



## Aspects of Intertextuality in Mahmoud Darwish's Poetry Collection "Do Not Apologize for what you have Done"

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**Abstract:** *The study undertakes a thorough analysis of the intertextual elements in Mahmoud Darwish's poetry collection "Do not Apologize for What You Have Done" (2004). This collection stands distinct from earlier ones in that it addresses the shattering of an imagined, exile memory of home, upon reunion with it, following long years of travel. The volume is characterized by its rich intertextual displacement and recovery. The intertexts evidently present in the collection are Sodom, Troy, Andalusia, Lorca, Jesus, Mohammad, Joseph, Gilgamesh, Hammurabi, alSayyab, Al-Ma'arri, and Abu Tammam. The researchers classify these intertextual references into five categories in relation to the speaker's intense reflections on past and present identities. The interchange of the textual and the intertextual signals a crisis between the imagined and the real homes.*

**Keywords:** Intertextuality; Mahmoud Darwish; National Memory; Transformation and Memory Crisis.

### 1. THE INTERTEXTUAL MOSAIC

Julia Kristeva has been credited by the majority of critics for having invented the term "intertextuality." In her seminal work, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (1980), Kristeva has demonstrated how texts are usually constructed from already existing ones. Authors do not create their texts in a vacuum, but they often do so in relation to other authors and/or texts. As signs travel in the intertextual space, they enter into relationships with other signs, and, by virtue of these relationships, they gain new meanings. Thus, the text becomes a space where "several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another" (Kristeva 1980, 36). Kristeva explains that "each word (text) is an intersection of words (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read" (66).

Accordingly, texts often embody two types of relationships. There is first the network of relations between the elements that are present in the text. Often, the relationships of presence have formative powers- events have agents, characters interact; words form by the power of textual structures, and not through their implications. These relationships are necessarily textual ones which form in relation to other units that precede or follow them. The second type, according to Ibrahim et al. (1996, 45-46), marks symbolic relationships- one signifier calls on another, and one fact recalls other facts; hence, the signifier does not acquire meaning in isolation from other signifiers but from the relationships it has with them.

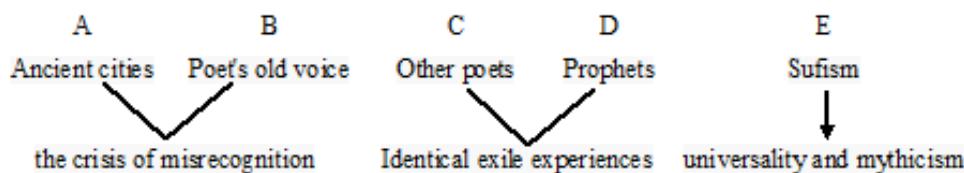
The signifiers inside the text often establish relationships of significance with other intertextual references from outside the text, e.g. hoof prints in muddy soil are traces of horses; the lipstick on cigarette filters signals feminine presence; potteries, weapons, and tools to an archeologist tell stories of ancient people.

Darwish is one writer who is well-known for heavily using allusions from other writers' work and voices and deploying them to serve his own purposes. His texts are made up of a network of allusions in which the threads converge and diverge only to redirect the readers to other texts. It is not uncommon to find four intertexts in four short lines of free verse or prose poetry; numerically, out of sixteen words, four are allusions to other poets, prophets, Canaanite deity, or other types of intertexts. Therefore, as we will demonstrate in this paper, reading Darwish can become a rather challenging exercise in the grouping, distribution and redistribution of intertexts. In fact, he once was asked "why

don't you say things we understand?" Dawrish sounded a bit elitist when he responded by saying "why don't you understand what I say?" (khrief, 97)

A text's meaning is understood, in Kristeva's view, as a temporary re-arrangement of old elements within textual space. Meaning, then, is to be tabulated in relation to both textual and non-textual elements. Unpacking the intertext is a four-step process: 1) identification of the reference; 2) recovering the original meaning; 3) relating it to other intertexts; 4) marking the private meanings, i.e. the poet's deployment of the intertexts in his/her own context. Kristeva has stated that: "any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another" (Kristeva 1980, 66). This paper focuses on this dynamic deployment of intertexts in one famous collection; they come in five types and reference both religious figures (Adam, Jesus, Joseph, Mohammad), ancient civilizations (Sodom, Troy, Andalusia), other poets (Abu Tammam, alSayyab, Lorca), Sufism (transcendence, metaphysical love, shedding the body of space), in addition to Darwish's own old voices. We connect these intertexts to the mismatch between the imagined and the real in the case of Darwish.

