



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Section: *Literature, Linguistics & Criticism*

The social approach in Mahmoud Darwish's Poem "To My Mother": An analysis of the symbolism of identity and nostalgia

Rakan Abu Arabi Adwan¹, Ismail Suliman Almazaidah^{2*} , and Asma Sayel AlTalafeeh³¹Sociology Department, University of Jordan²Arabic Language and Literature Department, University of Jordan³English Language Section, University of Jordan*Correspondence: i.mazaydah@ju.edu.jo**ABSTRACT**

This research aims to explore the relationship between the social approach and prison literature, with a focus on Mahmoud Darwish's experience as a poet of the Palestinian cause. The study seeks to understand how Darwish's texts reflect the social and political contexts that influenced them, emphasizing the symbolism of his poem "To My Mother" as a representation of identity, nostalgia, and connection to the homeland.

The research adopts the social approach in literary analysis, interpreting texts as reflections of social and political realities. This approach is employed to study Darwish's works within the contexts of the Palestinian Nakba, exile, and diaspora. The analysis also incorporates prison literature to understand the feelings of alienation and oppression evident in his works.

The study revealed that the social approach highlights Darwish's ability to intertwine the individual and collective suffering of the Palestinian people. The poem "To My Mother" showcases the symbolism of the mother as a personification of the homeland and a longing for roots in the face of exile and alienation. The study also demonstrated that prison literature and Darwish's works share common themes of oppression and deprivation while emphasizing hope for liberation and return.

The findings confirm that the social approach is an effective tool for understanding Mahmoud Darwish's works, as it helps uncover the connections between literary texts and social and political issues. Darwish's literature authentically represents the Palestinian experience in the diaspora, enriched by its ability to convey the suffering of his people to the world through profound symbolism and a deeply human style.

KEYWORDS: social approach, Mahmoud Darwish, prison literature, Palestinian Identity, nostalgia, symbolism

Research Journal in Advanced Humanities

Volume 6, Issue 2, 2025

ISSN: 2708-5945 (Print)

ISSN: 2708-5953 (Online)

ARTICLE HISTORY

Submitted: 20 January 2025

Accepted: 18 February 2025

Published: 08 June 2025

HOW TO CITE

Adwan, R. A. A. ., Almazaidah, I. S. ., & AlTalafeeh, A. S. . (2025). The social approach in Mahmoud Darwish's Poem "To My Mother": An analysis of the symbolism of identity and nostalgia. *Research Journal in Advanced Humanities*, 6(2). <https://doi.org/10.58256/scwz9t42>



Published in Nairobi, Kenya by Royallite Global, an imprint of Royallite Publishers Limited

© 2025 The Author(s). This is an open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Research Significance

The primary objective of this research is to examine the relationship between the social approach and prison literature in the works of the poet Mahmoud Darwish. The study investigates how social and political experiences, particularly those related to the Palestinian cause, are reflected in Darwish's works. Through this analysis, the research aims to provide a deeper understanding of how Palestinian literature represents major issues such as identity, alienation, and exile. The study emphasizes the importance of the social approach in interpreting literature as a mirror of the social and political realities in which it is produced.

Research Objective

This research aims to employ the social approach in analyzing the works of Mahmoud Darwish, particularly his famous poem "To My Mother," to understand how social and political issues such as exile, occupation, and nostalgia are represented in literary texts. It also seeks to examine how literary symbols, such as "the mother," are used to represent concepts like homeland and Palestinian identity.

Research Hypothesis

The central hypothesis of this research is that Mahmoud Darwish's literature, through his poem "To My Mother," reflects the Palestinian experience of exile and diaspora, utilizing the social approach to analyze the impact of social and political circumstances on literary texts. The literary text plays a significant role in shaping social and political awareness and can be read as a tool of resistance and cultural expression that conveys the suffering of an entire people.

Research Problem

The primary problem addressed in this research is how the social approach influences the analysis of prison literature and resistance literature, particularly in the works of Mahmoud Darwish. How can poems serve as a mirror of Palestinian society, especially in the context of occupation and exile? Can the symbolism in his works simultaneously express collective and individual suffering?

