

Home, Homeliness and Search for Identity in Mohmoud Darwish's Poetry

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Received: October 15, 2013 Accepted: October 31, 2013 Online Published: November 4, 2013

doi:10.5430/ijelt.v1n1p32 URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5430/ijelt.v1n1p32>

Abstract

It is not easy to write about a home you are enforced to be away of it. Undoubtedly, your words and lines will be expressive and impressive because they come to reveal a fact would not be ignored by the Palestinians or the world in general. Mohmoud Darwish is one of the Palestinians who were enforced to be dislocated, jailed, but exiled. He has an experience in exile with homelessness and homeliness. This article attempts to analyze four of Darwish's poems that address home and homeliness, identity and exile of the strangers who spend their lives dislocated. The selected poems will be analyzed to probe deeply into the location of home, homeliness, exile and identity in the poetry of Mahmoud Drawish. How the strangers feel while they are detached of their homes and families searching for their identity, searching for their home. The article explores the influence of the words of Darwish's poetry in expressing homesickness, homeliness and how a Palestinian finds his life away of his motherland, Palestine. The focus will be on the thematic and attitudinal structure and the aesthetics of using the expressive words, symbols and images that manifest the postcolonial identity that always stands against dominating power of colonizers.

Keywords: home, homeliness, identity, exile, discrimination, stranger, Palestinian, poem

1. Introduction

Mahmoud Darwish was born in the village of Birwa, western Galilee in 1941. He was one of the Palestinians who dedicated his life to defend Palestinian issue whether through his political activism or his literary writings and poems. For this reason, he deserved to be a great national poet who paints his love for Palestine in his words and his work in the area of politics. He writes for his place and people who share with them pains and sufferings. Darwish spares no efforts to express his concern about his people about the place he was forced to be away of it because of Israel. Darwish recognizes well that the defense of a country by not only using bullets but also it could be by using the brain that narrates for the international community the concerns of a nation under the siege of the occupying power that attempts to eradicate their identity and put an end for their struggle.

Resistance is not only by war but also by powerful words that would leave positive influence that may not make it wars and bullets. Darwish in one of his poems writes "I am my Language...I am my language. I am words' writing: Be! Be/ my body/ No land on earth bears me. Only my words...bear me/ this is my language, a necklace of stars around my neck". However, Darwish did not choose one way for struggle but he selected the way of his resistance by political activism and by literary words. No one would belittle the role of the words and their power to reach further than the sound of the bullets. Ghassan Kanafani is the first who addresses this sort of literature in *literature of Resistance in Occupied Palestine: 1948-1966*, literature of resistance. He paid his life for his brave situations and his political activism that made Israeli colonizers put an end to his life because his political and literary words which have left very deep influence in the lives of Palestinians in particular and the lives of international community in general.

Mhamoud Darwish's concern with poetry began very early, his first book, *Asafir Bila Ajniha (Wingless Birds)* in poetry was published at the age of nineteen. His talent prepared him to write the wonders of poetry that addresses different sides of Palestinian misery under occupying power. He wrote many collections such as *olives Leaves, A Lover from Palestine, Usual Grief Diaries, Try No. 7, A Song is A Song, Don't Apologize for What You Have Done, Weddings*, and *The Birds Die in Al Galil*. Assassination of Naji Al Ali, a Palestinian caricaturist who painted for Palestine, in London and murder Ghassan kanafani, a Palestinian literary writer and political activist, do not halt

Darwish's struggle. Darwish at the beginning of his literary stage published his poems in Al Jaded and Al Fajr Journals who became later the editor of Al Jadid journal and assistant of editor of Al Fajr journal. Both journals involved with Israeli communist party and workers party.