The intertextual and conceptual mosaic in this collection is shown in this figure:



## **2. AN OVERVIEW OF THE POET'S STATUS AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

Mahmoud Darwish (1941-2008) is one of the most internationally renowned Palestinian resistance poets. Upon his death, he has left behind twenty six poetry and eleven prose poetry collections; amongst the most famous of his works are *Leaves of Olives* (1964), *A Lover from Palestine* (1966), *A Soldier Dreaming of White Lilies* (1973), *Victims of the Map* (1984), *Memory for Forgetfulness* (1987), *Bypassers in Bypassing Words* (1991), *Eleven Stars* (1992), *Why Have You Left the Horse Alone?* (1995), *the Butterfly Burden* (2008), *The Mural* (2000), *Don't Apologize for What You Have Done* (2004) *Almond Blossoms and Beyond* (2005).

Darwish experienced the refugee camp life early in his childhood. When he was six, he found himself with his family in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon; his home village (AlBirwa) was destroyed by the Israeli forces in the 1948 War. Like many other Palestinians, Darwish served several terms in the Israeli prisons for his political activism during 1961, 1965, 1967, 1969, and 1971. Between 1971 and 1982 he lived in Beirut where he worked as the chief editor for *The Journal of Palestinian Affairs* and the director for the Palestinian Liberation Organization research institute.

Darwish received several regional and international prizes for his literary achievements; amongst the most renowned prizes are The Lotus Prize for Asian and African writers, India, 1969, The Mediterranean Prize by the Mid Cultural Center, Italy (1981), Linen Prize, Soviet Union (1983), The French National Order of Merit by the French Ministry of Culture (1997), The Cairo Prize for Poetry and Innovation (2007).

## **3. WHY THIS COLLECTION?**

In national literature, it is often the case that the individual voice is subdued to the collective; when in suffering, the collectivity tends to absent the individual voice only to foreground the objective and the collective voice. Anna Bernard has read Palestinian authors, one of them is Edward Said, as national allegories. One of the distinctive features of the Palestinian autobiography is that its protagonist is an embodiment of a nation; his or her autobiography is either generational or collective. While describing his or her personal experience, s/he identifies with or reflects an experience of a generation or a collective whole. Wail Hassan notes that in Palestinian autobiographies 'private feelings, and private life are inextricably woven into the fabric of collective history'. This theory, however, does not apply to Darwish's "Don't Apologize for What You Have Done". In the collection, the case is reversed. The individual voice predominates all other voices. The first person pronoun resounds in the poems as a voice for the self, not the collectivity; it becomes the window to an inner struggle over meaning with an old imagined homeland. Indeed, this fact is what tempts the researchers to classify

this collection as a testimony to the author's personal feelings towards his homeland. Darwish resoundingly declared it as his own individual space:<sup>1</sup>

LIT. I follow my own insight

أمشي على هدي البصيرة، ربما

To give the story a personal slant

أعطي الحكاية سيرة شخصية

The story comes in the first person singular to tell of an inner crisis between the imagined and the real spaces. The crisis is configured through heavy use of intertextual references to past and present historical, political, and religious figures whom Darwish employs to: a) seek immortality for his own vision; and b) signal that his own epic had precedence in modern and ancient history. The intertextual elements nicely intertwine with the perception of home when away or the experience of home when at home.