To address this problem, several questions can be posed:

- How does Darwish's literature reflect the interaction between the self and the community under social and political circumstances?
- To what extent can the poem "To My Mother" be interpreted through the social approach, particularly in light of its symbolism?
- How does Darwish, through his literature, portray the suffering of Palestinians in exile, and how is this suffering reflected in the structure of his texts?

Literature Review

Several studies have explored the social and artistic dimensions of Mahmoud Darwish's poem "To My Mother," highlighting its structural, stylistic, and symbolic aspects. A study titled "Social Criticism in the Poem "I Long for My Mother's Bread"" by Mahmoud Fawzan and others, published in 2023, examines the structure and values of Darwish's poem through a qualitative descriptive methodology. The research finds that the poem's physical structure encompasses elements such as imagery, language, meter, and rhyme, while its conceptual structure focuses on meaning and intention. Furthermore, the poem emphasizes ethical values related to divinity, individuality, and society, reflecting its deep social impact.

Another study, "The Aesthetic Style in the Poem "To My Mother" by Mahmoud Darwish", published in 2022 by Dalal Lazazqa and others, investigates the poem's stylistic beauty using a stylistic approach. This research highlights the aesthetic features of sound, vocabulary, imagery, and meaning, with particular attention to techniques such as deviation, repetition, and contrast. These stylistic devices enrich the poem's meaning and enhance its emotional impact on readers.

A third study, "The Symbolic Structure in Contemporary Poetry of Mahmoud Darwish: The Symbolism of Women in "To My Mother" and "I Love You or I Don't Love You" as Examples", published in 2014 by Mariam Amroush and others, explores Darwish's use of symbolism, particularly regarding the portrayal of women.

Focusing on the poems “To My Mother” and “I Love You or I Don’t Love You,” the study identifies women as symbols of motherhood, homeland, love, and beauty. It also analyzes how female symbolism intertwines with political and poetic elements, emphasizing the influence of social and political realities on Darwish’s depiction of women.

Together, these studies provide a comprehensive understanding of “To My Mother” as a multifaceted work, revealing its rich interplay of structure, style, and symbolism while reflecting the profound social and political contexts that shaped Darwish’s poetry.

Introduction

This research explores the application of the social approach in literary studies, focusing on prison literature and the works of Mahmoud Darwish, one of the most prominent literary voices in the Palestinian struggle. Literature plays a vital role in shaping cultural and social awareness; it is not merely an individual creative effort but a reflection of the reality experienced by the writer. Literature serves as a mirror of the social and political conditions surrounding its creation, making it a powerful medium for expressing human and societal issues, particularly during critical times that demand cultural and political resistance, as is the case in the Palestinian context.

This research is based on the central hypothesis that literary texts, especially those belonging to prison literature and resistance literature, express the intricate interplay between the individual and the collective, as well as between the self and the surrounding social and political environment. In this context, Mahmoud Darwish emerges as a distinctive poetic voice through which he articulated the suffering and aspirations of the Palestinian people. He employed profound humanistic and national symbols to address the major issues faced by Palestinian society.

The study focuses on the poem “To My Mother”, one of Mahmoud Darwish’s most prominent works. Despite its personal tone, expressing the poet’s longing for his mother, the poem transcends the boundaries of an individual relationship to become a text embodying a collective experience. It symbolizes a lost homeland and a threatened identity. Within the context of this poem, the mother transforms into a symbol of the homeland, the land, and the roots to which the displaced and exiled Palestinian longs to return. This symbolism highlights the deep connection between literature and society and demonstrates how literary texts can convey profound social and political messages through simple human symbols.

The study applies the social approach to understand the dimensions of the poem “To My Mother”. This approach analyzes the relationship between the text and its social and cultural context, focusing on how major societal issues, such as occupation, exile, and identity, are reflected in literary works. It also examines how literature can serve as a tool for resistance and the expression of cultural values. Through analyzing this poem, the research aims to explore the connection between the individual and society, highlighting how Darwish merges his personal experience of estrangement with the collective experience of his people enduring the same suffering.

