Exile in Contemporary Palestinian Poetry

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Abstract

In contemporary Palestinian poetry, the motif of exile does not appear as a matter of choice but is imposed upon it by the political and social circumstances which the Palestinian people had encountered in 1948. Exile is the antithesis of homeland and invites the use of motifs derived from the conflict between separation from one's homeland and soil and the desire to return. Among these motifs are memory, nostalgia, return, and absence. Contemporary Palestinian poets use the motif of exile as a sentimental response; for the poets Muḥammad al-Qaysī, Murīd al-Barghūthī, Ibrāhīm Naṣrallāh and ʿIzz al-Dīn al-Manāṣra exile is associated with departure, leaving home, death and nostalgia. Among the aforementioned poets, the motif of exile does not exceed the bounds of these sentimental meanings, while in Muḥammad Darwīsh's poetry it goes beyond this to take on the meaning of identity creation and alienation, since he perceived exile as an existential state. Here we attempt to show that the evolution of this motif in Darwīsh's works reflects it evolution in contemporary Palestinian poetry.

Keywords: Exile, accompanying motifs, Palestinian poetry, "the setback", exodus from Beirut, alienation

1. Introduction

The concept of exile can be traced back to the punishment meted out by God to Adam, whom he drove out of the Garden of Eden.[i] It is also represented in Cain's expulsion after his fight with his brother Abel. The philosophical view of death represents it as a kind of exile.[ii] According to Mansson, writing about exile may constitute a strategy for regaining something that has been lost, because exile involves first becoming detached from one's place and then a feeling of estrangement. Exile thus possesses two dimensions, material and spiritual. As for the literary form which exile may take, Jābir ʿUṣfūr is of the view that it was shaped "forcefully after the end of World War II. Clearly it existed also before, but it did not become a noticeable literary phenomenon until after that war, when colonialist imperialism waned with the rise of liberation revolutions in the third world."[iii]

The literature of exile possesses a number of unique features. It is a blend of expressions of alienation, composed of an imagined possession of two or more identities combined with the feeling of not belonging to any of them. It is a literature in which the overall perspective is based on the idea of the destruction of the unique and absolute identity. As such, it is a literature that crosses cultural, geographical, and historical boundaries and contains harsh direct dissections of the state of the exiled person, the collective from which he was uprooted and the collective that received him; however, it is also a literature that keeps away from hatred.[iv]

Fakhrī Ṣāliḥ explains the tangled nature and the difficulties involved in the concept of "literature of exile": It is indeed difficult to draw a network of meaning for exile and for the literature of exile under such complex circumstances, involving emigration, dispersion, absence from the homeland, uprooting, banishment, expatriation and voluntary migration in search of freedom or out of a desire for a better livelihood.

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In previous ages, migration was an individual matter, or involved small groups, but today there are entire societies that are dispersed from their original homeland, some willingly and others by force. Some of these diasporas were forced not only to give up their homeland but also to relinquish their mother tongue and their original culture and to become absorbed into new societies and cultures, as for example the Africans who live in France and the Indians and Pakistanis who live in Britain. They produce hybrid literatures, using English or French to express themselves, despite the difficulties which this raises for self-expression and the split it creates in their identity."[v]Exile represents the customs and traditions that make up one's identity, and which constitute one's personal fingerprint in the new place. As the Saudi writer, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Munīf (1933-2004) stated:

Indeed, the moment an exiled person puts his foot down on the new soil his attributes become defined and from that moment, he behaves in accordance with these imposed attributes, in addition to a set of thoughts, dreams, and beliefs. For he is transformed, at least in his own view, into an ambassador for an issue and a people, even if no one has appointed him! He is subjected to this role unwittingly and is completely shrouded in it. In exceptional cases the opposite happens: The exiled person flees forward and relinquishes his identity of his own free will in order to take on a new and different state, in which he imitates a desired role, however difficult it is to reach it".[vi]

Perhaps paradoxically one becomes more profoundly acquainted with one's homeland in exile, because separation makes one more aware of the distance. The mind sees the homeland better from the outside: However, the strangest thing which the exiled person experiences is that he becomes well acquainted with his homeland only in exile".[vii]

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Munīf also raises the question of how we view the homeland in exile: "However, with what eye do we see the homeland? Do we see it with the eye of childhood, as it was, or with the eye of the future, as we would like it to be? This is the challenging question that faces the writer in exile. We rarely encounter the image of the true, actual homeland, because that homeland is temporary, so what remains is only the past and the dream of the future".[viii]

