go and let's be kind
"We Were Missing A Present", The Butterfly's Burden:7

Metaphors of natural concrete and abstract elements

Natural elements like hills, oceans, and the sea are commonly found as metaphors for persistence and strength in Arab culture and Arabic literature due to their power and reliability. It is popular to read a phrase used by the sign of revolution, Yasser Arafat, such as "Oh mount! Winds cannot rock you," "That player is a rock in the defensive area," or "The warrior was a rock from which all waves of invaders broke." Darwish and the rock "represent the stable and enduring ideal of perseverance" in Palestine in his poem *Awaiting Those Returning*, published in 1966. Darwish "stubbornly resists the dangerous temptation to abandon hope of the loved ones' return and patiently waits on the rock" (Månsson, A. 2003: 113):

The steps of my loved ones are the sighs
Of the rock, beneath a hand of iron, I wait with the rains
In vain looking in the distance
I will remain on the rock…under the. .Rock…enduring

Fruitful orchards and lovely gardens, on the other hand, are poetic counterparts to the Garden of Eden and the Biblical/Quranic fall of man from paradise. Darwish believed that

paradise vanished two times: once when man was removed from it and again when the people of Palestine were banished from their land. Darwish said expressing those two disasters*:*

I am the Adam of two Edens lost to me twice:
Expel me slowly. Kill me slowly
Under my olive tree
With [Garcia] Lorca.
(Translated by Munir Akash and Daniel Moore in Darwish, 2000: 87)

Darwish believed that this fall from grace was tied to a long period of exile. It was associated with the metaphor of long roads and routes. He said in *We Travel Like Anyone Else:*

We said to our wives: Give birth to hundreds of years,
So that we may end this journey
Within an hour of a country, Within a meter of the impossible. Your road is long, so dream of seven women
To bear this long journey on your shoulders.
(Translated by Munir Akash and Carolyn Forché in Darwish, 2003: 11)

The symbol for this unwanted exile is Noah or his ark. The symbols of reconciliation are doves and olive trees. The paradise is a symbol for Palestine. Adam is a symbol for the Palestinian refugees. The unrooted trees are a symbol for those who displaced from their homelands. Darwish said in *the Rain* poem:

Noah!
Give me the branch of an olive tree and my mother…a dove! We made a paradise
Whose ends are litter boxes!
Oh, Noah!
Don't travel with us
Death here is a victory
We are roots, can't live without earth.
(Translated by Mansson, 2003: 127)

Therefore, Darwish was put inside the Hell suffering from the bad environment around him. In *Hooriyya's Teachings*, he says:

Since the day you were expelled from
Paradise a second time
Our whole world changed,
Our voices changed,
Even our greeting was Echoless like a button dropped on sand.

Darwish explains his strong desire, passion, and exile in a more nuanced metaphor. He reverses the form of the sentences to stress the meaning of "exile" that brings much strength to the metaphor. It appears in the poem *Al- Hudhud* (*The Hoopoe*), *Unfortunately, It was Paradise* :4271.

Longing is the place of exile; our love is a Place of exile,
Our wine is a place of exile and
A place of exile is the history of this heart

The main element of conflict is the territory. In Palestine, the majority of Arabs are farmers and this is the essence of this tragic situation. Darwish should touch on the topic softly,

extracting everything from it, turning each phenomenon into a precious and special icon. The new values could be created that represent the insistent tradition and nobility inherent in Palestinian history.

The abundance of words relating to land and exile is done on purpose to convey his deep connection to Palestine and his tale of struggle against the Israeli occupation. "A physical union between the author and the land is the culmination of an effort to convey through symbols an entrenched relationship between Palestinians and their homeland, a relationship that can be preserved and strengthened in the face of Israeli rhetoric invoking the land." (Parmenter, B. M., 1994: 83).

Darwish gave an artistic image of the Palestine people, comparing their identity to earth gravity and comparing them to people flying among clouds, attempting to neglect the fact that they an identity. in *'Man Anna Duna Manfa',* he said:

we have come two friends of the
strange creatures in the clouds.
and we are now loosened from the gravity
of identity's land
what will we do without
exile? and a long night that stares at the water.
(Translated by FadiJoudah "Who am I Without Exile?

Darwish added more metaphors of earth and heaven in his poem (*The Hoopoe*) to comment on Palestinian exile longing for a spot under the sun:

The further we move away, the closer we come
To our reality and the boundaries of exiles.
Our sole desire is to cross them.
We are the duality of heaven-earth, earth-heaven.

Darwish likened exile to a Palestinian-side fenced house. Thus, the Palestinians suffer from harsh siege conditions due to being besieged and under severe circumstances, even in exile outside Palestine. Darwish tells the Diaspora tale, it is of no concern what distance the people of Palestine travel, with no one accepts them and how they are besieged in the exile abroad.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the linguistic and cultural phenomenon of the metaphors in Darwish poetry. They serve a goal that goes beyond enhancement and poetic delight to persuasion and a serious declaration of identity. Natural elements are politized in a way that expands their original denotation fields to include rich homeland and exile connotations. Darwish's poetic art thus reaches the universal issues beyond the local. Since the analysis in Darwish's works is insufficient, the researcher recommends that Darwish's poetry be studied as a Resistance literature figure which meets the goals of other international authors and serves the universal issues.

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