The research further seeks to study literature as a form of cultural resistance, particularly in the context of prison and resistance literature. Prison literature represents a unique genre that addresses issues of oppression and deprivation, where the literary text becomes a means to challenge material and cultural constraints. Through his poetry, Darwish demonstrates how poetry can give a voice to the voiceless, and how simple human symbols, like the mother, can be transformed into profound carriers of national and political meanings.

Furthermore, the research aims to shed light on the role of the social approach in analyzing literary texts that embody the experience of resistance. By examining the profound symbolism employed by Darwish, particularly the symbolism of the mother in his poem “To My Mother”, the study demonstrates how poetry can unite personal and collective experiences, transforming the text into a medium that expresses human suffering—not only as an individual experience but also as part of a community enduring oppressive circumstances.

Ultimately, this research represents an attempt to understand the social and political dimensions in Mahmoud Darwish’s works and how his poetry reflects a profound interaction between the individual and society. By applying the social approach to “To My Mother”, the study hopes to highlight the significance of literature as a tool for understanding social and political contexts and as a means of expressing both human and national struggles. This analysis serves as a step toward a broader exploration of resistance literature and prison

literature, showcasing how these texts can reflect human suffering while simultaneously inspiring individuals to preserve their identity and roots.

The Social Approach in Literary Criticism

The social approach is one of the modern critical methodologies that emerged within contemporary literary studies. It focuses on analyzing literary texts as reflections of the social reality in which they were produced, viewing them as outcomes of the cultural, economic, and political interactions within society. This approach is considered an extension of realist critical theories that date back to the 19th century, particularly with the rise of Marxism as an intellectual and ideological framework aimed at understanding literature in its social context and its role in driving change. Many critics attribute the development of the social approach to the writings of Georg Lukács and Theodor Adorno, who laid the groundwork for studying literature as a mirror of social and political realities (Abu Haif, 2001, p. 15). Within this framework, the task of the creative reader becomes essential: it is their role to bring together the disparate components and instruments of the text, which are all interconnected, to form the overall structure that the author aimed to communicate using a variety of techniques (Al Thunebat et al., 2024, p. 234). By doing so, the reader not only uncovers the text's artistic value but also its deeper sociocultural significance.

The social approach is based on the idea that literature is not merely an isolated form of pure art but rather a human creation that interacts with the social, economic, and cultural environment it represents. Consequently, a literary text becomes a document that reflects the values, issues, and social phenomena characteristic of a particular era. The French critic Hippolyte Taine famously stated, "Literature is the child of the environment in which it was born, and it must be understood through three factors: race, milieu, and moment" (Taine, 1968, p. 28). This highlights the importance of the social approach in uncovering social structures and analyzing class and economic conflicts, especially in literature that addresses the struggles and tragedies of peoples.

The History of the Social Approach and Its Prominent Figures

The 20th century witnessed a significant rise in social criticism, closely tied to the economic and social transformations experienced globally, such as the two world wars and workers' revolutions in Europe. The works of Karl Marx and his followers laid the theoretical foundation for the social approach, as they viewed literature as an expression of class struggle and a reflection of the prevailing production relations within society (Al-Sayed, 2012, p. 49).

Marx's ideas in literary criticism were further developed through the writings of Antonio Gramsci on the concept of the "organic intellectual," emphasizing the intellectual's role in guiding the masses and raising social awareness through literary texts. The Hungarian critic Georg Lukács played a pivotal role in the development of the social approach, highlighting that the realist novel is the ideal form for depicting social transformations due to its ability to present complex portrayals of reality (Lukács, 1983, p. 90). Lukács also emphasized that great art reflects the dialectical relationship between the individual and society, making the social approach an effective tool for analyzing literary works that address class and political struggles.

In the Arab context, the application of the social approach in literary criticism became evident in the mid-20th century, particularly among Arab critics who focused on interpreting literary texts in light of national and social issues. Prominent figures such as Ghali Shukri and Hussein Mroue offered critical readings that highlighted how literature became a means of expressing the aspirations and struggles of the people.

Applications of the Social Approach in Literature

The social approach has proven its effectiveness in analyzing numerous global and Arab literary texts by focusing on the social and political values expressed within the works. Realist novels such as *Les Misérables* by Victor Hugo and *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy offer a truthful reflection of European society during their time, depicting social injustice and class struggles that emerged in post-industrial revolution Europe.