Edward Said depicts the exiled person's situation as one of being uprooted: Exile, unlike nationalism, is fundamentally a discontinuous state of being. Exiles are cut off from their roots, their land, and their past. They generally do not have armies or states, although they are often in search of them. Exiles feel, therefore, an urgent need to reconstitute their broken lives, usually by choosing to see himself or herself as part of a triumphant ideology or a restored people. The crucial thing is that a state of exile free from this triumphant ideology - designed to reassemble an exile's broken history into a new whole – is virtually unbearable and virtually impossible in today's world".[ix]

The Palestinian exilic experience has been extremely painful. The 1948 defeat in Palestine was a turning point in modern Arabic literature.[x] In fact, Palestinian literature flourished mostly in exile; it may be fair to say that no other literature has taken shape and evolved to this extent in the crucible of exile. Palestinian literature can only be treated as a literature of exile, absence from the homeland and an attempt to preserve a threatened identity.[xi] The prospects for the Palestinians' dream of return are unclear, and therefore Palestinian life is filled with yearning for their home, while exile is a project without a program.[xii]

Exile may be perceived as part of the Arab liberation movement against colonialism in the Arab world, since political circumstances and Arab reactionary regimes have forced many intellectuals to forsake their countries:[xiii]Exile becomes a state of mind, a mood, whenever, as in the case of the Palestinians, the exiling power deploys its might not only to confiscate, repress, and colonize lands but also to uproot national cultures, resources, feelings, and lifestyles."[xiv]Edward Said points to the moral irony of expulsion in the Palestinian cause, since émigrés expelled another nation.[xv]

2. The motif of exile among Palestinian poets

The motif of exile can be found not only in Palestinian poetry, but in prose as well, especially in novels and autobiographies, where they document the childhood of writers who left their homeland. This literature revolves around basic themes like return and nostalgia, the latter of course being the opposite of the concept of exile.[xvi] Writers who were deprived of their homeland construct their memory of it be means of evoking individual and collective remembrances of their previous lives there.[xvii]

Furthermore, "In these texts words function as an ultimate means to preserve the lost home/land, the Palestinian identity in collective mind and memory";[xviii] exile, "according to the autobiographies, is first and foremost the material of a displaced people who have lost most of their property, lead a daily struggle for their survival, and encounter little sympathy from others".[xix]

Palestinian literature may be divided into three parts: Literature inside Israel's 1948 borders, literature in the West Bank since 1967, and the literature of the Palestinian dispersion.[xx] Space does not permit us to discuss the characteristics of each of these in detail. Our aim is to treat the motif of exile, which in this article will be carried out by way of a textual analysis of poetic passages from the perspective of their content on one hand, and the stylistic devices which characterize the use of this motif on the other.

A perusal of Palestinian poetry reveals that most poets used the motif of expulsion at the sensory level. This is reflected in most poems. For Palestinian poets exile constitutes an obstacle to their return and their poetry is full of nostalgia. Maḥmūd Darwīsh succeeded in overcoming this Romantic approach, if it may be called so, as we shall see below. The motif of exile as the basic theme can be found in the works of poets who actually experienced life in exile or, more accurately, in Palestinian poetry composed in the dispersion. This is only natural, since those who live in exile can make a more credible artistic statement about it than those who do not.

Exile became instilled in Palestinian poetry due to the political circumstance in which the native population was transformed from a majority to a minority. The conflict with the Zionist narrative concerning the land caused Palestinian poets to express their adherence to the soil at a number of points in time, beginning with the defeat of 1948, then the defeat of 1967 and finally the exodus from Beirut in 1982.[xxi]According to Jayyusi, the main characteristic of Palestinian poetry in the dispersion is its powerful sense of place as depicted from the place of exile.[xxii] She adds that what defines Palestinian society both inside the homeland and in the dispersion is its tragic nature and that it is difficult for literature to reflect the experience of a nation that is in a constant state of siege without viewing it as a tragedy.[xxiii] At the same time, exile has become an agent in the battle for freedom and independence.[xxiv]

In his poem "Fī al-manfā" ("In Exile") the poet Muḥammad al-Qaysī (1944-2003) says:
I wonder who will tell the loved ones that we have not forgotten them
That we in exile live nourished by their memory
That we have not ceased to think of them
That our friendship at the dawn of life still delights us
And still accompanies us in these deserts in exile
We are in this foreign land
The spiders of this foreign land build their homes in our corners.[xxv]

Clearly here the poet's ego wraps itself around the collective self and speaks on its behalf. Absence from one's homeland is the first result of exile, and memory its antithesis, so that a conflict arises between memory, which retains the self's identity, and exile, which symbolizes annihilation. In the passage above, he compares the place of exile to a desert, at the level of place. Memory through this magnifying glass is what protects the exiled person's self from becoming obliterated in his new place. The poet expressed this using coded intertextuality in his transference of the concept of protection to the spider, which despite its weakness alludes to the protection of the Prophet as it wove its weak threads across the entrance to the Cave of Hira, and the external image to which he has recourse.