The poems grow out of a polarization of the temporal with the spatial, the national with the individual, the physical with the metaphysical, and the imagined with the real. Such polarizations occur in a space where the self reunites with the collective in a tragic fashion. Darwish relies heavily on intertextual references to his own earlier texts on one hand and to the texts of other authors as well. The text, therefore, sounds new and ever renewable. Although the text cross references Darwish's earlier experience, the speaker's encounter with old memories of home has opened the speakers eyes to new realities. He defines himself as the 'him' to whom his mother will sing her own songs:

LIT. I'm him: and she got ready for singing

إنني هو: فاستعدت للغناء

in her own way

على طريقتها

"I am his mother who brought him here

أنا الأم التي ولدته

But the winds has raised him up"

لكن الرياح هي التي ربتة

I told my other: Do not apologize but to your mother

قلت لآخر: لا تعذر إلا لأمك

The return from exile has ushered a new phase in the poet's life which the years and winds of exile has shaped and that he himself will have to mould anew. Now, he has to redraw his own narrative, symbols and mythologies over again. The fear of death for the old self has brought in new visions and a new self with a new story which outlasts death.

Indeed, the new episode requires answers to baffling questions: Will there ever be a story for one who has returned from the dead? Can he choose his own rhymes and beats? Can he have the wisdom of someone who has been condemned to death? Will such wisdom grant him a new life? And what will he do with the old story?

Darwish has painted no rosy reality; instead, he has presented the tragic encounter with perplexing realities. A happy ending (an independent state; return of the refugees; unity of the exile with home) is not within reach. The old narratives cannot be retrieved or recaptured with ease. The present, then, becomes the 'objective correlative' for the new years of loss, exile, and pain.

#### **4. ANCIENT CITIES AND CIVILIZATIONS**

Darwish's "Do not Apologize for What you Have Done" bespeaks of a tragic reunion; memory is disfigured; and rebirth a miscarriage. Much of the imagery in this collection marks a state of loss - eternal exile and broken present. Old cities and civilizations are cited to mark this tragic end. They make up the intertexts which express the fear from eternal exile. Looking forward is the 'snake bite', and so is looking backward; both are equally painful:

Lit. My language carries me to our unknown destiny

تطير بي لغتي إلى مجدها الأبدى

Behind our broken present

خلف الحاضر المكسور من جهتين

If you look back you will awaken Sodom

إن تنظر وراءك توقيط سدوم المكان

Sinful as it may be...

على خطئته ...

And if you look forward you will awaken history

وإن تنظر أمامك توقيط التاريخ

Both will equally bite you

فاحذر لذعة الجهتين

<sup>1</sup> The literal translation for these and all other quotations are done by the researchers. They are provided for the convenience of readers who are unable to read Arabic script.

Darwish references Sodom from the Old Testament. Religious texts tell us that Sodom is a city in ancient Palestine which was burned down as a punishment for its people's sexual transgressions. The Lord rained down heavenly fires on the city when its citizens disobeyed their prophet Lut ibn Haran who carried the Lord's warning against these and other corrupt practices. The city becomes a symbol for self-inflicted destruction and for enraging the Lord; referencing Sodom carries modern significance of loss and disintegration in the Arab World, much of which seems to be self-inflicted. The memory of the past invokes Sodom when you look back, and, if you look forward you awaken tragic history again. Both bite you painfully in the mouth- a torturous , tragic kiss.

A state of anxiety and agony overtakes the speaker's whole being and pushes him to recall old objects which also open new wounds; anti-romantic images are used in connection with the Muslim history in Andalusia:

LIT. The sea winds wound me...The night scents wound me	فيجر حني هواء البحر ... مسك الليل يجر حني
Jasmine necklace on people's words wound me	وعقد الياسمين على كلام الناس يجر حني
Contemplating the spiral roads in the turfs of Andalusia wound me	ويجر حني التأمل في الطريق اللولي إلى ضواحي الأندلس

The sea breeze, the Jasmine necklace, and contemplating the neighborhoods of Andalusia all tap his wounds. Andalusia is today's southern Spain where Muslim Umayyad rulers established a flourishing civilization between the eighth and the fifteenth century. The last Andalusian Muslim Mohammad XII handed the keys of Alhambra palace in Granada in 1492. The spiral road leading to Andalusia hurts the poet's being. The intertext serves as a reminder of the Palestinian loss which might turn eternal.