In Arab literature, the novels of Naguib Mahfouz serve as exemplary applications of the social approach. His trilogy *The Cairo Trilogy* portrays the transformations in Egyptian society across different historical periods, highlighting the conflicts between tradition and modernity and the dynamics of various social classes. As the critic Hussein Mroue remarked, "The realist novel is not merely a literary art form; it is a social document that

records the historical transformations of society” (Mroue, 1978, p. 53).

The social approach is also evident in resistance literature, where the writer becomes a witness to the realities of their people, expressing their hopes and sorrows. In Ghassan Kanafani’s novel *Men in the Sun*, the narrative reflects the suffering of Palestinians following the Nakba and the sense of loss they experienced as a result of the Israeli occupation (Kanafani, 1963, p. 31).

The Social Approach and Poetry

The application of the social approach is not limited to novels but extends to poetry, where poets express the issues of their societies through texts imbued with clear social and political dimensions. In the poetry of Mahmoud Darwish, one can distinctly observe how poetry intertwines with social and political concerns, particularly the Palestinian cause. Darwish contributed to shaping the image of the Palestinian homeland in contemporary poetry, highlighting his people’s suffering and their dream of freedom.

In his renowned poem “On This Earth,” Darwish captures this profound connection between poetry and the collective experience of his people. He writes:

“On this earth, there’s what deserves life:
April’s hesitation,
The aroma of bread at dawn,
A woman’s incantation for men,
Aeschylus’ writings,
The beginning of love,
Grass on a stone,
Mothers standing on a flute’s thread,
And the invader’s fear of memories.”
(Darwish, 2005, p. 111)

These verses embody the profound connection between poetry and Palestinian society, expressing the suffering of its people and their hope for change. Similarly, Mahmoud Darwish’s poem “State of Siege” illustrates the impact of political and social conditions on the poet and his daily life. In the poem, he writes:

“Here, at the slopes of hills,
Facing the sunset and the cavity of time,
Near orchards deprived of shade,
We do what prisoners do,
What the unemployed do:
We nurture hope.”
(Darwish, 2002, p. 9)

Through these lines, Darwish captures the resilience of the Palestinian spirit, showing how poetry serves as a mirror of societal struggles and as a means of preserving hope amidst adversity.

The social approach in literary criticism is an effective tool for understanding literary texts within their social and historical contexts. By focusing on the dialectical relationship between literature and society, we can uncover the profound dimensions of literature as a means of expressing collective consciousness and the struggle for change. Poetry, as a flexible art form, interacts with its social and political environment to reflect the issues and concerns of the people.

Prison Literature: A Reflection of Human Suffering

Prison literature is one of the most prominent forms of resistance literature, as it conveys the harsh human experiences within prisons and documents the suffering of individuals facing political and social oppression. This genre often takes the form of memoirs, novels, or poems, highlighting themes such as freedom, identity, and belonging.

This genre of literature became particularly prominent in modern Arabic literature with the rise of national liberation movements and the suffering of intellectuals and activists in prisons, especially under colonial occupations or dictatorial regimes (Bakkar, 2015, p. 37). One global example is *This Blinding Absence of Light* by Tahar Ben Jelloun, while numerous Arabic texts document such experiences under Israeli occupation or other oppressive regimes.

A significant example of Arabic prison literature is Abdul Rahman Munif's novel *East of the Mediterranean*, which illustrates how individual suffering in prison transforms into a collective experience that embodies oppression and tyranny (Al-Taher, 2016, p. 22).

Mahmoud Darwish and the Palestinian Cause

Mahmoud Darwish is a poetic symbol of the Palestinian cause, skillfully blending the personal and the collective, as well as individual experiences with the collective suffering of his people. His works represent a form of cultural resistance, rejecting occupation and displacement while solidifying Palestinian identity.

In his famous poem "Identity Card", Darwish writes:

"Take record!
I am an Arab
And my identity card number is fifty thousand
I have eight children
And the ninth will come after summer...
Will that anger you?"
(Darwish, 2005, p. 80)

This poem clearly reflects his adoption of the social approach, emphasizing the class and national dimensions of the Palestinian struggle under occupation. Darwish also frequently used the mother as a symbol of the homeland and the land, as exemplified in his poem "To My Mother", which overflows with human emotions and a longing for roots (Hamada, 2017, p. 19).