The equation of exile with death can be clearly seen in the poetry of the Palestinian dispersion, with which it is associated. In his collection al-Kanʿāniyyūn (The Canaanites; 1982) al-Qaysī says:

In the middle of exile
They wrote their names
And read the shroud.[xxvi]

Here the poet changed the collocation "on the open road" (ʿalā qāriʿat al-ṭarīq) into "in the middle of exile" (alā qāriʿat al-manfā), transforming the meaning from guidance to a place to loss and ruin; in other words, the poet here has reversed the meaning of this common phrase. In addition, the meaning of the verb "wrote" here is limited to naming the dead, as if it were an act of documenting collective death.

The poet Murīd al-Barghūthī (b. 1944)[xxvii] compares exile to constant departure. The heavy burden of leaving one's homeland turns him into a porter. This is what he says in his poem "al-ʿAttāl" ("The Porter"):

The exiled person said:
My yearnings are for you
The jewels of my memory
I carry like a porter
And walk
On the world's roads.[xxviii]

Here he divests himself of everything except "the jewels of my memory" which he carries, and turns walking on the world's roads into a symbol of a lack of permanence. The image of the porter conveys the same meaning, in addition to the rigors of the job. This is an external image that expresses the internal pain in one's place of exile.

Al-Barghūthī describes the journey into exile in detail and associates it with expressions taken from the semantic field of separation and harshness, such as "stranger", "hammers of time", "strait", "searing wind", "dust", "riotous shouting", "vanish from sight", as can be seen in the poem "al-Manāfī" ("Places of Exile"):

The caravan of day passes on without waiting for the stranger
The hammers of distant time appear to me across the strait
And the searing wind laden with dust
Riotous shouting: There is no escape
And the caravan of day vanishes from sight.[xxix]

The poet Ibrāhīm Naṣallāh (d. 1954) equated exile with silence and death, as in his poem "al-Manfā" ("Exile"):

Silence in the bones calcifies here
In the bird's song
In the meaning of the words
Silence spreads on the green, swallows the open spaces
Slithers like the vipers of the desert
Breaks through the neighing of the horses.[xxx]

Silence is the equivalent of death. The poet draws silence over man, bird, animal and word, in other words, over all manifestations of life, embellished with the following verbs: "spreads", "swallows", "slithers", "breaks through".

In contrast, the poet ʿIzz al-Dīn al-Manāṣra (d. 1946) made exile a living body and so was able to express it visually and dynamically. In the poem "al-Khurūj min al-baḥr al-mayyit" ("Exodus from the Dead Sea") he says:

You say they went east, went west, and went south, o doves
And smelled the north winds, which was like our cold exile
My mother's *mawwāl* songs on a desolate hill
Resist the harshness of what happened yesterday.[xxxi]

He drew this scene with similes and metaphors from the everyday life of the simple people. The directional confusion reflected in the verbs "went east, went west, went south …north" highlights his state of loss and exile. The poet's self addresses the doves, in a transition to the theme of departure and expulsion, common in Palestinian poetry and taken from popular literature, enhanced by several phrases with a negative meaning such as "our cold exile", "desolate hill", "harshness".

He also creates an intertextual connection with the poet al-ʿArjī's poem "Aḍāʿūnī" ("They Lost Me"):

> The exiled poet said as he wept:
> They lost me
> What youth did they lose?
> Two years passed. The land of the Byzantines is wide, and my grandfather
> Always stumbles.[xxxii]

The allusion here creates an ironic relation between the absent and the present text, since al-ʿArji in his verse says:

> They lost me and what youth did they lose / to a day of misfortune and plugging the breach.[xxxiii]

Here the aspect of vainglory dominates, but in al-Manāṣra's poem he speaks from a position of weakness. He weeps and his fortunes fail.[xxxiv]

Al-Manāṣra defines the place of exile in his poem "Jafrā … lā tuʿākhidhīnā" ("Jafrā, Do Not Hold It against Us" in a series of nominal sentences that convey the immovability associated with non-existence, death, fear and hunger. He describes exile visually and repeats the word "exile" in every line, using the anaphor to present an image of the material and psychological ruin caused by exile:

> Exile is wood and nails
> Exile O Jafrā is an open grave festering with worms
> Exile is cessation and borders
> Exile is fear or hunger
> Exile is a root pulled out
> Exile is a felled tree.[xxxv]

2.1 The motif of exile in the poetry of Maḥmūd Darwīsh

Maḥmūd Darwīsh (1941-2008) in his uses of the motif of exile parts company with other Palestinian poets, especially in his initial phase. He succeeded in developing this motif and to give it meanings that go beyond its sensory aspects, as we shall see below.

Darwīsh is considered one of the most important poets among Palestinians and in the Arab world as a whole. His poetic career spanned nearly half a century, during which his unique poetic talent made him a "legendary poet", to use Angelica Neuwirth's expression.[xxxvi] His oeuvre clearly reflects the evolution of Arabic poetry in general. Darwīsh lived through the experience of exile twice in his life, first when he was seven years old and then once again when he made his own choice and left the country in 1970. Yair Huri considers him as one of the most important poets in exile in contemporary Arabic poetry.[xxxvii] In an article he wrote "About Exile" that was never published in a book, Darwīsh noted that "Since my childhood I lived the experience of exile in the homeland and also lived the experience of exile abroad. I was a refugee in my own homeland and abroad. I experienced prison as well; prison is also exile. In the internal exile, I tried to liberate myself with words and in the external exile; I tried to realize my return with words. Words became a way and a bridge, and perhaps a place of residence. And when I returned, metaphorically, the external and the internal exiles became mixed together, because exile had become part of my poetic formation, because it was also real."[xxxviii] Al-Musawi states that "Darwish's poems of exile reinstate moods and agonies in a textual terrain that uncovers the shame of coercive ideology".[xxxix]Anyone who follows the evolution of the motif of exile in Darwīsh's poetry will also notice how the motif developed in Palestinian poetry in general. This development may be divided into three parts: Exile – the reaction; exile – molding an identity; and existential exile.

2.1.1 Exile – the reaction

A survey of the motif of exile in Darwīsh's poetry reveals that it occurs 163 times in all, from his first collection of poems ʿAṣāfīr bilā ajniḥa (Wingless Birds; 1960) to his last, Lā urīdu li-hādhihi al-qaṣīda an tantanhiya (I Do Not Want This Poem to End; 2009). The motif in question did not constitute a leading theme in his poetry during the first stage, when he still lived in Israel. During this period, it appeared twenty-five times and encompassed the following meanings: Uprooting, prison, expulsion. Until the 1970s the poet used this motif as a response to the conflict over the place, to embody meanings of the loss of one's geographical domain. At this stage, exile for Darwīsh was associated with aspects of adversary responses such as defiance, resistance, and sacrifice.

He speaks about the experience of exile involving geographical displacement in his poem "Risāla min al-manfā" ("Letter from Exile") in the collection Awrāq al-zaytūn (Leaves of Olives; 1964), where he tells the story of a young man who left his village in search of work:

> Greetings, and a kiss
> I have nothing to say as yet
> Where shall I begin? And were shall I end?
> The cycle of time is without bound
> And all I have in my absence from home
> Is a bag with dry bread, passion,
> And a notebook that takes from me some of what I bore.[xl]

Absence from the home is a motif that accompanies that of exile very prominently at this stage of Darwīsh's poetic career. It is associated with a sensory lexicon: Bag, dry bread, notebook. In his poem "ʿĀshiq min Filasṭīn" ("A Lover from Palestine") Darwīsh speaks about place and addresses his lover, the soil:

> But I am he who has been exiled beyond the wall and the gate
> Take me under your eyes
> Take me wherever you are
> Take me however you are
> I will return to myself the color of my face and body
> The light of heart and eye
> The salt of bread and a melody
> The flavor of the soil and the homeland.[xli]

The repetition of the phrase "Take me" indicates the state of weakness and desperation in which the poet finds him. What, he asks of his beloved, are the basic elements of human dignity and life, as indicated also by the words "The salt of bread and a melody / the flavor of the soil and the homeland"? The motif of exile takes on an ironic aspect when the poet in "Nashīd lil-rijāl" ("Hymn for Men") in the collection a Lover from Palestine asks the Prophet for advice on what he should do. The orientation and the discourse reflect a dialogue between the poet's weak ego and the sanctity, heritage, culture and authority represented by the figure of the Prophet:

> With Muḥammad
> Hello! I wish to speak to Muḥammad the Arab
> Yes! Who is speaking?
> A prisoner in my own land
> Without soil
> Without a flag
> Without a home
> My family has been cast into exile
> They have come to buy fire from my voice
> So I could come out of the darkness of the prison
> What should I do?
> Resist the prison and the jailor
> The sweetness of faith will melt the bitterness of the bitter apple.[xlii]

The poetic self lays the reality bare and depicts in the harshest terms: "A prisoner in my own land." He also uses negation, which helps enhance the black picture of reality by deepening the crack in the poet's self. Exile imprisons both the exiled person and the expeller. The exiled person becomes prisoner of the place of exile's language and words while the expeller becomes the jailor who is present every second of the prisoner's life. This identification between expeller and exiled person transforms the dialectic of exile into a sensory contest which the poetic self experiences every day. In the collection al-ʿAṣāfīr tamūtu fī al-jalīl (Birds Are Dying in Galilee; 1970) Darwīsh says in the poem "Rītā aḥibbīnī" ("Rita, Love Me"):