Similarly, the legendary Troy recalls the famous siege and destruction of the city by Greek armies under king Agamemnon around 1200 B.C. Troy is cited as an exemplar of the loss and exile, which the Palestinians, having lost their homeland, will relive in the contemporary history. They travel between tragic destinies; their story is drafted behind the pages of history books. What's behind the page? a state of Homeric waiting for the apocalypse right where the promised apocalypse will happen in the chapter after the last:

LIT. From destiny to destiny they travel	كأنهم يأتون من قدرٍ إلى قدرٍ
Their fates drafted behind the text	مصائرهم مدرونةً وراء النص
A Greek myth from Troy	إغريقيةً في شكل طرُوادِيَّة
Black or white	بيضاء أو سوداء

....

What's after this Homeric waiting	وماذا بعد هذا الانتظار الهوميري
Waiting for the apocalypse, here,	ننتظر القيمة، هنا، في دارها
In her home, in the chapter before the last	في الفصل ما بعد الأخير

Troy is the bad omen which reveals the sorrowful end for the long-awaited destiny of the Palestinian exiles. Jabra Ibrahim Jabra in *The Ship* makes an interesting analogy between Ulysses and the Palestinian exile's attempt to return home. Apparently, Palestinian authors have employed the myth as a space through which they subvert or resist the futility of the return of the Palestinian exile.

Darwish opts for a second exile in the city of Tunisia. The city hosted the Palestinians after their second exodus from Beirut in 1982. Darwish like many other Palestinians exiles lived there until after signing the Oslo agreement in 1993. Tunisia, therefore, represented a second home for the Palestinians, a tranquilizer or potent pain reliever, where home is not a home and exile is not exactly an exile:

LIT. "Follow me," she says	وابتعني
"I will reside in Tunisia between two brackets," I say	أقول لها: سأمكث عند تونس بين منزتين
Home here is not a home	لا بيت هنا بيتي
Neither is exile an exile!	ولا منفأي كالمنفى

The speaker chooses travel again, a self-willed second exile. Home comes to have multiple signified; it is literally his own home which stands vacant except from old memories; at another level, it is his

village which has been erased from the map; at a yet third, higher, and more generic level, it is his own country which does not anymore feel like home.

##### **5. THE POET AS AN INTERTEXT: MISRECOGNITION OF AN OLDER SELF**

To turn the poem into human action and to remove the layers of doubt and the confusion in his own thoughts, Darwish opts for mixing times – the past time of exile, the time of return, and the time of writing. His earlier self becomes the intertext for his current perplexed condition.

The intertextual references here mark a split between the old and the new selves. A poet, a defiant voice, a revolutionary, a national icon, the author of the Palestinian national anthem, the writer of the Palestinian declaration of independence document, and a maker of the Palestinian national identity, Darwish turns into a note at the end of a sad violin song - a sign of an impaired memory and of an undesired split between the individual and the collective voices which resides inside his self. A violinist plays the song, while the poet remains without agency - he is selected by the violinist as the object for a sad song. Evidently, the Palestinians have never been authors of any of the realities surrounding them or those happening to them. Their realities are the products (echo) of many players from Belfour onwards.

LIT. I am the violin's sad note though not the violinist  
In the presence of memory  
The echo of things Speak of me

أنا رجع الكمان، ولست عازفه  
أنا في حضرة الذكرى  
صدى الأشياء تتطق بي

This is certainly not a happy, relaxing violin music, or the smell of fragrance on the neck of a strange beautiful woman following a long romantic night in a strange city. Confronted with the memory of things, he only hears the echo of old words and could see the remnants of spatial realities over which he has no control or agency any more. The lines mark complete disappointment and a crisis of misrecognition for an older self:

LIT. I walk, introducing myself to itself  
You self is one feature of the place  
Three deserted churches  
Broken minarets  
Oaks on both sides  
Villages like dots erased from their letters  
A girl on the grass questioning a shadow  
Why did you grow and not wait for me?

أمشي، أعرّف نفسي إلى نفسها  
أنتِ يا نفسُ، إحدى صفاتِ المكان  
ثلاث كنائس مهجورة  
مآذن مكسورة  
سنديان على الجانبيين  
قرىٌ كنقاط على أحرفِ مُحيَّت  
وفتاة على العشب تسأل طيفاً  
لماذا كبرت ولم تتنظرني؟

The echo becomes an intertextual reference signifying past memories severed from the present days, though the past is still evidently alive in the poet's memory. He could hear the echo of his soul resounding from older home objects to which he has given names and meanings. These objects - broken minarets, deserted churches, the oaks on the sides of the road, traces of destroyed villages, and the girl of his young years- have all been erased. The voice then becomes united with space and a witness to its old features before it was transformed and renamed by the Israeli armies and authorities.