Darwish's works represent a powerful intersection of literature and politics, with his texts serving as a mirror of the Nakba and the occupation of Palestine. Through his poetic language, he transformed tragedy into a universal human discourse (Al-Bazour, 2018, p. 25).

The Social Approach and Darwish's Works: A Critical Perspective

The poetry of Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish provides fertile ground for applying the social approach in literature, as he masterfully conveyed the suffering and aspirations of his people through deeply artistic and expressive works. His poems reflect the multifaceted dimensions of the Palestinian cause, from the Nakba of 1948 to exile, diaspora, and the ongoing Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands. Darwish's works consistently address the social and political issues that affect Palestinian lives, making them a genuine representation of the ongoing Palestinian struggle. Through everyday symbols and poetic techniques that are both simple and profound, Darwish created literary texts that carried the pain and dreams of his people to the world.

Analyzing the poems "Identity Card" and "To My Mother" through a social lens reveals how they reflect the class and political structures of Palestinian reality under occupation. In "Identity Card", Darwish paints a poignant picture of the racial discrimination and injustice Palestinians face in their homeland. He illustrates how the restrictions imposed on Palestinians affect their identity and societal status.

In "To My Mother", Darwish delves into the themes of displacement and exile, expressing the internal conflict of Palestinians living in the diaspora, torn between feelings of estrangement and painful memories of their homeland. These works highlight the personal and collective struggles of the Palestinian people, serving as a powerful testament to their resilience and longing for freedom.

Mahmoud Darwish's works not only express the suffering of Palestinians but also embody their yearning for freedom and justice. Through his unique use of language and poetic imagery, Darwish transforms social and political issues into universal messages that resonate with audiences worldwide. Researcher Abdel Fattah Mesila

noted in his study that “Darwish’s literature reflects the profound gap between Palestinians and their reality, while simultaneously carrying a call for hope and change” (Mesila, 2019, p. 45). Similarly, researcher Hussein Abdullah emphasized that “the social poetry in Darwish’s works represents a creative tool of resistance against oppression and injustice” (Abdullah, 2020, p. 58).

In his work “The Role of the Social Approach in Literary Criticism”, Youssef Al-Sayed highlighted that social literature serves as a powerful means to unveil political and class issues in oppressed societies, thereby enhancing literature’s capacity to inspire change (Youssef Al-Sayed, 2012, p. 49).

These analyses demonstrate that Darwish’s literature was not merely a reflection of reality but also a critical tool that illuminated the social and political dimensions of the Palestinian struggle. His works remain central to understanding Palestinian culture and the broader Arab reality, serving as a bridge between artistic expression and societal transformation.

Discussion

Mahmoud Darwish’s poem “To My Mother” is a deeply evocative work that transcends personal emotion to reflect the collective experience of the Palestinian people, rooted in their social, cultural, and political realities. By employing the social approach, the poem can be understood as a mirror of the poet’s environment, shaped by the circumstances of exile, displacement, and the struggle for identity. This approach reveals how the poem not only articulates Darwish’s personal longing for his mother but also serves as a powerful commentary on the broader Palestinian experience of loss, resilience, and hope. The poem’s richness lies in its ability to intertwine the personal with the collective, using the figure of the mother as a multifaceted symbol of love, homeland, and cultural identity.

At the heart of the poem is the experience of exile and alienation, a recurring theme in Darwish’s work. The poet’s longing for his mother is inextricably linked to his longing for his homeland, which has been rendered inaccessible due to occupation and displacement. The mother, in this context, transcends her individual role and becomes a symbol of the homeland itself—a source of love, safety, and belonging. This transformation is evident in the poet’s evocative imagery, where the mother’s bread, coffee, and touch are not merely personal memories but symbols of a lost way of life. For instance, Darwish writes:

“I long for my mother’s bread,
My mother’s coffee,
And my mother’s touch...”