My place of exile is peasants imprisoned in the language of writing
My place of exile is jailors exiled in my voice.[xliii]

The tragedy of forced exile is manifested in the poem "Yawmiyyāt jarḥ filasṭīnī" ("Diary of a Palestinian Wound"):

Where is my family?
They left the tent of exile and returned
Captives once again.[xliv]

Now exile has become an equation composed of the words "tent", "left" and "Captives", clearly showing that the motif at this stage is sensory, just as it was among other Palestinian poets; in other words, exile is now associated with absence from the homeland and yearning for return.

2.1.2 Exile – molding an identity

Darwīsh in his poetry transformed the motif of exile into a device for creating a Palestinian identity. This meaning took shape after the poet left the country, and even more so after the exodus from Beirut in 1982.[xlv] Edward Said described it thus:

This need to reassemble an identity out of the refractions and discontinuities of exile is found in the earlier poems of Mahmoud Darwish, whose considerable work amounts to an epic effort to transform the lyrics of loss into the indefinitely postponed drama of return.[xlvi] The motif of exile became an umbrella for several other accompanying motifs, such as banishment from the homeland, yearning and return, because it is evoked upon detachment from one's place. However, at this stage it is used in a philosophically more profound manner and not in the obvious sensory lexical meaning, as was the case in the first stage. In his heroic poem "Madīḥ al-ẓill al-ʿālī" ("A Eulogy for the Tall Shadow"; 1983) Darwīsh says that the homeland will be transformed into an exile upon the return, because of the demographic and political changes it has undergone. The poet thus lives in exile no matter where he will be:

And if one day you come back
To what exile will you return,
To what exile will you return?[xlvii]
The dual nature of the homeland as exile becomes a basic dilemma in the poet's opinion:
No, I have no exile
For I say: I have a homeland
I swear by God, o time![xlviii]
After his return to Ramallah, Darwīsh said of his ambivalent feelings towards exile:

I do not really feel that I am in the homeland. I feel that I am in a big prison located on the soil of the homeland and as if I have not been freed from my exile. Because when you carry the homeland with you in exile you carry your exile in the homeland".[xlix] In the poem "Man anā dūna manfan" ("Who Am I without an Exile?") in the collection Sarīr al-gharība (Bed of a Stranger; 1999) Darwīsh abandons the sensory lexicon he used in his depictions of exile in the "stage of beginnings" with it expressions of expulsion and grief. Now he adopts a different perspective, expressed in dynamic language,[l] in which exile is transformed into a starting point through which the poet redefines reality. This redefinition can be seen in the following way the motif of exile is used:

Stranger on the riverbank, like the river.... water
Binds me to your name. Nothing brings me back from this distance
To the oasis: neither war nor peace.
Nothing grants me enter the gospels.
Nothing. Nothing shines from the shores
Of ebb and flow between the Tigris and the Nile.
Nothing lifts me down from the pharaoh's chariots.
Nothing carries me, or loads me with an idea: neither nostalgia,
Nor promise. What shall I do? What
Shall I do without exile? And a long night
Of gazing at the water?[li]

Notice the semantic connection between the motif of exile and those of yearning and separation from the homeland. The poet constructs his position through the use of contrasting expressions to emphasize his identity as a person in exile, a new identity that nothing will erase. His words "neither war not peace … neither nostalgia nor promise" and his five-fold repetition of the word "nothing" in the passage above show that he has no intention whatsoever of changing his identity as a person in exile. Fakhrī Ṣāliḥ confirms this:

There is a correlation in literature of exile, especially in Arabic, between separation from the homeland and exile. This is what we find in the writings of Palestinians. For example, in Maḥmūd Darwīsh's Bed of a Stranger all the love poems focus strongly on the idea of the stranger who searches for a woman stranger who would cure him of the wounds he suffers from his exile far from his homeland, from his feelings of solitude in the land of others. There is a sense of detachment from home and a lack of solid ground under one's feet, an addiction to the place of exile, and a definition of the self based on exile and not on any other form of existence. For this reason, neither love nor anything else can cure the exiled person from the injuries of his eternal exile. It is impossible to reverse the course of exile; even when he returns to his homeland such a person will continue to live in estrangement as an émigré.[lii]

2.1.3 Existential exile

Exile has often been associated with alienation[liii] and the great cosmic problems like love and death. Darwīsh no longer expressed the experience of exile with words that are directly connected to place after it had become an existential state for him,[liv] connected to an important motif in his poetry, namely absence. This is a motif that one does not find in the first state of Palestinian poetry, either in Darwīsh's works or in those of any other Palestinian poets. In Darwīsh's collection Arā mā urīdu (I See What I Want; 1990) he says, in his poem "Maʾsāt al-narjis malhāt al-fiḍḍa" ("The Tragedy of Narcissus, The Comedy of Silver"), in which he depicted the journey of the Palestinian in exile:

As for places of exile, they are places and times that change their kin.[lv]As if existentially exile had become the fundamental principle and everything else was secondary. This dialectic is confirmed by the following statement by the poet:O martyrs, you were right. For the home is more beautiful than the road leading to it, despite the flowers' betrayal. But the windows do not look out at the sky of the heart ….And exile is exile, here and there. We never went into exile in vain.[lvi]

When exile resides in the poet's mind then place is no longer the only defining characteristic in the exiled person's identity. In his collection Ka-zahr al-lawz aw abʿad (Almond Blossoms and Beyond; 2005) Darwīsh makes a distinction between the homeland and the place of exile in the poem "al-Ān fī al-manfā" ("Now in Exile"):

Now in exile, yes at home
At the age of sixty quick years
They light candles for you.[lvii]

The relationship with place in Darwīsh's works has become metaphysical. In the poem "Manfā III" ("Exile III") he says:

My wing was small on the wind that year
I figured that the place would recognize
The mothers and the smell of sage. No one
Told me that this place was called a land

And that beyond the land there were borders. And that beyond the borders there was a place called dispersion and exile,

Ours. I was not yet in need of an identity
But they, those who take us on
A tank move the place on trucks
To a ravenous region
The place is compassion.[lviii]

This transformation in the way Darwīsh deals with the dialectic of place of exile *versus* homeland shows that the poet no longer treats place as a geographical concept but as a reflection of the idea of the existential alienation which he experiences while his inward gaze reflects his mental state.In the poem "Qāla al-musāfir lil-musāfir lan naʿūd kamā" ("One Traveler Said to the Other: We Shall Never Return As We...."), the place of exile is fragmented into two types of ego, in an exile located in geographical space and the other an existential one that attempts to define its self without the use of geographical terms (here: the sea and the desert):

> I am you the addressee, it is not exile
> For me to be you. It is not exile
> For you to be me. And it is not exile
> For the sea and the desert to be
> The song of one traveler to another.[lix]

The dialectic relationship between the first and the second person here reflects the poetic self's constant worry and its awareness of the profound conflict represented by the self's split into two. Furthermore, the correspondence of sea and desert makes the desert into a symbol of the original location of the poet's culture in Arabia, while the sea symbolizes loss and exile.In the poem "Correspondence" addressed to his friend Edward Said, Darwīsh distinguishes between two kinds of exile, external and internal:

> Exile is the external world
> Exile is the internal world. Which of them are you?
> I do not know myself completely
> So I do not lose it. I am what I am
> I am my other in a duality
> That harmonize words with their reference.[lx]

The poet depicts the ego's loss or shattering as a state of existential worry that alternates between declaration/speech and allusion/reference. This may be due to the fact that the equation of exile underwent a transformation, especially in the first phase of Darwīsh's poetry, from the homeland as the basic state and exile as something temporary, to the place of exile becoming the basic state and the homeland a Paradise lost, after the exodus from Beirut. The latter is particularly evident in his last poetry collections.

Conclusion

The way Palestinian poets use the motif of exile may be characterized as follows: The speaking ego is the collective self, and therefore the speaker in the text is the conscience of the group. The lexicon which the poets use is of a sensory nature, perhaps as compensation for the state of loss which they experience. This means that the poets use external phenomena as a means for expressing their own internal state. We note the use of accompanying motifs such as yearning for place and family, and a feeling of being away from home.

Stylistically this was also reflected in Darwīsh's poetry in the initial stage. However, he came to differ from other poets after the exodus from Beirut, when he began to use the technique of posing questions indicating doubt, searching and lack of stability. He depicted his experience going from the inside outwards. The speaking ego dominated his poetry, and while at the beginning the equation he used was exile versushomeland, in his latest collections exile had become a component of the poet's cosmic identity.

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[i]Gohar, 2011:228.

[ii]Mansson, 2003:31.

[iii]Ibid., 34.

[iv]ʿAbdullāh Ibrāhīm, http://thawra.alwehda.gov.sy/_print_veiw.asp?FileName=57123186020080527222020

[v]Fakhrī Ṣāliḥ, http://www.alarabimag.com/arabi/Data/2009/9/1/Art_90737.XML

[vi]Munīf, 2001:79.

[vii]Ibid.:87.

[viii]Ibid.:94.

[ix]Said,2000:177.

[x] Jayysi believes that the *nakba* or defeat in 1948, despite the catastrophe that it represents, played a role in creating awareness of the bankruptcy of the Arab *ancien régime* and created a desire for liberation among Arab peoples, as demonstrated by the revolutions that took place in the Arab world in the 1950s and 1960s: Jayyusi, 1992:7-8.

[xi]Fakhrī Ṣāliḥ, http://www.alarabimag.com/arabi/Data/2009/9/1/Art_90737.XML. See also: Tabori, 1972:37.

[xii]Sadi, 2015:217.

[xiii]Gohar, 2011:230. According to Mena the literature of exile may be classified as part of post-colonialist literature: Mena, 2009:112.

[xiv]Al-Musawi,2006: 190.

[xv]By this he means the Israeli occupation: Said, 2000:178.

[xvi]Susanne, Enderwitz, " 'Home' in Palestinian Autobiographies", in: Ken Seigneurie (ed.), *Crisis and Memory: The Representation of Space in Modern Levantine Narrative* (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2003), p. 224.

[xvii]For more details on exile in Palestinian autobiographies and novels see: Juliane Hammer, "A Crisis of Memory: Homeland and Exile in Contemporary Palestinian Memories", in: Ken Seigneurie (ed.), *Crisis and Memory*, p. 177; Abir Hamdar, *Exile, Home and Identity: Constructing Alternative Spaces in* The Homeland *by Hamida Nana*, in: Ken Seigneurie, *Crisis and Memory*, pp. 211-222.

[xviii]See Ibrahim Taha and Ken Seigneurie (eds.), *Crisis and Memory: The Representation of Space in Modern Levantine Narrative.Middle Eastern Literatures*, 10/2 (August 2007), p.191.

[xix]Susanne Enderwitz, "'Home' in Palestinian Autobiographies", in: Ken Seigneurie, *Crisis and Memory*, p. 225. Exile may also be the opposite of this: "Exile can be a mental state without the experience of real exile", ibid., p. 226.

[xx]The distinguishing characteristic of the literature inside the 1948 borders is that after the Arab defeat of that year the Arabs inside Israel became isolated from the other Arab societies because of the military rule that was used as a tool for control over the Arabs in Israel. In addition, the censorship on literature made poets use symbols in order to escape the censor's scissors. Furthermore, most prominent Arab poets inside Israel were sentenced to house arrest or prison, a state of affairs that is reflected in their poems. Typical motifs of Arabic literature inside Israel are steadfastness, adherence to the

soil despite the confiscations, resistance, and the peaceful demonstrations that became the strategic choice of the Arab minority inside Israel.

The literature of the West Bank, which became known as such after the defeat of 1967, is characterized by despair of the Arab regimes, diminution of Arab nationalism, the Palestinian attempt to rely on themselves in the battle of liberation and the dream of return and armed resistance.

In the literature of the Palestinian dispersion the poets described the iniquities of the Arab regimes. The inability of Palestinians to obtain citizenship, as happened in Lebanon, greatly affected the feelings of Palestinians in exile. These poets also quite clearly allowed themselves greater freedom in expressing their dream of returning to their homeland, of their solitude, and of their sufferings in exile. See Taha 2000:228-229.

Also see Sadi, who discusses the issue of exile and return in Palestinian literature in all its stages: Sadi, 2015:216-243; Ashrawi, 1976:3-12.

[xxi]Darwīsh gave expression to the story of the exodus from Beirut in his heroic poem "Madīḥ al-ẓill al-ʿālī" ("A Eulogy for the Tall Shadow").

[xxii]Jayyusi, 1992:47.

[xxiii]Ibid.:61.

[xxiv]Gohar, 2011:232.

[xxv]Al-Qaysī, 1999, vol. 1:17.

[xxvi]Ibid., vol. 2:101.

[xxvii] Richard van Leeuwen analyzes Murīd al-Barghūthī's autobiography *I Saw Ramallah*, where he notes, with respect to al-Barghūthī's relationship to place: "'The relationship to a place, which had defined his relationship to reality, is transformed from a real, material point in space, to an imaginary space, existing only in memories, fantasies, and stories", Richard van Leeuwen, *A Journey to Reality: Mourid Barghouti's I Saw Ramallah*, p. 201; "places lose their meaning", ibid., p. 200.

[xxviii]Al-Barghūthī, 1997:188.

[xxix]Ibid.:725.

[xxx]Naṣrallāh, 1994:525.

[xxxi]Al-Manāṣra, 1994:135.

[xxxii]Ibid.:146/

[xxxiii]Al-ʿArjī, 1956:34.

[xxxiv]In the poem "Accept Our Condolences ... in Any Exile" he says "In what exile shall we hold the ceremony of mourning? / Why has the face turned away from you / We sell our tears to Persia and Byzantium / The level ground, the voice and the slope are still in our blood / The voice, the level ground and the slope are still in our blood / are still ...", ibid.:243.

[xxxv]Ibid.:345.

[xxxvi]Neuwirth, 2008:190.

[xxxvii]Huri, 2006:56.

[xxxviii]Darwīsh: http://www.darwishfoundation.org/atemplate.php?id=273

[xxxix]Al-Musawi, 2006:190.

[xl]Darwīsh, 1971:33; see also Nassar, 2008:197.

[xli]Darwīsh, 1971:83-84. In this collection Darwīsh treats Palestine like a beloved woman, thus pointing to the connection between exile and place; Palestine is depicted as a wife who lost her husband in the battle for freedom. See Gohar, 2011:231.

[xlii]Ibid.:157.

[xliii]Ibid.:276.

[xliv]Ibid.:344. Darwīsh gives expression to the experience of exile in refugee camps in his poem "al-Qatīl raqm 48" ("Fatality No. 48"). The refugees in Lebanon became a symbol for all Palestinian refugees.

[xlv]In his *Dhākira lil-nisyān* (*Memory for Forgetfulness*) Darwīsh says: "Put this in your record!"—an old rhythm I recognize! "Put this in your record"—I recognize this voice, whose age was twenty-five. Oh, what a living time! Oh, what a dead time! Oh, for a living time rising from a dead time! "Put this in your record: I'm Arab!" I said that to a government employee whose son might now be piloting one of these jets. I said it in Hebrew to provoke him. But when I put it in a poem, the Arab public in Nazareth was electrified by a secret current that released the genie from the bottle. I didn't understand the secret of this discovery, as if with the gunpowder of identity I had stripped the minefield of its thunderbolt. This outcry then

became my poetic identity, which has not been satisfied with pointing to my father but chases me even now. I didn't realize it was necessary to say it here in Beirut: "Put this in your record: I'm Arab!" Does the Arab have to say this to his fellow Arabs? Oh, what a dead time, oh, what a living time!". Quoted in Mhawi, 1995: 174. See, Tabori, 1972:37.

[xlvi]Said, 2000:179.
[xlvii]Darwīsh, 1994:53.
[xlviii]Ibid.:55.
[xlix]Wāzin, 2006:127.
[l]Huri, 2006:58. Neuwirth is of the opinion that Darwīsh views the world through the dialectic of homeland/exile: Neuwirth, 2008:183.
[li]Darwīsh, 1999:112-113; Akash, 2003:113.
[lii]Fakhrī Ṣāliḥ, http://www.alarabimag.com/arabi/Data/2009/9/1/Art_90737.XML
[liii]According Najami and Ajjawi, "In Darwish's last book of collected poems, the theme of "exile" is strongly present with a feeling of chronic alienation and the loss of life of the exiled who awaits time, place and restoring the past. Darwish invited himself and those who suffer from the same distress to try to live again and to take the initiative to "walk" toward the other. Also, we notice in his last books the repeated call to "carry the road" and to trust the role of the will in achieving hopes". 2014: 281. See Williams, 1983: 33-37; Schacht, 1971: 9-13.
[liv]Huri, 2006:57.
[lv]Darwīsh, 1994:423.
[lvi]Ibid.:435.
[lvii]Darwīsh, 2005:17.
[lviii]Ibid.:157.
[lix]Darwīsh, 1995:113-114.
[lx]Ibid.:184. He expressed the same idea in prose as well: "Exile has many names, and two aspects, internal and external. Internal exile is when a man leaves his society and his culture. It is a profound gaze into oneself, due to the change in one's perspective on the world and in the meaning of one's presence in the sight of others. One therefore feels different, a stranger. This kind of exile has no physical borders, for it is located inside the self that has been deprived of its personal freedom to think and express oneself, whether because of an oppressive political regime or due to the authority of tradition. This happens in the place that is the opposite of the definition of "exile", inside the homeland. External exile is the separation from one's authoritative space, from one's first place and one's emotional geography. It means a sharp break in the course of one's life, a profound fracture in its rhythm, here. Exile bears all the elements that constitute his self: Childhood, nature, memory, language, defending his unique features and identity. The way he expresses his yearning for his homeland takes the form of prayer to something holy. Here the exiled person becomes different from the others: He is afraid that he will become absorbed and will forget. He lives at the broad margins between "here" and "there". He comes to realize that his far-away land is solid, while the land of the others is strange and soft. The exiled person is the outsider *par excellence*, who does not belong to any place outside his first memory. Memory becomes a land and an identity; its contents are transformed into objects of worship. The exiled person thus magnifies the beauties of his land and attributes to it features of Paradise lost. And when he looks angrily at history he does not ask himself: Am I the son of history or merely its victim? http://www.darwishfoundation.org/atemplate.php?id=273