These are old childhood memories associated with his native village Albirwa, which is a Palestinian village located in the Galilee where Darwish lived with his family before the Nakbah (catastrophe) in 1948. Following the armistice, the family returned to the village only to find that an Israeli Moshav Ahlyoud and Kibuts Yesour Faash were erected on the ruins. The family lived in Al-Jdeydhah village ever after. As he walks around, he matches the remembered with the real and recollects his memories of this Galilee village. The disfigured memory is the cause for the crisis. "I walk introducing myself to itself," he says. The old and the new are in definite mismatch. Typical of Palestinian narratives of return, Darwish describes a mismatch between the old memories and the new realities. Neither the place nor the people residing in it do match the remembered or the imagined home. Colonial transformations of the geography and the unsettling Palestinian post-Oslo fragmented realities, all contribute to the disconcerting state of double consciousness of the protagonist.

Then comes the scene when the speaker walks into his mother's house. The eyes from his own portrait hanging on the old wall of his mother's house keep watching him. The self burdened by concerns from the present comes face to face with the old memories from childhood. The gaze of the old self is focused on the speaker in a typical Lacanian recognition/misrecognition mirror stage moment. This episode is treated in bitter sarcasm with the anticipation of a future time similar to ones from romance literature-women; fertility; growth; springs erupting from the rocks; fear is gone forever; and the roar of bullets comes to silence. Then doves will build their nests on the enemy tanks. Nobody there decides to immigrate or contemplates suicide:

LIT. There will come another day, a woman's day  
Transparent and fully forged

سيجيء يوم آخر، يوم نسائيٌ  
شفيف الاستعارة، كامل التكوين

.....  
Smooth and light, nobody would  
Contemplate suicide or a desire to leave

سلسٌ خفيف الظل. لا أحد يُحِسْ  
برغبةٍ في الانتحار أو الرحيل

At this point, the poet could not reconcile with the tragic end for the Palestinian struggle- a deformed entity that is under full control from the occupation forces; a just cause turned into an economic enterprise; a story of liberation turned into a country without borders which could survive only on foreign aid.

## **6. OTHER POETS AS INTERTEXT: IDENTICAL VOICES**

Other poets mark this state of confusion between the imagined (old) and the real (new). The connection with one place is severed in the intertextual reference to the Arab poet Abu Tammam who is one leader of the Abbasid school of rationalism in poetry. His famous words "فاغترب تتجدد" lit. travel to renew." His famous line of poetry represents him as the ultimate traveler, who, when he travels East forgets the West, and, when travelling West forgets the East:

LIT. I went West where I found no mention of the East  
and I went East until I forgot all about the West

وغربت حتى لم أجد ذكر مشرق  
وشرقت حتى قد نسيت المغاربا

At this point, Darwish has developed an expatriate's/ modernist's impulse; the Palestinian realities impelled him to live a nomadic life; travel is conceived as necessary for the renewal of the self and the narrative. According to Abu Tammam, after long years of travel home has become unlike home, and the people unlike he left them:

LIT. you are unlike you  
and home is unlike home

لا أنتِ أنتِ  
ولا الديارُ ديارُ

Darwish echoes Abu Tammam almost verbatim:

LIT. I am not me now  
and home is unlike home

والآن، لا أنا أنا  
ولا البيت بيتي

And again the intertextual references to the Spanish poet Lorca certainly only intensify this crisis with the self.

Darwish says:

LIT. Cordoba is both distant and alone

قرطبة وحيدة وبعيدة

.....  
Even if I know all the routes leading to it  
I will never reach to Cordoba

حتى لو عرفتُ الدروب كلها  
لن أصل أبداً إلى قرطبة

Lorca, the Spanish poet and dramatist, is known for his admiration of the Andalusian cities of Cordoba and Granada. Lorca moved away from Cordoba and could not recognize it upon his return because its features have transformed beyond recognition (Almanasrah, 238). The similarity in the

experience of these two prominent figures might be the reason for conjuring up the Lorca spirit- Lorca was jailed, oppressed and murdered by nationalists during the Spanish civil war. Darwish adapts the reference to his own special condition; thus, he is not writing praise to Lorca's spirit, but wailing the waning of his own moon. References to Lorca are made to reveal the depth of the human tragedy and intensify the sense of agony and exile from a home which had turned into an exile in shape, in shade, and in meaning.