These lines are not just an expression of personal longing but also a deep yearning for the simplicity and security of a life disrupted by occupation. Bread, a staple of daily sustenance, represents the continuity of Palestinian traditions and the simplicity of a life now distant. Coffee, with its connotations of warmth and shared moments, evokes the intimacy of familial and cultural rituals. The mother’s touch, tender and nurturing, signifies the emotional and spiritual connection to one’s roots. Through these symbols, Darwish captures the essence of Palestinian identity, which is deeply tied to the land, its traditions, and the collective memory of its people. The poem also delves into the theme of childhood, which is portrayed not merely as a stage of life but as an emotional state characterized by innocence and security. The poet’s longing for childhood reflects a desire to return to a time untainted by the hardships of exile and imprisonment. This is poignantly expressed in the lines:

“And childhood grows within me
Day after day,
And I love my life because,
If I die, I will be ashamed of my mother’s tears.”

Here, the poet’s love for life is intertwined with his respect for his mother, emphasizing her role as a source of unconditional love and resilience. The phrase “the shame of my mother’s tears” underscores the cultural reverence for the mother, who occupies a sacred position in Palestinian society. This connection highlights the cultural values that place the mother at the center of the family, embodying both personal and collective

strength. The poet's yearning for the simplicity of childhood is thus a yearning for the stability and purity of a life rooted in one's homeland and cultural heritage.

Sanctity and sacrifice are also central to the poem, as Darwish elevates the mother to a divine status, imbuing her with extraordinary power and purity. The poet's desire to become part of his mother, even symbolically, reflects a deep yearning for reconnection with the homeland. This is vividly illustrated in the lines:

“Take me, if I return one day,
As a scarf for your lashes,
And cover my bones with grass
Baptized by the purity of your feet.”

The imagery of grass “baptized by the purity of your feet” intertwines life and death, suggesting that the homeland, embodied by the mother, is the ultimate source of immortality and continuity. The repeated plea, “Take me,” underscores the poet's longing for return and embrace, while the metaphor of the scarf symbolizes his wish to be reunited with his roots. This sanctification of the mother reflects the social values that regard her as the ultimate source of life and unconditional love, a figure who grants strength and purpose to her children. The emotional and social dimensions of the poem are further enriched by its exploration of familial bonds and cultural values. In Palestinian and Arab societies, the mother is revered as the cornerstone of the family, a source of tenderness and security. Darwish's portrayal of his mother as a symbol of the homeland reinforces this cultural ideal, highlighting the deep connection between familial love and national identity. The poet's willingness to sacrifice himself for his mother mirrors the Palestinian values that sanctify sacrifice for family and homeland. This theme is echoed in the imagery of prayer and forgiveness, where the mother's prayers are depicted as a source of spiritual and social security. The poet writes:

“Place me, if I return,
As fuel for your fire...
A clothesline on your rooftop.”

These lines highlight the poet's readiness to sacrifice himself for his mother, reflecting the social obligation to protect and honor the family and homeland. The poem's exploration of these themes underscores the centrality of the mother in both personal and collective identity.

The search for roots is another recurring theme in the poem, as Darwish expresses a desire to reclaim his stolen childhood and return to his lost home. The imagery of the “nest of waiting” symbolizes the family home and the homeland, to which the poet longs to return. This longing is poignantly expressed in the lines:

“I have aged; return to me
The stars of childhood
So I can join
The little sparrows
On the path back... to your nest of waiting.”

Here, the “nest of waiting” represents the enduring hope for return, a theme that resonates deeply with the Palestinian experience of displacement. The poet's yearning to reclaim his childhood reflects the broader desire to restore a sense of belonging and identity that has been disrupted by exile and occupation.

The poem's impact on its audience lies in its ability to bridge the personal and the collective, transforming individual longing into a universal expression of loss and hope. Through the figure of the mother, Darwish conveys the cultural and social values that define Palestinian identity, emphasizing the importance of familial ties, attachment to one's roots, and the sanctity of the homeland. The poem serves as a poetic testimony to the suffering of the Palestinian people, while also embodying their collective dream of return. It is a powerful reminder of the role of literature in expressing social and political issues, offering a lens through which to understand the complexities of identity, memory, and resistance.