Darwish was influenced by two important figures in the area of poetry: the first one is Abdel Wahab Al Bayati and Badr Shaker Al Sayab. Darwish left Israel in 1970 to go to defunct USSR to study for a year in Moscow University. His efforts did not stop at literary writings or poems writings but he joined Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1973 that made Israel to prevent him from returning to his home. The last visit to Israel was in 15 July 2007, poetry recital at Carmel Auditorium in Haifa, where he criticizes severely the conflict and clash between Fatah and Hamas "as a suicide attempt in the streets"

Darwish has published many poetry collections that exceed thirty volumes of poetry and eight books of prose. Most of his poetry addresses the resistance and exile, identity and homeliness. Darwish realized well that if the Palestinians do not write for their issue, the colonizers would change the historical facts. He competed with Jewish poet, Yehuda Amichai, in writing for their country, but the Jewish poetry comes as a challenge to Mahmoud Darwish as he pointed out himself because both write about the same place, use the same landscape and history for his own concern. His writing considers an expansion at the expense of Palestinians destroyed identity. So Darwish argued "we have competition: who is the owner of the language of this land? Who loves it more? Who writes better?"

Where is the location of Darwish among the creative people of the world? Darwish is one of the most important Arab figures in the area of poetry and politics. He was granted many awards as the Knight of Arts, 1997, Mediterranean Prize, 1998, Lannan Foundation Prize for Cultural Freedom in 2001 and most of his poems and literary works have been translated into more than twenty languages. Shihab Nye wrote in (Poets. Organization, Academic of American Poets) "Darwish is the essential breath of the Palestinian people, the eloquent witness of exile and belonging..." Darwish passed away in a hospital in Houston, Texas in 9th of August 2008 as a result of negative effects of the major heart surgery made to him in the hospital. Ahmad Darwish pointed out after the death of Darwish (Associated press. J. Post 10 August, 2008) " Mahmoud does not just belong to a family or a town, but all Palestinians, and he should be buried in a place where all Palestinians can come and visit him" Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, declared three days of mourning as an honor to that person who spent his life defending of Palestine and its issues. I am going to analyze four poems of Mahmoud Darwish in the following part of this article to probe deeply to his thematic and attitudinal structure of his poems. Further, this part will spot light on the significant images, symbols, and expressive words.

2. Colonizers' Practice of Oppression and Discrimination

'*I am Yusuf oh father*' is one of the greatest poems of Mohmoud Darwish that addresses colonizers' oppression and discrimination against Palestine. Mahmoud compares the story of colonizers with Palestine as the story of Prophet Yusuf with his brothers addressed in Holy Quran. Darwish's poems are full of expressive symbols and images that give an insight into the relationship between Israel and Palestine and it has painted a beautiful artistic picture that narrates the historical and political story of Palestine. How is the feeling of a person who is detached of people and place? Mahmoud Darwish was one of the people who live a real and a live experience involved with exile, oppression and discrimination. This poem comes to express the pains and sufferings of Darwish in exile, away of his home. If the poet lives the experience, his words undoubtedly would come powerful and touching.

I am Yousuf, O father.
O father, my brothers do not love me nor want me among them.
They assault me and throw stones and words at me.
They want me to die so they can eulogize me.
They closed the door of your home and left me outside.
They expelled me from the field.
They poisoned my vineyards.
They destroyed my toys, O father.

Here Darwish addresses his father; I am Yusuf father, here to confirm he is a member of the family. However, his brothers do not love him; they do not want him to live among them. Their bad deeds against Yusuf and another brother, Benjamin, are from another woman and the rest brothers are from the same woman. The brothers represent majority and this majority encourage them to revolt against Yusuf. They cause the suffering of Yusuf and attempt to silence his

voice, furthermore, to kill him. They are the closest people to his heart and home, his brothers. /they want me to die.../he depicts Israeli people as his brothers in humanity and share the same place and sky, however, they refused to live with Palestinians as their brothers in humanity. Jews have practiced different aspects of oppression and discrimination as Yusuf's brothers did. They do not like to see Palestinians in their home/ they closed the door of your home and left me outside/they expelled me from the field.../ brothers supposed to take care of their brothers but here Darwish probes deeply into the evil deeds of the brothers. Yusuf is an incarnation of Palestine itself while brothers embody the Jews who make use of any opportunity to end the Palestinian lives.

The words used by the poet indicate the deliberate action that causes the suffering of Palestinians; they make them live strangers outside of their country and strangers inside their country as well. Darwish portrays the weakness of Palestine by brining to our attention the innocence of a boy who is playing with his toys and the colonizers tend to destroy his field, his vineyard, and his toys. The boy has no power to defend himself and he resorts to his father who represents the voice of reason, the voice of righteousness and the conscience of the world. The appealing words of Yusuf are the appealing words of Palestinians who could not find any power to bring back their rights in an era that does not recognize the language of weakness. The words and statements used in the poem indicate the deliberate actions such as do not love me, assault me, they want me to die, throw stones and words at me, closed the door of your home, it is not their home, expelled ...poisoned... destroy...etc. All these words uncover the horrible acts and actions of Israelis who supposed to be Palestinians' brothers in humanity, it is not sufficient to them to put their hands on Palestinians land, but they refuse to share the home with them. Darwish uses 'destroy my toys', he depicts Palestine as a helpless, powerless, innocent child expecting help from the others because he could not defend himself or his toys or what belongs to him. Balraj Dhillon points out "Darwish's poetry resists separatist nationalists' discourses by frequently humanizing both Israelis and Palestinians- humanizing the enemy of each" (46). In this poem, the poet depicts Israelis as brothers, cruel brothers, merciless brothers, and he finds the wolf is more merciful than his brothers are.

When the gentle breeze passed by the played with my hair they became jealous
And flamed up with rage against me and flamed up in rage against you, what did I ever do to them O father?
Butterflies perched on my shoulders, Stalks of wheat swayed toward me, and birds rested in my palms.
What did I do O father? And why me?
You named me Yusuf, And they threw me into the well, And accused the wolf, The wolf is more merciful than my
brothers.
O father! Did I ever wrong anyone when I said: 'I saw eleven stars, and the sun and moon, I saw them prostrating before
me? '

Yusuf is a symbol of peace and innocence, and everything around him harmonize itself with him easily, all the elements of nature adapt themselves with him except his brothers, the Jews, brothers in humanity./ gentle breeze passed by the played with my hair.../ Butterflies perched on my shoulders, Stalks of wheat swayed toward me, And birds rested in my palms/. Darwish asserts that Palestinians love peace and live in harmony with the elements of nature: gentle breeze, butterflies, stalks of wheat, birds...etc. while describe the reactions of brothers, the Jews, he uses the words that indicate the bad nature of those people such as jealous, flame up, rage, destroy, poisoned, throw me into the well...etc.

Thematic structure of this poem is practice of oppression and discrimination against Palestinians who are the owner of the place. Yousuf is simply a symbol of helpless Palestine and his father is the voice of justice, Yousuf narrates to his father about his oppression and discrimination from his brothers' side, they practice different aspects of destruction and to cast their blame on the wolf, which is more merciful than the brothers are. Further father represents the reason, wisdom, experience and the history that recognizes well as one of the old generation the roots of the people and origin of the area. The speaker in this poem is the poet himself and he begins his poem by /I'm Yusuf oh father/ to assert his identity as a member of the family, as a member of the Home. The word " I am" is explicit to stabilize the sense of identity in the reader's mind. Further the tone of the poem is the tone of weakness and regret that presents Palestinians helpless, hopeless, powerless, innocent and appealing to the mercy of the world and this consciousness floats as a reaction to the colonizers attempt to silence the voice of the voiceless Palestinians and endeavor to destroy the dream's of the stateless people. By complaining to his father, Yusuf seems torn and lost because brothers stand against him, but they want him to leave Home, the home of his parents and grandparents and attempt to put an end to his life. All these evil deeds of brothers manifests the innocence and weakness of Yusuf to save his life from unexpected brothers who suppose to protect him and share home and land with him as one who has a right in this land and home.

3. Palestinians and Search for Identity: Name without Title

Identity Card

Write down!
 I am an Arab
 And my identity card number is fifty thousand
 I have eight children
 And the ninth will come after a summer
 Will you be angry?

Write down!
 I am an Arab
 You have stolen the orchards of my ancestors
 And the land which I cultivated
 Along with my children
 And you left nothing for us
 Except for these rocks..
 So will the State take them
 As it has been said?

Write down!
 I am an Arab
 Employed with fellow workers at a quarry
 I have eight children
 I get them bread
 Garments and books
 from the rocks..
 I do not supplicate charity at your doors
 Nor do I belittle myself at the footsteps of your chamber
 So will you be angry?

The poet asserts his Arab identity; he is one of the Arab people and is very proud of his root as an Arab. He does not look to the restricted area of Palestine, however, he envelops his identity with the Arab frame and Palestine is a part of this big world. He fears nothing to declare and emphasize his identity to one of the Israeli soldiers. The thematic structure argues in this poem the identity and construction the identity that belongs to the Arab world. Darwish's attitude toward his identity is the pride that appears very clear while addressing one of the troops of the colonizers. /Write down/ I'm an Arab/ here his voice and tone bears pride and bravery to declare that he belongs to the big world of Arab, which his country, Palestine is a part of it. The number of his identity card is fifty thousand that clarifies the long history of Palestine, the long history of the people of Palestine on this land. When he addresses the colonizers soldier, his pride does not fade away, but he argues the hard work that he has to do with his fellows of work in quarry to bring honorable bread and food to his children and he does not begging charity from his colonizers, so he is very proud with his work.

Write down!
 I am an Arab
 I have a name without a title
 Patient in a country
 Where people are enraged
 My roots
 Were entrenched before the birth of time
 And before the opening of the eras
 Before the pines, and the olive trees
 And before the grass grew.
 My father.. descends from the family of the plow
 Not from a privileged class

And my grandfather..was a farmer
 Neither well-bred, nor well-born!
 Teaches me the pride of the sun
 Before teaching me how to read
 And my house is like a watchman's hut
 Made of branches and cane
 Are you satisfied with my status?
 I have a name without a title!

He repeats the statement that confirms his root as an Arab to let his enemy be afraid of his bravery. /Write down/ I am an Arab/ I have a name without tile/ Darwish discusses that he recognizes well who is he, his identity, his motherland but he recognizes well his identity is only a name without a title, A Home without being homed, he feels that sort of homelessness and homeliness in a country where people are enraged his roots. His roots which are very clear for the people of the world; his root is a root of a nation, a root of Palestine itself. His root is before the birth of time, before the pines, and olives trees. His first generation they were a part of this land, working in plowing and they are farmers they recognize the history and value of this land. Darwish's father as he argued taught him the pride of the sun, that always high and this pride would not offer concessions concerning his place and people. The poet as a representative of one of the Palestinians, he lives in very simple house describing by the poet like (watchman's hut made of branches and cane) this simile points out the simplicity of Palestinian lives that would not bring mercy and compassion to the hearts of his colonizers.

Therefore!
 Write down on the top of the first page:
 I do not hate people
 Nor do I encroach
 But if I become hungry
 The usurper's flesh will be my food
 Beware..
 Beware..
 Of my hunger
 And my anger!

By the end of Darwish's poem, he argues his attitude towards humanity, toward the world's people, whatever their root or race, he does not hate people, but if those people stand against his interests, and deprived him from his life's requirements, particularly to deprive him from honorable living and drive him to starvation, "their flesh will be my food". He wants to assert at the top of the colonizers' list that he has no preconception about the people, but the people particularly, the colonizers who make such impression, impression of love or hate. He repeats this sense in different poems for instance, *State of Siege*, he argues that he "...I don't love you, I don't hate you...., yes I don't love you? Are you some of my I?" This image as it reveals the poet tolerant to coexist with the people of the world as it depicts his anger is more serious than the colonizers' anger. He releases a strong warning to the colonizers who deprive him from his living, which spends his time struggling to spare to himself, to his family and children, he would be wild animal devour the flesh of the usurpers. He releases / Beware/ Beware/ of my hunger/ and my anger/

The speaker in this poem is the poet himself who desperately attempt to defend his national identity, which is denied by the colonizers. 'Write down/ I am an Arab/ these words bear faith power and dignity. Darwish here requests from Israeli soldier to 'write down' without introduction or appeal to listen to him, but the words come from his mouth as a bullet and this imperative does not offer any sort of concession. He does not fear of declaring his national identity as one of Arabs, but his words manifests his matchless pride. The first lines are repeated at the beginning of the stanzas to assert his national identity and dignity. Darwish uses 'I am' or 'I' to represent not only himself but to represent the Palestinians who spend their lives in search of their identity which is revealed reconstructed by the external circumstances in exile.

The tone of the poem bears anger, enthusiasm and bravery. The voice seems strong and the words are convincing and containing the power that is sufficient to shake the person who hearing them. The words reflect the pains and sacrifices of the owner of the land and they have to come back as strangers, for this reason, the words of strangers release confidence and power of the owner of the rights. Darwish repeats the words and phrases that reveal his situation strong. He uses 'my-I am- my' to emphasize his national identity and his rights (I am An Arab- my identity card- my children,

my grandfather, teaches me- I have a name without a title- which I cultivated along with my children- my root) to inform the reader that he is the owner of the rights in land. However, he addresses his colonizers by ('you' 'will you be angry' you have stolen the orchards of my ancestors- and you left nothing for us) only to cast his blame on the colonizers and asserts his responsibility for Palestinians' sufferings.

Darwish points out that his existence before /the birth of the time/ and before the opening of the eras/ before the pines/ and the olives trees/ and before the grass grew/ all these images are symbols of Palestine's landscape used to assert the ancient life of Palestinians on this land that the colonizers claims his right in this land. There is a sort of exaggeration to make the picture explicit in the minds of the readers that he and his old generation belong to this place before the coming of the colonizers. He expresses the selfishness of the colonizers who have taken everything to themselves and left nothing for Palestinians who become helpless, powerless, and stateless. They leave the rocks they even said they would take them.

4. Home and Homeliness in Strangers' Literature

To my mother

I long for my mother's bread
 My mother's coffee
 Her touch
 Childhood memories grow up in me
 Day after day
 I must be worth my life
 At the hour of my death
 Worth the tears of my mother.

In exile, the poet feel lost and his poem to his mother, to his Home, to Palestine treats issues of political, historical, national concern, and deeply personal thought and attitude. The Palestinian people but the world called him the poet of the people. He penetrates into his own consciousness while also giving voice to his stateless people. He reflects in his poems powerful images and touching words that reveal the national concern of the poet and his longing for his lost country. *To My mother* proves the Darwish's ability to tie external scenery with interior feelings. These images reflect the concrete with very sweet memories of his mother's bread, his mother's coffee and his mother's touch. Darwish's poem in general are full of symbols that almost refer to his Home and the people of Palestine, he feels nostalgia toward his childhood place and people.

In Darwish's poem *To My Mother*, he expresses the long journey of detachment from his motherland, two dear things leave their impression in one's heart: his love for his mother and his love for his motherland. Darwish's love for his Home is well expressed in those images. He is not certain that he may come to his home again because of the length of the period of exiled that reveals his return as impossible.

And if I come back one day
 Take me as a veil to your eyelashes
 Cover my bones with the grass
 Blessed by your footsteps
 Bind us together
 With a lock of your hair
 With a thread that trails from the back of your dress
 I might become immortal
 Become a God.

The simile used as a veil to your eyelashes and he requests to cover his bones (the long exile makes him appear as a group of bones) by the grass blessed by his mother footsteps and /bind us together/with a lock of your hair/. He does not want to be detached from his mother body, from his land, he longs for his mother's blessing lock and eyelashes and grass blessed by his mother footsteps. What a beautiful image indicate that integration between the mother and the son, between the place and the people.

If I touch the depths of your heart.
 If I come back
 Use me as wood to feed your fire
 As the clothesline on the roof of your house
 Without your blessing
 I am too weak to stand.
 I am old
 Give me back the star maps of childhood
 So that I
 Along with the swallows
 Can chart the path
 Back to your waiting nest.

The poet goes ahead in painting this beautiful picture, the picture of sacrificing his life even to be as wood for his mother's fire or clothesline on the roof of the house. Without his home, without his motherland's blessing, the poet is vulnerable, weak and yearning to his childhood's memories, which are lost, and he is yearning to come back to his home. Darwish in this poem addresses his mother and expresses his love for his mother, his home, to Palestine. The poem represents the strong tie between the mother and her son; long years of exile could not make him forget his mother's bread and coffee. The poet pulls the attention of the reader to this great love of a son to his mother, a stranger to his homeland, he uses many images that reveal that love peerless, that love makes the person a God, an immortal. The poet has brought into our minds many impressive and expressive images that make the view alive in our memory. His memory is connected with his (mother's bread, mother's coffee, Mother's touch...) how Darwish will repay his mother, motherland, for these values find them engraved in his heart. He uses many similes to describe that matchless love for his motherland and his yearning to be stuck to his mother parts of body. / take me as a veil to your eyelashes/ cover my bones with the grass blessed by your footsteps/ bind us together with a lock of your hair with a thread that trails from the back of your dress/ use me as a wood to feed your fire/ as clothesline on the roof of your house/. They are very impressive, realistic images manifest the great love of the Palestinian to his country.

5. Exile as A Part of Identity Formation

Who Am I, Without Exile?

A stranger on the riverbank, like the river ... water
 binds me to your name. Nothing brings me back from my faraway
 to my palm tree: not peace and not war. Nothing
 makes me enter the gospels. Not
 a thing ... nothing sparkles from the shore of ebb
 and flow between the Euphrates and the Nile. Nothing
 makes me descend from the pharaoh's boats. Nothing
 carries me or makes me carry an idea: not longing
 and not promise. What will I do? What
 will I do without exile, and a long night
 that stares at the water?

Water
 binds me
 to your name ...
 Nothing takes me from the butterflies of my dreams
 to my reality: not dust and not fire. What
 will I do without roses from Samarkand? What
 will I do in a theater that burnishes the singers with its lunar
 stones? Our weight has become light like our houses
 in the faraway winds. We have become 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 ... what
 will we do without exile, and a long night
 that stares at the water?

Exile becomes for Palestinians a part of their daily life as strangers. Exile has been enforced on the Palestinians and the return becomes a dream far reached in soon future. If it is fulfilled, Palestinians feel another sort of exile and *Ghurbah*. Mahmoud Darwish in *Who Am I, Without Exile?* releases the suffering and loss whether in host country or in his home after very long journey deprived of it. Darwish describes himself as a stranger and bring to our memory the image of the landscape: the river, the water that brings life to the river. The water is the hope that preserves our life. He is still exiled, dislocated, and lost, nothing return him back to his home just memories of his landscape. He believes neither war nor peace; nothing can bring him back to his Home. Here the poet reveals his despair with all peace talks that could not make everlasting peace that can guarantee the rights of Palestinians and guarantee the return of Palestinians to their home. Exile becomes his inescapable world despite his continuous yearning to his people, place and landscape: river, palm tree, water, land, etc. The Palestinian recognizes well that his identity is reconstructed in exile. /...we are now loosened /from the gravity of identity's land.../

Water
binds me
to your name ...
There's nothing left of me but you, and nothing left of you
but me, the stranger massaging his stranger's thigh: O
stranger! What will we do with what is left to us
of calm ... and of a snooze between two myths?
And nothing carries us: not the road and not the house.
Was this road always like this, from the start,
or did our dreams find a mare on the hill
among the Mongol horses and exchange us for it?
And what will we do?
What
will we do
without
exile?

Darwish here uses the image of water to revive life in his soul. The river without water is nothing and the landscape without trees are nothing, for this reason, he wants to be involved to the water that bring life and promise for the future. /water binds me to your name/ there's nothing left of me but you, and nothing left of you but me, the stranger massaging his stranger's thigh: / the image is impressive and cast light on the reality of the situation in Palestine. This poem reflects a wide range that reflects Palestinians struggle in exile, whether in occupied land, or in Israel, or in exile. The lives of Palestinians are reshaped by the realities of the new location, political, social, and cultural situations. Edward Said (1992) in the *Question of Palestine* argued the Palestinian identity and he asserts that "each Palestinian community must struggle to maintain its identity on at least two levels: first, as Palestinians with regard to the historical encounter with Zionism and the precipitous loss of homeland; second, as Palestinians in the existential setting of day-to- day life responding to the pressure in the state of residence" (121).

Here the reality of exile and reconstruction of identity well expressed by Barbara Parmenter (1994) when she points out the relationship between Palestine as home and exile as a refuge of Palestinians to continue their lives in peace. She pointed out "whereas the Israelis establish their place by transforming nature- draining swamps, irrigating arid lands, and building cities, Palestinian writers cling into the indigenous landscape and its relict features for inspiration and support" (79). These words are correct in regards with the relationship of Palestinians to the elements of landscapes, Darwish who yearning to the elements of life in his home's landscape. The image of river, water, palm tree, etc they bring a strong bond between Palestinians, as strangers, and their imagined community, which definitely has taken a new form after these long years of exile.

Darwish's poem reveals the internal and the external repercussions of inescapable exile, whether at the level of psychological effects or through the physical actions that results from exile restrictions and yearning to motherland. *Who Am I, Without Exile* explores the sense of landscape and its symbolic representation portrayed the struggling of Palestinians inside or outside Palestine. It shows an unstable life of exile at the level of psychological and physical instability, under the influence of dislocation which sometime requires to move from a place to another inside the country or moving to another country. On an artistic perspective, the images of river, water, palm trees, and the image of the stranger who has nothing just his country and the country has nothing but the stranger are fresh, alive and cast an

irony to the life of exile. The exiled Palestinians have no options to their suffering in exile as well as the emotional turmoil, feelings of humiliation and indignity that life in exile imposes on Palestinians. River, water, palm tree, are viewed by the poet as symbols of survival. Darwish attempts to show that Palestinians want to create a new life in exile that is full of short moments of prosperity and pleasures while they expect the worse at any moment of their exile. They are troubled by the repercussions of exile and the daily news coming from their motherland. Darwish in *Mural* writes, "I don't want to return to any country after this long absence, I want only to return to my language..." In one of the interviews, Darwish asserts, "poems can't establish a state. But can establish a metaphorical homeland in the minds of the people. I think my poems have built some houses in this landscape" (Politics of Poetry 1).

6. Conclusion

Darwish is one of the contemporary Arab poets who managed to reach a matchless position as a poet of Palestinian people. His experience as an exiled, jailed and a refugee stamp his poetry with nationalism and make his words and images come expressive and impressive. His words and images appear spontaneous and alive and reflect nationalist topics related to the landscape of the place and the hard living of the people. The four poems analyzed here reveal the great love to his motherland and the sufferings of Palestinians in exile. However, exile could not make the poet in particular and Palestinians in general forget his love for his Home. Darwish's poems discussed here concentrate on identity as a Palestinian struggling in exile to maintain Palestinian nationalist identity in a world gets smaller by the tools of globalization, which do not respect the specifications of the nations. Further the element of dislocation whether inside Palestine or outside of Palestine works on reconstructing the identity of the exiled people and turn them to strangers inside or outside Palestine.

Darwish poetry is marked by searching for identity and appealing to Palestinians' landscape that envelopes his poems with sweet memories in his imagined community. His themes have taken national and revolutionary stamp that manifest his bravery, his defense of his postcolonial identity and his nationalist issues such as his poem 'Identity Card' and other poems discussed in this article. He uses the words and pronouns that assert his identity such as 'I am- my root, my mother's bread...etc' and make a bond between him and Palestinian landscape: olive trees, palm trees, river-water-...etc. all these symbols are symbols of life and symbols of peace as the branch of olive which symbolizes peace. The long years of exile could not eradicate these symbols from the poet's memory. Homeliness and search for Palestinian identity are a product of pains and sufferings in exile.

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