Darwish is moving from the local to universal, and yet he is emphasizing the historical and political particularities of the Palestinian condition. As a leading Palestinian author, Darwish has stressed the human essence of the Palestinian story and has attempted to universalize it especially in the new millennium.. These references become signifiers for human, not just Palestinian, experience, and they will, therefore, endow his poetry with the touch of universality in depth and intensity.

## 7. PROPHETS AS INTERTEXTS: THE SEARCH FOR IMMORTALITY

The allusion to the prophets emphasizes the Palestinian legitimate desire for immortality. A person dies, yet the narrative does not disappear. Renan's (1990,19) widely acknowledged definition of the nation includes two 'spiritual principles' which are crucial for sustaining it. "One is the possession of a rich legacy of memories; the other is the present day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form." Renan rightly announces that suffering together unites more than common joy (19). In this same vein, the Palestinians will maintain an eternal bond by immortalizing their story of shared suffering and exile. Paradoxically, the search for immortality happens via passage into the spaces of myth.

The exit is made all the more feasible by allowing it a mythical status through referencing the Prophets Mohammad, Jesus, Joseph, and Adam. In this space, one can forget his own death; both the temporal and spatial deaths acquire metaphysical status.

LIT. I am not me in the presence of Ascendance site	أنا لا أنا في حضرة المراج
I thought: Only prophet Mohammad had spoken <i>fusha</i> Arabic..	لكتني أفكر: وحده، كان النبي محمدٌ يتكلّم العربيّة الفصحيّ..
And what? .. What then?	وماذا بعد؟ .. ماذا بعد؟
Suddenly a female soldier screamed:	صاحب فجأة جنديّة:
Is it you again? Have I not killed you?	هو أنت ثانية؟ ألم أقتلك؟
You did said I but like you I forgot to die	قلت: قتلتني ... و نسيت ، مثلك ، أن أموت

In this very context, Darwish alluded to Joseph's story and loaded it with similar significance of death and resurrection for the victims of human tyranny and desertion. The reference to Joseph entails the Arab nations' betrayal of the Palestinians by leaving them to face the unknown all by themselves. Joseph won against the unknown and the Palestinian, likewise, will stay despite the desertion of the Arab brothers.

Darwish beautifully merges the crucifixion of Jesus with the betrayal of Joseph by his brothers;

LIT. I read some verses from the holy word  
And said to the unknown in the well  
Peace be upon you the day you were  
murdered in the land of peace  
And when you will arise from the dark well alive  
  
قرأت آياتٍ من الذكر الحكيم  
وقلتُ للمجهول في البئر  
السلام عليك يوم  
قتلت في أرض السلام  
ويوم تصعد من ظلام البئر حيًّا

Both are immortal figures by the virtue of carrying universal stories of salvation, forgiveness and peace. The signified called upon in Joseph's well ties with meanings of negation, nomadic life, loneliness and emptiness. Jesus's crucifixion absolves the sins of humanity. In both cases, there is descent and ascent for two giant figures who were victims of tyranny and oppression. Merging the two figures in one allusion can be interpreted as the search for the collective universal human memory. What unites all Palestinians irrespective of their location is a story of suffering and the desire to protect it from amnesia.

Darwish summons the genesis story with the many references to Adam. The reference adapts the history of Fall and links it to the original sin of departure or the first Exodus in the Palestinian history which happened in 1948. The mother is still pregnant and rebirth is yet to come. A second birth outside history may deliver forgetfulness:

LIT. Our lands are pregnant with us... when were we born?  
Has Adam married two women? or will we  
be born again  
to forget the Sin  
I'm the second Adam who learned reading  
and writing from the lessons of my Sin  
My tomorrow will start here

تلك بلادنا حُبلى بنا .. فمتى ولدنا؟  
هل تزوج آدم امرأتين؟ أم أنها  
سنولد مرةً أخرى  
لكي ننسى الخطيئة  
أنا آدم الثاني: تعلمت القراءة  
والكتابة من دروس خطئتي  
وغدي سيدأ من هنا

The speaker is the second Adam who has learned his lessons from the Fall and the original sin. Darwish's exile from Palestine is his first sin for which he has to pay the price of self-misrecognition, and the search for the self in the strange and muddled realities. Reading and writing is the lesson he has learned from this sin. words - whether written or spoken - possess much power to configure realities. They are often the road to immortality for victims of history. "My tomorrow will start here," i.e. in the words and in writing. In trying to explain how the Palestinian artists tried to construct their history, Gertz and Khleifi (2003, no page no.) argue that both Palestinian literature and cinema do not surrender to the trauma but, rather, they attempt to "work it through" and to construct a narrative that leads forward, into the future. By the same token, and as will be shown in the next section, Darwish uses as a figure/means of resistance to forgetfulness, a tool for remembering.

The allusions to the prophets serve as a means to ease the tension of unhappy endings applies. The speaker will serve Jesus and carry his winter shoes along his journey from the mountains to the Tiberius lake:

I will carry for Christ his winter shoes  
so he could walk, like all people  
from the high Galilee... to the lake.

وسوفَ أحملُ للمسيح حذاءه الشتوي  
كي يمشي، ككل الناس  
من أعلى الجبال ... إلى البحيرة

All Jesus had is a story, yet he outlasted his oppressors. He is much more remembered than the Roman governor Pontius Pilate who ordered the crucifixion of Jesus. Darwish wants to be Jesus' servant and his travel companion.

## 8. THE MYTHICAL SPACE OF LANGUAGE

Other intertextual references provide relief from the impasse of eternal exile. Those are ones which help find a solution in the imagined space of writing. One example is the echo of Al-Ma'arri (973-1053), an Abbasid rationalist, who promises to outdo all predecessors in rhetoric:

LIT. Even if I were the last in his time  
I will bring what others could not

وإنني وإن كنت الأخير زمانه  
لاتِ بما لم تستطعه الأولان

By the same analogy, Darwish promises to outgrow all his disappointments using the power of words:

LIT. I, even if I were the last  
have found enough words  
Each poem a drawing  
I will draw the sparrows a spring map

وأنا، وإن كنت الأخير  
وجدت ما يكفي من الكلمات  
كل قصيدة رسم  
سأرسم للsparrows الآن خارطة الربيع

Darwish seeks refuge out of the tragic context into the promise of language. The poem here draws a different mental state that is less tense and more reconciled with the new realities. Even if he is the last one, the speaker promises to draw for the sparrow the map of spring (regeneration). The word

spring (alrabee') rhymes with the word road (altareeq) in Arabic. The language of poetry provides the road map for a solution to the crisis. Derrida has once argued that '[“Displaced Persons”] often continue to recognize the language, which is called the mother tongue, as their ultimate homeland, and even their last resting place'(Derrida 2000). Similarly for Darwish, language becomes his vehicle for flying beyond the ruins:

I recalled Yiannis Ritos in his home  
He was at that time entering one of his own myths  
Telling one goddess  
If there has to be a journey  
Then let it be an eternal one!

تذكّرْتُ يانيس ريتسوس في بيته  
كان في ذلك الوقت يدخل إحدى أساطيره  
ويقول لإحدى الإلهات  
إن كان لا بد من رحلةٍ  
فلتكن رحلةً أبدية!

Yiannis Ritsos (1909-1990) is one of the most prominent Greek writers in the modern era. Ritsos is known as the poet of rebellion, enlightenment, freedom, and philanthropy. Like Darwish, Ritsos was an activist in the communist party and a member in the Greek resistance during World War II. Both writers suffered the pains of banishment, exile, and prison for their political activism (Yusri 466). Darwish references Ritsos' request to willingly enter into the mythical space. Only in this space could immortality be achieved. There the poet will recognize himself and the story will be kept alive.

The same cry is echoed in Darwish poem's when he reunites with his own homeland but could hardly recognize its features. The physical space has transformed completely. Like Ritsos, he chooses exile despite its pains because the beats of his homeland could hardly touch his heart anymore.

These allusions bring in new dimensions into the text. The mythical space as in the Sufi tradition provides the means to survive the loss. Sufis are the wisest of all people. Most people look to God's bounty, while Sufis look to Him alone, seeking His intimacy. Others are content with His gifts; the Sufis are content only with Him (Abu'l husayn Nuri cited in HusJavad Nurbakhsh 1999, xx).

The retreat into the space of myth is not uniquely Darwessian. Long before him, alSayyab carried his memories to his tomb like a Sufi:

LIT. I recall alSayyab borrowing Hammurabi's  
law code of Babylonia to hide the misfortunes  
And to march to his tomb like a sufi

أَنذَرَ السِيَابَ، يَأْخُذُ عَنْ حُمُورَابِي  
الشَّرَائِعَ كَيْ يَغْطِي سُوءَ  
وَيَسِيرُ نَحْوَ ضَرِيقَه مَتَصُوفًا

Only by transcending the physical space that one can love what s/he does not have; the mortal can become immortal; and one can fall in love with an idea or a memory. Love is the doorway to a transcendent reality.

In a much more dramatic move into the world of myth, the speaker decides to join the cycle of nature as he seeks to become part of its own elements like tree leaves and worms. An entity which transforms the temporal and spatial delineations of the self. The mulberry tree takes him into its natural cycle; the worm consumes him from the mulberry concentrate; and a woman's needle would sew him into a mythical figure:

LIT. Willingly I will enter the mulberry tree  
for a worms to turn me into mulberry silk  
will enter the needle of a woman  
from the ancient myths

أَمَا أَنَا، فَسَأَدْخُلُ فِي شَجَرِ التَّوتِ  
حِيثُ تَحَوَّلَنِي دُودَةُ الْقَرَّ خَيْطُ حَرِيرٍ  
وَأَدْخُلُ فِي إِبْرَةِ امْرَأَةٍ  
مِنْ نِسَاءِ الْأَسَاطِيرِ

## 9. CONCLUSION

The volume "Do not Apologize for What You Have Done" speaks of the great distress the poet lived through following his first encounter with home after long absence. Home, in all its connotations, has

lost its old features which the poet carried in memory and wrote into his own songs during his exile years.

Home has transformed physically beyond recognition; the voice bespeaks a mismatch between the imagined and the real national spaces. The intertextual matrix in this volume marks this tension between the imagined and the real homes. The poet cites similar experiences from other poet's lives, recalls spaces of eternal exile like his own, and seeks immortality for his own story.

The poet again and again positions himself in relation to other intertexts. Interpreting the volume, therefore, becomes a matter of redistributing and regrouping the intertextual references in order to establish coherent relationships and logical sequences. The network of intertexts comes in four categories- each serving a special purpose. His own old figure as a national Palestinian voice speaks of an inner crisis fueled by the anti-romantic union with his own home. The crisis is evidently more intense when the poet uses his old self as an intertext; his own picture in his mother's home gazes down at him but fails to recognize him. This typical mirror phase marks the variance between old selves/narratives and new selves/realities. Allusions to ancient cities and civilizations like Troy and Andalusia signal a state of anxiety and serve as a testimony to the tragic, long-awaited end. This realization is the preamble for his second exile from a home which does not feel anymore like home.

The echo of other poets from the Abbasside and modern Western tradition inspire eternal wandering. The speaker joins the long line of renowned world rebel poets who sought eternal travel or self-willed exile. He shows affinity with Lorca and Abu Tammam, who both have opted for a life of travel away from home.

Alternative spaces are sought to preserve the Palestinian exile narrative.

Allusions to the prophets serve to immortalize the story. All prophets survived their times and immortalized their own histories by virtue of carrying a universal story. Despite desertion, betrayal and torture, Joseph and Jesus are more remembered than their oppressors. From Adam, the speaker has learned reading and writing. These become his tools to protect the story from unfair histories. Language has the power to tell about the beginnings, to document, and, therefore, to preserve the story of Palestinian exodus.

Sufi transcendence of temporal and spatial realities is yet another way to reconcile with the unhappy end. The third option is to join the cycle of nature where objects always have a beginning; beginnings are immortal and a resurrection must happen when things come full cycle.

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