Conclusion

In conclusion, “To My Mother” is not merely a personal ode to the poet’s mother but a profound reflection of the Palestinian experience, shaped by the realities of exile, occupation, and displacement. Through the symbolism of the mother, Darwish captures the essence of Palestinian identity, rooted in a deep connection to the land and its traditions. The poem’s exploration of themes such as childhood, sanctity, sacrifice, and the search for roots underscores the interplay between personal emotion and collective memory. From the perspective of the social approach, the poem emerges as a powerful commentary on the social and political realities of its time, offering a compelling call to preserve cultural values and identity in the face of loss and alienation.

The poem’s ability to connect individual longing with the collective struggle of the Palestinian people is one of its most striking features. By articulating the pain of exile and alienation, Darwish gives voice to a shared experience, making the poem resonate with anyone who has faced similar struggles. The mother, as a symbol of the homeland, becomes a universal figure of love, resilience, and hope, embodying the enduring spirit of a people determined to reclaim their roots and identity.

Thus, “To My Mother” stands as a testament to the enduring resilience and hope of the Palestinian people, inviting further exploration of the symbolic and historical depth of literary texts in their diverse contexts. It is a poignant reminder of the power of poetry to articulate the complexities of human experience, bridging the personal and the collective, and offering a voice to those who have been silenced by history. Through this poem, Darwish not only honors his mother but also immortalizes the struggle and aspirations of an entire nation.

References

- Al-Thunebat, S., Al-Masarwah, T. I., & Almazaidah, I. S. (2024). The duality of cohesion and coherence in Ibn Zurayq's poem "Do Not Reproach Him." *International Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, 13(2), 227–239. <https://doi.org/10.55493/5019.v13i2.5036> [https://doi.org/10.55493/5019.v13i2.5036​;contentReference\[oaicite:0\]{index=0}](https://doi.org/10.55493/5019.v13i2.5036​;contentReference[oaicite:0]{index=0}).
- Bazour, Ahmad. (2018). *A Reading of the Poem "Identity Card" from a Social Perspective*. Mohamed Khider University of Biskra, Issue 8, p. 25.
- Taher, Ahmad. (2016). An Analysis of the Novel East of the Mediterranean by Abdul Rahman Munif. *Journal of Critical Studies*, Issue 12.
- University of M'sila. (2019). The Aesthetic Style in Mahmoud Darwish's Poem "To My Mother". *Journal of Language and Literature Sciences*, Issue 5.
- Lukács, Georg. (1983). *Studies in Realism*. Translated by Abdel Qader Al-Qat. Dar Al-Adab.
- Mroueh, Hussein. (1978). *Materialist Trends in Arab Philosophy*. Dar Al-Farabi.
- Darwish, Mahmoud. (2002). *State of Siege* (2nd Edition). Dar Riyad Al-Rayyes, Beirut.
- Darwish, Mahmoud. (2008). *Diwan: The First Collection of Poems 1* (1st Edition). Dar Riyad Al-Rayyes, Beirut.
- Darwish, Mahmoud. (2008). *Diwan: The First Collection of Poems 3* (1st Edition). Dar Riyad Al-Rayyes, Beirut.
- Bakkar, Adel. (2015). *Prison Literature in Modern Arabic Literature: An Analytical Reading*. Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi.
- Hamada, Abdul Rahman. (2017). An Analysis of Mahmoud Darwish's Poem "To My Mother". *Journal of Critical Studies*, Issue 15.
- Abu Haif, Abdullah. (2001). The Social Approach in Arab Literary Criticism. *Journal of Language and Literature*, Issue 9.
- Abdullah, Hussein. (2020). *Palestinian Poetry and Social Criticism*. Library of Social Sciences.
- Kanafani, Ghassan. (1963). *Men in the Sun*. Dar Al-Tali'a.
- M'sila, Abdul Fattah. (2019). *Palestinian Resistance Literature*. Dar Al-Thaqafa Publishing House.
- Taine, Hippolyte. (1968). *Philosophy of Art*. Translated by Sami Al-Droubi. Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi.
- Al-Sayyed, Yusuf. (2012). *The Role of the Social Approach in Literary Criticism*. Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi.