



Images of Palestina in the Poems *Li-Bilādinā* & *Wa Lanā Bilād* by Mahmoed Darwish

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Abstract

This research is motivated by the prolonged socio-political conflict experienced by the Palestinian people, which has resulted in displacement, loss of sovereignty, and humanitarian suffering. In this context, literature particularly poetry functions not only as an aesthetic expression but also as a medium of reflection and resistance against oppressive realities. This study aims to reveal the image of Palestine in the poems *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād* by Mahmoed Darwish using Alan Swingewood's sociological approach to literature. This study employs a descriptive qualitative method with a historical-sociological approach to examine the relationship between literary texts and the social, historical, and cultural contexts that underlie them. Data were collected through close reading and note-taking techniques, while data analysis was conducted through three stages: data reduction, comparison of poetic quotations and interpretations from relevant references, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād* portray Palestine as a sacred yet oppressed land that has lost its sovereignty, identity, and living space due to colonization. In *Li-Bilādinā*, Palestine is depicted as a holy land marked by suffering, dispossession, and wounded identity, whereas *Wa Lanā Bilād* presents Palestine as an inner homeland and collective hope that survives in memory despite physical loss. Based on Alan Swingewood's sociological perspective on literature, these two poems reflect three main aspects of the socio-political reality of Palestine, namely territorial and sovereignty conflicts, humanitarian crises resulting from expulsion and violence, and economic crises as a result of structural colonization. Thus, this study confirms that Mahmoed Darwish's work is not merely an aesthetic expression, but a social document that raises awareness of the suffering and struggle of the Palestinian people and calls for the importance of global solidarity for justice and humanity. Therefore, this research contributes to the field of literary sociology by demonstrating the relevance of poetry as a medium for representing socio-political realities and by encouraging further studies on literary works from conflict zones using interdisciplinary perspectives.

Keywords: Alan Swingewood, *Li-Bilādinā* & *Wa Lanā Bilād*, Mahmoed Darwish, Poems, Sociology Literature

ملخص

ينطلق هذا البحث من الصراع الاجتماعي السياسي الممتد الذي عانى منه الشعب الفلسطيني، والذي أسفر عن التهجير، وفقدان السيادة، والمعاناة الإنسانية. وفي هذا السياق، تؤدي الأدبيات، ولا سيما الشعر، وظيفة لا تقتصر على التعبير الجمالي فحسب، بل تتجاوز ذلك لتغدو وسيلة للتأمل والمقاومة في مواجهة الواقع القومي. يهدف هذا البحث إلى الكشف عن صورة فلسطين في قصيدتي لبلادنا وولنا بلاد محمود درويش، من خلال توظيف المنهج السوسيولوجي للأدب عند آلان سوينغوود. ويعتمد البحث على المنهج الوصفي النوعي ذي المقاربة التاريخية الاجتماعية، لفحص العلاقة بين النصوص الأدبية والسياقات الاجتماعية والتاريخية والثقافية التي تقف وراءها. جمعت البيانات عبر تقنيتي القراءة المتأنية وتدوين الملاحظات، في حين أُجري تحليل البيانات عبر ثلاث مراحل، هي: اختزال البيانات، ومقارنة الاقتباسات الشعرية بتفسيراتها في المراجع ذات الصلة، واستخلاص النتائج. وتُظهر النتائج

أن قصيدتي لبلادنا وولنا بلاد تصوّران فلسطين بوصفها أرضاً مقدسة لكنها مضطهدة، فقدت سيادتها وهويتها وحيزها المعيشي بفعل الاستعمار. ففي قصيدة لبلادنا تُقدّم فلسطين أرضاً مقدسة موسومة بالمعاناة وسلب الملكية وجراح الهوية، في حين تُجسّد قصيدة ولنا بلاد فلسطين بوصفها وطنًا داخليًا وأملًا جمعيًا يستمر في الذاكرة رغم فقدان المادي. واستنادًا إلى المنظور السوسولوجي للأدب عند آلان سوينغوود، تعكس هاتان القصيدتان ثلاثة جوانب رئيسة من الواقع الاجتماعي لسياسي الفلسطيني، هي: الصراع الإقليمي وفقدان السيادة، والأزمات الإنسانية الناتجة عن التهجير والعنف، والأزمات الاقتصادية بوصفها نتيجةً للاستعمار النيوي. وعليه، يؤكد هذا البحث أن شعر محمود درويش ليس مجرد تعبير جمالي، بل وثيقة اجتماعية تثير الوعي بمعاناة الشعب الفلسطيني ونضاله، وتدعو إلى أهمية التضامن العالمي من أجل العدالة والإنسانية. وبذلك، يُسهم هذا البحث في إثراء مجال سوسولوجيا الأدب، من خلال إبراز أهمية الشعر بوصفه وسيطًا لتمثيل الواقع الاجتماعي لسياسي، وتشجيع الدراسات اللاحقة للأعمال الأدبية الصادرة عن مناطق الصراع عبر مقاربات متعددة التخصصات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: آلان سوينغوود، لبلادنا ولنا بلاد، محمود درويش، سوسولوجيا الأدب، قصائد

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Introduction

This research is based on the prolonged socio-political conflict experienced by the Palestinian people, which is considered one of the longest-running global issues in the modern era. For decades, the Palestinian people have lived in suffering due to occupation, expulsion, and systematic discrimination by the Israeli occupiers. According to Kaloko, Dulai, Siofian, and Utarithe conflict between Palestine and Israel has continued until recently. Tensions between Palestine and Israel peaked again in 2021, when Israeli military attacks on the Gaza Strip resulted in many Palestinian and Israeli civilian casualties. This incident involved military attacks and rocket fire from both sides, resulting in significant loss of life. This event is considered a violation of international law because attacks carried out without legal basis against the military are categorized as illegal acts, while deliberate and reckless attacks against civilians constitute war crimes.¹ This situation is part of the socio-political context that underpins the reality of Palestinian life. This issue is not only a concern in the realm of international politics and law, but also occupies a large space in the realm of literature, particularly modern Arabic literature. Literature has become a medium for reflection and resistance against oppressive realities.

In Agamben's view, literary works as a form of narrative have the power to reveal the metaphysical dimensions behind empirical reality in a particular society. In his view, literary texts do not exist by chance or merely present stories, but carry deeper meanings. For Agamben, literature is

¹ Rafid Sugandi and Riri Anggraini, "Gerakan Sosial: Aksi Bela Palestina Boikot Produk Israel di Kota Padang 2017-2023," *CENDEKIA: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Bahasa dan Pendidikan* 4, no. 2 (2024): 01–17. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55606/cendikia.v4i2.2482>

not merely an illustrative depiction, but a narrative construction that is capable of transcending the surface of the story it self. It is this ability to transcend that is considered important in understanding the process of interpreting literary texts as a whole.² Then according to Harry Levin, the relationship between literary works and society is mutually influential, literary works are born from the social context in which the author lives and works. In other words, literary texts are not formed solely from individual imagination, but through the author's struggle with the values, norms, and social structures that surround them. Therefore, when literary works raise humanitarian issues, this becomes a reflection of the socio-political situation that shapes the perspective and ideological awareness in the text, as well as a voice of resistance against injustice.³ In this context, Mahmoud Darwish, a prominent Palestinian poet, emerged as a voice of resistance through his poetry, which was rich in symbolism and nationalism.

In the world of modern Arabic literature, Mahmoed Darwish's work occupies an important position as a reflection of the social and political conditions of the Arab world, especially Palestine. Mahmoed Darwish's poems are not just beautiful strings of words, but a mirror of the suffering of the Palestinian people who have been deprived of their rights to land and identity. Among Mahmoed Darwish's many works, the two poems selected for this study are *Li-Bilādīnā* – For Our Country and *Wa Lanā Bilād* – We Have a Country, both of which have strong symbolic and historical value in describing the situation in Palestine. *Li-Bilādīnā* emphasizes a sacred attachment to the homeland, while *Wa Lanā Bilād* describes the conditions of exile, loss, and longing for the stolen land. The combination of the two shows the tension between national identity and the experience of diaspora, making it highly relevant for analysis through the perspective of literary sociology. This study is in the realm of literary sociology, which places literature as a mirror of the socio-political conditions of society. This approach is important to reveal how literary works can represent the political and cultural realities of an occupied society.

The sociological approach to literature views literary works as representations of reality. Therefore, when someone reads a literary work, they are transported into a world shaped by the imagination and experiences of the author. Within it, various aspects of life are depicted, ranging from social conditions and cultural elements to traces of history that have been absorbed and processed by the writer. Thus, literary works can be considered as reflections or depictions of life that have been transformed through the author's perspective.⁴

This sociological approach to literature refers to the theory developed by Alan Swingewood. According to Swingewood, literature cannot be separated from its social context, because literature reflects the structure of society, dominant ideologies, and historical events. Swingewood in his work *The Sociology of Literature* outlines three main approaches to understanding literature from a sociological perspective. First, literature is viewed as a reflection of the social conditions and events of a particular era that influence society. Second, attention is directed to how literary works are produced by authors as part of a creative process that cannot be separated from its social context.

² M. Hafidzulloh and Aprinus Salam, “Potensialitas Puisi *Bithoqob Hawiyah Karya Mahmud Darwish: Menilik Politik Kedaulatan Negara Palestina*,” *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra* 21, no. 1 (2021): 51–64. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17509/bs.jpbsp.v21i1.36658>

³ Rahmat Linur and Firmanda Taufiq, “*Realisme dan Konflik Timur Tengah dalam Kesusasteraan Arab*,” *Nady Al-Adab : Jurnal Bahasa Arab* 18, no. 2 (2021): 40–51. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.20956/jna.v18i2.18272>

⁴ Muhammad Anwar Mas'adi, “*Realitas Dunia Arab dalam Puisi-Puisi Mahmud Darwis (Analisis Sosiologi Sastra Alan Swingewood)*,” (Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, 2017). <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gqv3SUYZBi7GpFbzuWyHmjuq7K7xamJg/view?usp=sharing>

Third, literary works are considered socio-cultural documents that reflect the historical dynamics of a society at a particular time.⁵ In Swingewood's sociological approach to literature, it is important not to place too much emphasis on the author or the production process in the creation of a work. Swingewood emphasizes that it is not enough for a writer to simply describe social reality through broad themes. Instead, they must be able to convey sharp social criticism and shape the direction and social meaning of their own work. Society, in this case, can be understood as a representation of social institutions that regulate the functioning of social structures. These institutions include consciously practiced noble values, formal rules, social norms, and standards of interaction between individuals that apply in communal life.⁶ Through this framework, Mahmood Darwish's poetry will be analyzed as a socio-political reflection of the Palestinian people in the face of occupation and their struggle for independence. Thus, this analysis will explore the relationship between the poetic text and the socio-political reality that underpins it.

Academically, this study is significant in the fields of literary and cultural studies as it demonstrates the function of literary works as media of resistance, historical documentation, and instruments for shaping the collective identity of colonized nations. Through a reading of Mahmood Darwish's poetry, this study affirms the position of modern Arabic literature as a space for social and ideological representation, and reveals the role of language and poetic symbols in preserving the memory and political consciousness of the Palestinian people. Alan Swingewood's sociological approach to literature was chosen because it is relevant to examining Darwish's poetry as a form of resistance and collective reflection on the Palestinian conflict, both past and present.

A number of previous studies have examined the works of Mahmoud Darwish through various theoretical approaches, including stylistics, semiotics, and themes of existentialism and nationalism. Several semiotic and stylistic studies focusing on symbolic analysis, ideological meaning, and linguistic aspects of Darwish's poetry include the work of Hamzah and Barrunnawa,⁷ who analyzed representations of anxiety in Darwish's poem *al-Sijn* using Riffaterre's semiotic approach, highlighting the relationship between personal unrest and the collective Palestinian identity. A similar approach was also employed by Raden Muhammad Ardiansyah Kurniawan et al.,⁸ in their analysis of the poem *Hiya Fil Masāi Wahīdatin*, as well as by Suharsono et al.,⁹ in their study of longing for the homeland in the poetry anthology *Āsyiq Min Falistīn*. These studies demonstrate that Darwish's poetry is rich in ideological symbols that reflect socio-political experiences and the collective memory of the Palestinian people. In addition to semiotic studies on Darwish, a number of stylistic and linguistic studies have been conducted on Arabic literature more broadly. For

⁵ Lailiyatur Rohmah, "Kritik Sosial Model Puisi Maskumambang Karya W.S. Rendra (Kajian Sosiologi Sastra Alan Swingewood)," *Jurnal Estetika*, Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia 3, no. 2 (2022): 88–96. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36379/estetika.v3i2.160>

⁶ Nensilanti, Halimah Putri Syahrudin, and Ridwan, "Refleksi Sosial dalam Novel *Manusia & Badainya* (Perjalanan Menuju Pulih) Karya Syahid Muhammad (Kajian Sosiologi Sastra Alan Swingewood)," *Lingua Franca: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya* 7, no. 2 (2023): 156. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30651/lf.v7i2.18483>

⁷ Mukhotob Hamzah and Muhammad Barrunnawa, "Representasi Keresaban Mahmoud Darwish dalam Puisi *Al-Sijn*: Kajian Semiotik Riffaterre," *Al-Ma'Rifah* 18, no. 1 (2021): 27–38. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21009/almakrifah.18.01.03>

⁸ Raden Muhammad Ardiansyah Kurniawan et al., "Analisis Semiotika Riffaterre dalam Puisi 'Hiya Fil Masāi Wahīdatin' Karya Mahmoud Darwish," *Kajian Linguistik dan Sastra* 9, no. 1 (2024): 43–61. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.23917/kls.v9i1.3233>

⁹ Suharsono Suharsono, Ivan Adilla, and Syofyan Hadi, "Kerinduan pada Tanah Air dalam Antologi Puisi 'Āsyiq Min Falistīn Karya Mahmoud Darwish (Analisis Semiotika Riffaterre)," *Jurnal Ilmiah Universitas Batanghari Jambi* 23, no. 1 (2023): 1. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33087/jiubj.v23i1.3226>

instance, Najah et al.,¹⁰ examined the use of figurative language in the poetry of Mahmud Sami Basha al-Barudi through a stylistic approach, focusing on diction, syntactic structure, and rhetorical aspects. Meanwhile, Janah and Latif,¹¹ analyzed the musical rhythm of Imam Shafii's poetry using the theories of *'Arudh* and *Qawafi*. These studies underscore the strong academic attention to aesthetic aspects, form, and linguistic structure in Arabic poetry, yet they have not directly linked such analyses to specific socio-political realities.

Subsequently, studies in the sociology of literature and discourse analysis emphasize the relationship between texts, social structures, and the ideological contexts of society. Several studies have applied the sociology of literature approach to various literary works and media, such as Aeni and Mustari,¹² on the poem *Hawāmish 'Alā Daftar al-Naksab*, Alsyirad and Rosa,¹³ on the short story *Langit Makin Mendung*, Oktafianti and Shofiyuddin,¹⁴ on the film *Ipar Adalah Mant*, Adriyanti et al.,¹⁵ on the poetry anthology *To Kill the Invisible Killer*, and Putri and Rengganis,¹⁶ on the mini album *Beberapa Orang Memaafkan*. These studies demonstrate that the sociology of literature is effective in examining the relationship between literary works and social reality, although most of the objects studied are not directly related to the Palestinian context. In the context of Palestinian discourse, Mustofa and Zawawi,¹⁷ employed Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis to examine Anis Matta's speech entitled *Kullunā Fālāstīn* delivered at an international forum. The study highlights how diplomatic language represents Indonesia's national aspirations regarding the Palestinian–Israeli conflict. Although thematically relevant, this study belongs to the domain of political and diplomatic discourse analysis rather than literary analysis; therefore, it does not address poetic texts as representations of the collective experience of Palestinian society.

¹⁰ Zughrofiyatun Najah et al., "Language Style in Poetry Mahmud Sami Basha Al-Barudi (A Stylistic Analysis) Gaya Bahasa Dalam Puisi Mahmud Sami Basha Al-Barudi (Suatu Analisis Stilistik)," *Mantiqutayr: Journal of Arabic Language* 1, no. 2 (2021): 133–144. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25217/mantiqutayr.v1i2.1352>

¹¹ Faidatul Janah and Abdul Latif, "Musical Rhythm in Poetry 'Al-Jaddu Yudni Kulla Amr Syasi'in' by Imam Syafi'i (Critical Analysis of 'Arudh and Qawafi)|Irama Musikalitas Musikalitas Pada Puisi 'Al-Jaddu Yudni Kulla Amr Syasi'in' Karya Imam Syafi'i (A Nalisis Kritik Sa)," *Mantiqutayr: Journal of Arabic Language*, 2, no. 2 (2022): 97–109. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25217/mantiqutayr.v2i2.2344>

¹² Prisilia Anghuril Aeni and Mustari, "Sosiologi Sastra dalam Puisi Hawāmish 'Alā Daftar Al-Naksab Karya Niẓar Qabbani: Refleksi Konflik Palestina-Israel," *JILSA: Jurnal Ilmu Linguistik & Sastra Arab* 8, no. 2 (2024): 137–147. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15642/jilsa.2024.8.2>

¹³ Ridwan Alsyirad and Helvy Tiana Rosa, "Kritik Sosial dalam Cerpen Langit Makin Mendung Karya Kipanjikusmin: Tinjauan Sosiologi Sastra," *Arkhai: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia* 11, no. 1 (2020): 15–20. <https://journal.unj.ac.id/unj/index.php/arkhais/article/view/11463/10995>

¹⁴ Reza Dwi Oktafianti and Haris Shofiyuddin, "Konflik Sosial dalam Ruang Domestik pada Film Ipar Adalah Mant : Sosiologi Sastra Alan Swingewood," *KONASINDO: Konferensi Nasional Mahasiswa Sastra Indonesia* 1 (2024): 772–800. <https://proceedings.uinsa.ac.id/index.php/konasindo/article/view/2792/1914>

¹⁵ Mega Adriyanti, Ferina Meliasanti, and Sutri Sutri, "Representasi Sosial Masa Pandemi Covid-19 dalam Antologi Puisi to Kill the Invisible Killer Karya FX Rudy Gunawan dan Afnan Malay," *Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra* 9, no. 1 (2021): 35. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24036/jbs.v9i1.111411>

¹⁶ Ghea Pratama Putri and Ririe Rengganis, "Refleksi Sosial Masyarakat Indonesia Pada Mini Album Beberapa Orang Memaafkan Band .Feast Perspektif Alan Swingewood," *Sapala* 9, no. 1 (2022): 63–78. <https://ejournal.unesa.ac.id/index.php/jurnal-sapala/article/view/44673>

¹⁷ Rifki Mustofa and Moh Zawawi, "The Aspirations of the Indonesian Nation in Anis Matta's Speech the Aspirations of the Indonesian Nation in Anis Matta's Speech 'Kullunā Fālāstīn' Critical Discourse Analysis Norman Fairclough's Theory," *Mantiqutayr: Journal of Arabic Language* 5, no. 2 (2025): 206–32. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25217/mantiqutayr.v5i2.5689>

Among these studies, only Nida,¹⁸ specifically applies a sociology of literature approach to examine the poetry of Mahmoud Darwish in relation to the oppressed socio-political reality of Palestine. While this study serves as an important reference, it does not specifically analyze the poems *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād*, nor does it focus on an in-depth application of Alan Swingewood's sociological framework.

Based on the mapping of previous studies, it can be concluded that no research has specifically examined the poems *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād* by Mahmood Darwish using Alan Swingewood's sociology of literature approach. Previous studies have tended to focus on Riffaterre's semiotic approach, stylistic analysis, or different objects of study such as short stories, songs, films, and political speeches, without exploring in depth the relationship between literary texts and the social structures that underlie them. In contrast, this study focuses on analyzing the representation of Palestine's socio-political reality in the poems *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād* by Mahmood Darwish through Alan Swingewood's sociological framework.

Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in the application of Alan Swingewood's sociology of literature theory to two specific poems by Mahmood Darwish that have been relatively underexplored within a sociological perspective. This study views poetry as a social document, an ideological instrument, and a reflection of historical reality, as well as a medium of resistance and collective consciousness formation among the Palestinian people. By focusing on *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād*, this research demonstrates how the two poems complement each other in representing identity, suffering, and the collective hopes of the Palestinian nation amid the reality of colonization. Thus, this study not only expands Darwish scholarship within the field of sociology of literature but also enriches the application of Alan Swingewood's theory in reading poetry as a representation of the socio-political realities of oppressed societies. The focus of this research is formulated into two main research questions: how Palestine is portrayed in the poems *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād*, and how Palestine's socio-political reality is represented through Alan Swingewood's sociological perspective on literature.

The objective of this study is to examine and describe the image of Palestine in the poems *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād* by Mahmood Darwish, as well as to reveal the socio-political reality of Palestine as reflected in these poems. In addition, this study aims to foster public awareness of humanitarian conflicts and to highlight the historical continuity between past and present Palestinian struggles. It also seeks to emphasize that humanitarian issues constitute a global and universal concern that requires collective solutions.

This study is grounded in the assumption that Mahmood Darwish's poems, particularly *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād*, reflect Palestine's socio-political reality and serve as representations of the suffering, hope, and struggle of its people. Through Alan Swingewood's sociology of literature approach, these poems are examined as forms of symbolic resistance and social documentation of the colonial oppression experienced by Palestine. Therefore, *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād* merit in-depth analysis to understand the relationship between poetic texts, historical-social contexts, and the process of Palestinian national identity formation.

¹⁸ Nushrotun Nida, "حقائق الحياة الفلسطينية في الشعر 'يوميات جرح فلسطين' لمحمود درويش على نظرية ألان سوينجود (دراسة تحليلية)" *Journal of Arabic Literature* 2, no. 3 (2021): 135–150. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18860/jali.v2i2.12065>

Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method using a historical-sociological approach in literary studies. This approach is applied to examine the relationship between literary works and the social, historical, and cultural realities that underpin them. The selection of this method is consistent with Alan Swingewood's perspective, which posits three fundamental principles in the sociology of literature: literature as a representation or reflection of its historical period, literature viewed through the process of its production and authorship, and literature analyzed in relation to its historical context. These three principles serve as an essential framework for understanding literary works as social products that are inseparable from the realities of the society in which they emerge.¹⁹ Thus, poetry is not merely viewed as an aesthetic text, but also as a representation of the socio-political realities that exist within society. The historical approach also draws upon the ideas of Louis de Bonald, who emphasized that an in-depth reading of nationally oriented literary works enables readers to understand the social and historical conditions that underlie them.²⁰ Therefore, this method is relevant for examining the poems of Mahmoud Darwish, which emerge from the context of colonization and the Palestinian conflict.

The object of this research consists of two poems by Mahmoud Darwish, namely *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād*. These poems were selected because, thematically, they represent issues of identity, colonization, suffering, and the struggle of the Palestinian people. Meanwhile, the subject of this research is the poetic text itself as a form of social representation.

The main data sources in this study are the texts of the two poems published in the book *تعتذر عما فعلت* (Don't Apologize for What You Did), namely the poems *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād* by Mahmoud Darwish. Supporting data was obtained from books, journals, scientific articles, and historical references relevant to the Palestinian conflict, as well as works discussing Alan Swingewood's theory.

The data collection technique was carried out through reading and note-taking. Reading the poems in their entirety by paying close attention to each word and sentence structure within the poems *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād* by Mahmoud Darwish. Then, things related to the research context were noted.

The data analysis technique employed in this study follows the model proposed by Miles and Huberman, which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.²¹ First, data reduction is conducted by selecting poetic segments that contain representations of the socio-political realities of Palestine. Second, data display involves organizing relevant poetic excerpts and relating them to the historical context as well as the key concepts of Alan Swingewood's sociology of literature. Third, conclusion drawing is carried out by formulating

¹⁹ Mas'ud Muhammadiyah et al., *Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia (Menyelami Kekayaan Budaya dan Bahasa Bangsa)*, ed. Erfina Rianty, (Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta Email, 2024). <https://repository.ukitoraja.ac.id/id/eprint/941/>

²⁰ Anggun Vidia Azizah and Parmin, "Refleksi Sosial pada Film Barbie 2023 Karya Greta Gerwig: Kajian Sosiologi Sastra Alan Swingewood," *SAPALA* 12, no. 1 (2023): 61–69. <https://ejournal.unesa.ac.id/index.php/jurnal-sapala/article/view/66502>

²¹ Tria Nurianom Mahardika, "Teknik Penerjemahan Subtitle pada Film *Go Ahead* 《以家人之名 (Yǐ Jiārén Zhī Míng) Karya Shui Qianmo (水阡墨) dan Wang Xiongcheng (王雄成) pada Aplikasi Netflix," *Jurnal Bahasa Mandarin* 4, no. 2 (2020): 1–10. <https://ejournal.unesa.ac.id/index.php/manadarin/article/view/47308/39541>

the social, ideological, and historical meanings embedded in the two poems. Thus, this method is expected to reveal the depth of poetic meaning as a medium of social, political, and ideological expression within modern Arabic literature.

Result and Discussion

Mahmoud Darwish is one of the most important Arab poets who contributed to the development of modern Arabic poetry. He was born in 1941 in Palestine, moved with his family, accompanied by Palestinian refugees to Lebanon in 1948, and then returned to his country in 1949.²²

He is a revolutionary poet whose poetry is associated with the Palestinian revolution and struggle. Many of his poems are about love, the homeland or a woman's lover. His writing style is characterized by metaphors, symbols, historical and religious references that demonstrate his broad culture and connection to humanitarian issues. Mahmoued Darwish also managed to write a document containing the declaration of Palestinian independence announced in Aljazair.

In the poems *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād* written directly by Mahmoued Darwish in his book entitled "*La Ta'tadẓir 'Ammā Fa'al!*" which means "Do not apologize for what you have done". The content of this book is a collection of Mahmoued Darwish's poems, in which there are 52 poems, with 5 chapters, namely the first section contains 47 poems, then the second, third, fourth and fifth sections contain one title that corresponds to the name of the chapter.²³ The following is an explanation of the description of Palestine in the poems *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād* by Mahmoued Darwish and the socio-political reality of Palestine by reflecting what has been listed in the poems *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād* by Mahmoued Darwish's.

A. Images of Palestine in the poems "*Li-Bilādinā*" and "*Wa Lanā Bilād*" by Mahmoued Darwish

1. Poem "*Li-Bilādinā*": Palestine is a Land of History and Suffering

In the poem *Li-Bilādinā*, Mahmoued Darwish begins with the word *Li-Bilādinā*, which describes Mahmoued Darwish's feelings about the state of Palestine, as in the following excerpt:

للادنا،
 وَهِيَ الْقَرْيَةُ مِنْ كَلَامِ اللَّهِ،
 سَقْفٌ مِنْ سَحَابٍ
Our Country,
is a Country with God's Word,
Covered by Clouds

In the first stanza of the poem *Li-Bilādinā*, Mahmoued Darwish refers to Palestine as a "land of divine utterance." This expression does not merely function as symbolic imagery, but represents the collective worldview of Palestinian society toward their homeland as a space imbued with historical significance and moral legitimacy. Palestine is portrayed not simply as a geographical territory, but as

²² Mahmoud Darwish, "اقتباسات-محمود درويش" n.d. <https://www.noor-book.com/اقتباسات-محمود-درويش/>

²³ Mahmoud Darwish, *لا تعتذر - عما فعلت*, ed. Muhammad Hamada, First Publ, (Beirut, Lebanon: Riad El-Rayyes Books S.A.R.L, 2004). <https://www.noor-book.com/كتاب-ديوان-لا-تعتذر-عما-فعلت-ل-محمود-درويش-pdf/>

a “village” (*al-qaryah*) that lives within the social consciousness of its people, shaped by a long history of conflict, colonialism, and experiences of loss. From the perspective of Alan Swingewood’s sociology of literature, literary works are reflections of the author’s social consciousness, rooted in historical reality and the social conditions in which the work is produced.²⁴ Therefore, the depiction of Palestine as a “land of divine utterance” can be interpreted as a symbol of historical and cultural legitimacy that affirms the existence of the Palestinian nation amid conditions of oppression and occupation.

Furthermore, the imagery of a homeland “roofed with clouds” reveals a sharp contrast between the symbolic meaning of the land and the material conditions of its people. The cloud-like roof symbolizes the absence of real protection, instability, and a fragile existence. This imagery reflects the social reality of Palestinian society, marked by the loss of homes, life in displacement, and ongoing uncertainty caused by prolonged conflict. Within Swingewood’s framework, such imagery demonstrates how literary texts function as social documents that record the collective historical experiences of a society.²⁵

لبلادنا،
وهي البعيدة عن صفات الاسم،
خارطة الغيات
Our Country,
is a Country far from its Name,
a Map of Absence

In this stanza, Mahmood Darwish employs the expression “a land distant from its name” to describe Palestine’s condition of losing formal recognition and political identity. In this context, the “name” does not merely signify a label, but functions as a symbol of recognition, legitimacy, and existence within the global power structure. When a land is described as being “far from its name,” its existence is no longer officially acknowledged within political systems and global maps. In the historical experience of its people, Palestine appears to be erased from the language of power and international administration. From the perspective of Alan Swingewood’s sociology of literature, literature is understood as a reflection of social consciousness shaped by historical conditions and specific power structures.²⁶ Therefore, this phrase reflects the social reality of Palestine as a nation whose existence is continuously contested and systematically marginalized within global political discourse.

Furthermore, Darwish refers to Palestine as a “map of absence.” This expression evokes the image of a homeland that should exist, yet remains invisible within official global representations. Palestine persists in collective memory, history, and the lived experiences of its people, but is absent from political maps controlled by dominant powers. This imagery highlights processes of spatial

²⁴ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature* Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 11-13. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

²⁵ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature* Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 22-24. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

²⁶ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature* Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 11-13. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

erasure, territorial dispossession, and the denial of land rights experienced by the Palestinian people. Within Swingewood's framework, literature can be understood as a social document that records conflict, historical tensions, and forms of marginalization within specific societies.²⁷

As a poet who experienced exile and grew up amid ongoing conflict, Darwish channels these social experiences into his poetry. In line with Swingewood's view, literary works do not exist apart from the author's social reality, but function as a medium for recording and critiquing the historical conditions that shape them.²⁸ Thus, the "map of absence" serves as a symbol of territorial conflict and the loss of sovereignty, illustrating how Palestine is politically erased while remaining socially and historically alive in the consciousness of its people.

للادنا،

وهي الصغيرة مثل حبة سمسم،

أقن سماوي... وهاوية حفية"

Our Country,

Small as a Sesame Seed,

Heavenly Horizon...Hidden Abyss

In this stanza, Mahmoed Darwish portrays Palestine as a land that is "small like a sesame seed." This expression represents the very limited geographical size of Palestine, which appears almost insignificant when viewed within the global political map. However, this small territorial size stands in stark contrast to the immense historical burden and prolonged conflict attached to it. Palestine becomes a contested space of power, political interests, and enduring conflict involving major global actors.

Within the framework of Alan Swingewood's sociology of literature, the image of a "small land" can be interpreted as a reflection of the structural condition of a nation positioned in a subordinate role within the global power system. Swingewood emphasizes that literary works often record the social and political inequalities experienced by particular groups throughout history.²⁹ Therefore, the metaphor of the "sesame seed" signifies not only physical size but also Palestine's fragile and vulnerable position within the international order.

Furthermore, Darwish introduces contrasting imagery through the phrases "a heavenly horizon" and "a hidden abyss." The "horizon" symbolizes hope, aspiration, and elevated human potential, while the "hidden abyss" suggests suffering, violence, and humanitarian crises that are not always visibly acknowledged. This contrast reveals the gap between the idealized image of Palestine and the lived social reality experienced by its people on a daily basis. From Swingewood's perspective, literature functions as a medium that exposes social realities often obscured or ignored by dominant discourses. In this sense, literary works operate as social documents that record

²⁷ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature* Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 16-17. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

²⁸ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature* Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 17-18. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

²⁹ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature* Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 14-16. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

collective historical experiences and forms of structural suffering within particular societies.³⁰ Consequently, the “hidden abyss” can be understood as a critique of the external perception of Palestine that remains superficial, failing to recognize the depth of social wounds caused by conflict and occupation. The poem thus affirms that behind symbols of hope and idealized narratives lies a social reality marked by profound injustice and suffering.

للادنا،

وهي الفقيرةُ مثل أجنحة القَطَا

كُتِبَ مُقَدَّسَةً... وجرح في الهوية

Our Country,

as Poor as the Wings of a Desert Bird,

the Holy Books... and the Wounds that are Identity

In this stanza, Mahmoed Darwish portrays Palestine as a land that is “poor like the wings of a desert bird.” This metaphor emphasizes a condition of fragility and limitation. The desert bird (*al-qatā*) survives in a harsh environment and depends on uncertain natural conditions; therefore, its wings symbolize weak and constrained vitality. This imagery represents the social condition of the Palestinian people, who live under economic deprivation, political pressure, and prolonged conflict. From the perspective of Alan Swingewood’s sociology of literature, such representations of poverty cannot be separated from the social structures and histories of oppression that produce them. Swingewood argues that literary works often reflect the material conditions of society, including poverty, marginalization, and inequality resulting from unequal power relations.³¹ Accordingly, poverty in this poem should not be understood merely as an individual condition, but as the outcome of historical and political processes that are structural in nature.

Furthermore, the phrase “sacred books” should be interpreted not as a theological reference, but as a symbol of the long-standing cultural and historical heritage attached to Palestine. Darwish presents an irony between this symbolic and historical richness and the oppressed social reality of its people. This contrast highlights the tension between inherited cultural values and the lived experience of deprivation and constraint.

The culmination of suffering in this stanza appears in the expression “a wound in identity.” This phrase reflects a collective identity crisis experienced by the Palestinian people, whose existence as a nation is continuously denied and questioned. Within Swingewood’s framework, literature functions as a space for articulating the historical and social experiences of marginalized groups, as well as a medium for criticizing processes of identity erasure and historical negation.³² This wound of identity is not merely personal, but rather a direct consequence of exile, the denial of sovereignty, and structural violence endured by the Palestinian people. Thus, this stanza represents the

³⁰ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood* (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 16-17. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

³¹ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood* (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 14-16. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

³² Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood* (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 16-17. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

humanitarian and identity crisis that lies at the core of the socio-political reality of Palestine in Darwish's poetry.

بلادنا،
وهي المعطوفة الممزقة التلال،
كمائنُ الماضي الجديد
*Our Country,
Shackled and its Hills Torn Apart,
is Like a New Trap of the Past*

In this stanza, Mahmoed Darwish depicts Palestine as a land that is “shackled and whose hills are torn apart.” This expression represents the condition of Palestine as unfree and subjected to external pressures political, military, and social. The state of being shackled signifies the restriction of the Palestinian people's freedom of movement in their daily lives, while the imagery of “torn hills” refers to the destruction of geographical space caused by conflict, occupation, and structural violence. Within Alan Swingewood's historical-sociological framework, literature is viewed as a reflection of historical processes and social structures that shape the life of a society.³³ Therefore, the damage to nature and living space depicted in this poem is not merely symbolic, but reflects the material reality of Palestinian society, which has experienced land dispossession and territorial fragmentation as a result of prolonged conflict. The poem illustrates how changes in the physical landscape occur alongside transformations in social structures and the loss of sovereignty.

Furthermore, the phrase “new traps of the past” conveys a powerful historical irony. Darwish emphasizes that traumatic experiences of the past such as colonization, displacement, and violence never truly come to an end, but continually reappear in new forms. From Swingewood's perspective, history is not a passive background in literary works, but an active force that continuously shapes the collective consciousness of society.³⁴ Thus, the past in this poem becomes a social trap that perpetually reproduces suffering and obstructs structural change for the Palestinian people.

The imagery of bondage and the destruction of geographical space affirms the reality of territorial conflict and the loss of sovereignty. Through a historical-sociological approach, Darwish's poetry functions not only as an aesthetic expression, but also as a critique of recurring historical processes and enduring structures of domination.

لبلادنا، وهي الشبية
حُرّيّة الموت اشتياقاً واحتراقاً
وبلادنا، في ليلها الدمويّ
جَوْهَرَةٌ تشعُّ على البعيد

³³ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood* (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 14-16. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

³⁴ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood* (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 11-13. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

على البعيد نُضيء خارجها...

وأما نحن، داخلها،

فرداد اختاذا

*Our Country, Held Captive
Freedom to Die of Burning Longing
and for our Land, in its Bloody Night,
the Jewel that Shines from Afar,
from Afar it Radiates Light Outward...
While We, Who are in it,
are Alone and Lost.*

In this stanza, Mahmoed Darwish portrays Palestine as a captive land, where the meaning of freedom undergoes an extreme distortion. The expression “the freedom to die out of burning longing” reflects a condition in which life under occupation loses its human significance, so that death is perceived as the only remaining form of freedom. This imagery represents the historical exhaustion and existential suffering of the Palestinian people living under constant pressure and structural violence. From the perspective of Alan Swingewood’s sociology of literature, literary works function as forms of social consciousness that record the collective experiences of societies in particular moments of historical crisis.³⁵

Furthermore, Darwish introduces a sharp contrast by depicting Palestine as “a jewel shining from afar.” From the outside, the land appears beautiful, valuable, and historically meaningful. However, this idealized image stands in stark opposition to the social reality experienced by its people within a “bloody night.” Within Swingewood’s framework, the tension between ideological representation and material social reality reveals how literature exposes social contradictions that are often obscured by external or dominant perspectives.³⁶

The phrase “alone and lost” reinforces the condition of alienation experienced by the Palestinian people in their own land. This alienation is not merely physical, but also social and historical, as they are disconnected from rights, security, and a stable sense of identity. The poem demonstrates how both individuals and communities experience alienation as a consequence of unequal social structures and prolonged conflict.

Thus, the imagery of captivity, symbolic contrast, and alienation in the final stanza of *Li-Bilādīnā* represents a humanitarian crisis rooted in the history and social structures of Palestine. In line with Swingewood’s perspective, Darwish’s poetry functions as a social document that records collective suffering while simultaneously revealing the disparity between symbolic representation and the lived reality of oppressed societies.

2. Poem “*Wa Lanā Bilād*”: The plight of the Palestinian People and their Dispossessed Land

In the poem *Wa Lanā Bilād*, Mahmoed Darwish opens the first stanza with a description of Palestine, which he depicts as a boundless land, a reflection of the longing, uncertainty, and hope

³⁵ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood* (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 18-20. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

³⁶ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood* (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 14-16. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

that are deeply ingrained in the collective memory of the Palestinian people. The stanza reads as follows:

ولنا بلادًا لا حُدُودَ لها، كفكرتنا عن

المجهول، ضيقةٌ وواسعةٌ.

*We Have a Country that has no Borders,
Like our Idea of the Unknown, Narrow and Vast.*

In the opening stanza of *Wa Lanā Bilād*, Mahmoed Darwish refers to Palestine as “a country with no borders.” The expression “a country without borders” represents the political reality of Palestine, whose territory is no longer fully recognized within the international order. This condition is a direct consequence of a history of colonization, displacement, and occupation that has forced the Palestinian people to live in exile or under foreign control. Consequently, Palestine does not appear as a stable geographical space, but rather as a fragile and fragmented historical experience. From the perspective of Alan Swingewood’s sociology of literature, literature is understood as a social product that reflects the historical conditions of the society in which it is produced. Swingewood emphasizes that literary works often record social crises and structural conflicts experienced by particular social groups, especially in contexts of unequal power relations and political oppression.³⁷ Therefore, the image of a borderless Palestine in this poem can be read as a reflection of the loss of national sovereignty and the social uncertainty experienced by the Palestinian people.

The phrase “like our idea of the unknown” reinforces the sense that Palestine has become an abstract concept. The homeland no longer exists solely as a physical place of residence, but rather as memory, longing, and a projection of the past. In this sense, Palestine survives within the collective consciousness of its people rather than in the certainty of political space and legal recognition.

Furthermore, Darwish employs the paradoxical imagery of “narrow and vast.” The term “narrow” depicts the constriction of Palestinian living space caused by territorial restrictions, spatial fragmentation, and military control. In contrast, “vast” signifies the expansive meaning of Palestine within memory, hope, and collective national identity. This paradox reflects a contradictory social experience: physical confinement alongside symbolic and historical persistence. According to Swingewood, tensions between oppressive social structures and collective consciousness frequently emerge in literary works through symbols and paradoxes of this kind. Literature thus not only records historical facts but also articulates how societies understand and respond to their social realities.³⁸

بلادًا...

حين نمشي في خريطتها تضيقُ بنا،

وتأخذنا إلى نُقُقِ رماديّ، فنصرخ

³⁷ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood* (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 41-42. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

³⁸ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood* (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 49-50. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

في مشاهنها: وما زلنا نحتك. حبنا

مَرَضٌ وراثيٌّ.

*A Country... When we Walk on its Map, it Becomes too Narrow for us,
and Leads us Into a Gray Tunnel, so that we Scream in its maze: We still love you.
Our love is a Hereditary Disease.*

In this stanza, Mahmoed Darwish depicts Palestine as a country whose space becomes increasingly constricted when it is lived in. The expression “when we walk on its map, it becomes too narrow for us” reflects the socio-historical reality of the Palestinian people, who experience the shrinking of living space within their own land. This imagery points to conditions of structural oppression resulting from occupation, territorial restrictions, and mechanisms of power control that limit mobility and social life. Within Alan Swingewood’s historical-sociological framework, literature functions as a mirror of the social conflicts experienced by societies in particular historical periods, especially conflicts arising from unequal power relations and political domination.³⁹ Therefore, the image of a “narrowing map” does not merely signify a geographical condition, but also reflects the contraction of rights, freedoms, and the social existence of the Palestinian nation.

The image of the “grey tunnel” conveys prolonged uncertainty and alienation, marking a life trapped in crisis without a clear future. Nevertheless, the cry “we still love you” reveals the enduring emotional and historical bond between the Palestinian people and their homeland. The phrase “our love is a hereditary disease” emphasizes that this attachment is transmitted socially and historically from one generation to the next. In line with Swingewood’s view that literature records the collective consciousness of society, this stanza illustrates how suffering, alienation, and loyalty to the homeland become recurring elements of the Palestinian people’s social experience throughout their history.⁴⁰

بلاذ ... حين

تنبذنا إلى المجهول ... تكبرُ. بكبرُ
الصفصافُ والأوصافُ. بكبرُ عُشْبُهَا
وجباها الزرقاءُ. تتسعُ البحيرةُ في
شمالِ الروحِ. ترتفعُ السنابلُ في جنوب
الروحِ. تلمغُ حنةُ الليمونِ قديلاً
على لبل التهاجرِ. تسطغُ الجغرافيا
كُتُباً مُقَدَّسَةً. وسلسلةُ التلالِ

³⁹ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood* (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 43-45. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

⁴⁰ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood* (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 52-54. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

تصير معراجاً، إلى الأعلى ... إلى الأعلى.

A Country...When it Throws us Into the Unknown...It Grows.

Pine Trees and Descriptions Grow. The Grass Grows and the Mountain is Blue.

The Lake Expands North of the Soul. Corncobs Grow in the South of the Soul.

A Lemon Shines Like a Lamp in the Immigrant Night. Geography Shines Like a Holy Book.

And the Series of Hills Becomes a Ladder, Leading to the Top... To the Top.

In this stanza, Mahmoed Darwish presents a form of imaginative resistance to the experience of displacement endured by the Palestinian people. When Palestine “casts us into the unknown,” the homeland paradoxically grows within the memory and collective consciousness of its people. The depiction of nature expanding lakes in the “north of the soul” and wheat in the “south of the soul” suggests that Palestine no longer exists solely as a geographical space, but as an inner landscape that continues to live and develop within the people themselves. From the perspective of Alan Swingewood’s sociology of literature, literary works function as a medium that records the collective consciousness of societies subjected to historical pressures, including exile and the loss of homeland. When physical sovereignty is taken away, such social experiences are transformed into symbols and imaginative expressions within literature. Thus, the expansion of natural space within the “soul” reflects the way Palestinians symbolically preserve the existence of their homeland.

The symbol of the “lemon shining in the night of the immigrant” underscores the role of memory and nostalgia as sources of hope in the diasporic experience, while the image of “geography shining like a sacred book” indicates the sacralization of the homeland as a spiritual and historical space. The chain of hills that transforms into a “stairway ascending upward” represents hope for liberation and transcendence from conditions of oppression. In line with Swingewood’s view that literature not only records territorial conflict but also captures society’s symbolic responses to domination, this stanza affirms that although Palestine has lost its physical sovereignty, it continues to live on as a national identity and a symbol of resistance within the collective consciousness of its people.⁴¹

(لو أُنِّي طائر لحرقتُ أجنحتي) يقول

لنفسه المنفى. رائحةُ الخريف تصيرُ

صورةً ما أحب... تسرّب المطرُ

الخفيفُ إلى جفاف القلب، فانفتح الخيالُ

على مصادره، وصار هو المكان، هو

الحقيقيّ الوحيد.

If I Were a Bird, I Would Burn My Wings,” The Exile Said to Himself.

The Scent of Autumn Becomes an Image of What I Love... Raindrops Seep Into the Dryness of the Heart,

So That Imagination Opens to Its Source, And Becomes That Place, The Only Reality.

⁴¹ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature* Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 55-57. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

In this stanza, Mahmoed Darwish articulates the voice of exile through the expression “if I were a bird, I would burn my wings.” This metaphor reflects profound inner exhaustion and despair caused by prolonged displacement, in which freedom loses its meaning when it is no longer accompanied by the possibility of returning to the homeland. The symbol of the bird, commonly associated with freedom, is transformed here into an existential burden, marking a crisis of meaning in the lives of the Palestinian people under conditions of alienation. From the perspective of Alan Swingewood’s sociology of literature, literary works function as expressions of collective social consciousness shaped by historical pressures and specific political structures. Therefore, this imagery should not be read merely as a personal experience, but as a representation of the social experience of the Palestinian nation living in diaspora and deprived of its living space.⁴²

The images of the “scent of autumn” and “drizzling rain” subsequently evoke memory and emotion, reviving the imaginative realm. The rain that seeps into the “dryness of the heart” symbolizes an awakening of inner consciousness, where imagination becomes a substitute space for a lost reality. Within Swingewood’s framework, literature serves as a medium for preserving the historical experiences of a society, particularly when material reality can no longer be directly accessed.⁴³ Thus, imagination in this stanza emerges as the “only reality” for the Palestinian people a symbolic space in which identity, memory, and attachment to the homeland continue to survive amid an ongoing humanitarian crisis and persistent alienation.

وكلُّ شيء في
 البعيد يعود ريفياً بدائياً، كأنَّ الأرضَ
 ما زالت تكوّن نفسها للقاء آدم، نازلاً
 للطابق الأرضي من فردوسه. فأقول:
 تلك بلادنا حبلى بنا ... فمَنى وُلدنا؟
 هل تزوج آدم امرأتين؟ أم أنا
 سلولّد مرةً أخرى
 لكي ننسى الخطيعة؟

*And Everything in the Distance Returned to Being Primitive and Rustic,
 As if the Earth Was Still Molding Itself to Meet Adam, Down to the Ground Floor of His Paradise.
 I Say: This is Our Country That is Carrying Us... So, When Were We Born? Did Adam Marry Two
 Women? or Will We Be Born Again to Forget Sin?*

In the closing stanza of *Wa Lanā Bilād*, Mahmoed Darwish portrays Palestine as an ancient homeland through the expression that “everything in the distance returns to something rural and primitive,” reflecting Palestine as a primordial land the origin of civilization and humanity. The image

⁴² Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood* (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 50-52. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

⁴³ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood* (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 58-60. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

of the earth that is “still shaping itself to meet Adam” presents Palestine as the space of initial creation, yet simultaneously as a space of exile, when Adam is cast down from paradise to the earthly realm. Adam’s exile thus becomes a symbolic parallel to the historical experience of the Palestinian people, who have been repeatedly expelled from their own land.

From the perspective of Alan Swingewood’s sociology of literature, the use of religious and mythological symbols in literary works functions to connect contemporary social experience with broader structures of historical consciousness. Such symbols enable poets to represent modern social conflicts through universal narratives of origin.⁴⁴ Therefore, the figure of Adam here does not carry merely theological meaning, but also represents the origins of identity conflict and displacement that recur throughout Palestinian history.

The question “did Adam marry two women?” implies competing claims and fractured identities over the same land, while the question “or will we be born again in order to forget the sin?” reflects a collective hope for rebirth and historical reconciliation. In line with Swingewood’s view that literature records social crises and the search for meaning among oppressed societies, this stanza represents the territorial, identity, and sovereignty crises of Palestine, intertwined with spiritual and humanitarian dimensions.⁴⁵

B. Palestinian Socio-Political Realities in the poems *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād* by Mahmoed Darwish

1. Territorial and Sovereignty Conflict

The territorial and sovereignty conflicts experienced by the Palestinian people are at the heart of the social reality reflected in Mahmoed Darwish's poetry. Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Darwish has witnessed firsthand how his homeland was seized and his people expelled as a result of a modern colonialism project rooted in the Balfour Declaration announced by the British government in 1917, which basically expressed support for the plan to establish a residence for the Jewish community in the Palestinian territories. Furthermore, the plan to divide the Palestinian territories into two states, one for Arabs and one for Jews, was proposed by the United Nations General Assembly through Resolution Number 181 on November 29, 1947. The Jews continued to hope to return to the territory they considered the “promised land”, and various efforts were made to seize the territory. The Zionist movement flourished in many Jewish diaspora centers throughout history. However, historically, Jews were not the first group to settle in Palestine.⁴⁶

In 1948, Israel began implementing policies aimed at expelling the Arab population from the Palestinian territories. Any Arab village or community that refused to submit to Jewish military force would be destroyed, and its inhabitants forcibly expelled. As a result of this policy, around 400 Palestinian villages disappeared from the map during the period 1948 to 1949. Palestinian property rights were then transferred to Jews under the legal pretext of ownership of unoccupied land. The Zionist movement systematically used pressure and force to seize land that had been inhabited by Palestinians for centuries. As a result of the expulsion, the area that can be inhabited by Palestinians

⁴⁴ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood* (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 53-55. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

⁴⁵ Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood* (London: Paladin, 1972), hlm. 61-63. <https://share.google/PeH2ISEE83khSGBVS>

⁴⁶ Nur Islamiyah and Agus Trilaksana, “*Aspek Historis Peranan PBB Dalam Penyelesaian Konflik Palestina-Israel 1967-1955*,” AVATARA, e-Journal Pendidikan Sejarah 4, no. 3 (2016): 902–16. <https://ejournal.unesa.ac.id/index.php/avatara/article/view/16146>

is now very limited, only remaining in areas such as the Gaza Strip. Since then, conflicts and wars between Jews and Palestinians have been recurring until today.⁴⁷

Since the proclamation of Israel's independence on May 14, 1948, by Ben Gurion, which affirmed the Palestinian claim to the “birthplace of the Jewish people,” this historical claim has reinforced the narrative that the Jewish people's past, understood since the time of Abraham, Moses, and the political heyday of King David and the spiritual heyday of King Solomon, continues to be revived to legitimize the occupation.⁴⁸ Initially, the Jewish population was around 650,000 people. However, by 2000, the number had increased rapidly to nearly 4.95 million people. Then, with the passage of a bill on Jews proposed by Benjamin Netanyahu and approved by the Israeli Parliament, the number of Jews is likely to increase even more. This could trigger a massive wave of Jewish migration from various countries in Europe and America to Israel.⁴⁹

This is reflected in Darwish's poetic expressions such as “far from the attributes of a name” and “map of absence,” which signify the loss of Palestinian identity and sovereignty in the eyes of the world. Palestine is depicted as having lost not only its land, but also its name, recognition, and political existence.

This conflict is also evident in his poem *Wa Lanā Bilād*, when Darwish writes about people who are “cast into an unknown place.” This expression describes the condition of the Palestinian people who have been expelled from their homeland and live in exile, far from the place that should be their home. They are scattered without any certainty about the future, as if they have lost their direction in a world that does not recognize their existence. This exile does not only mean the physical loss of their homeland, but also reflects their disconnection from their cultural roots, history, and collective identity as a nation.

Thus, these two poems describe the reality of territorial conflict and the loss of sovereignty of the Palestinian people, a form of modern colonialism that erases the existence of a nation from history and the world map.

2. Humanitarian Crisis

Mahmoed Darwish's life as a Palestinian poet is inseparable from the harsh realities surrounding his people, expulsion, colonization, and long isolation. Since childhood, Darwish experienced firsthand how his family was expelled from their homeland in Al-Birwa in 1948, a traumatic experience that became the basis of his entire poetic breath. In his poems written before his death in 2008, especially until 2004, Darwish often voiced the collective suffering of the Palestinian people as a humanitarian crisis that has not ended.

The humanitarian crisis in Palestine has been going on since the British colonization and worsened after the establishment of the state of Israel. Between 1936 and 1939, Palestinians organized strikes and resistance against British colonialism and increased Jewish immigration. The British responded with brutal crackdowns, mass arrests, house demolitions, aerial bombardments and killings. During this period, thousands of Palestinians were killed or imprisoned.

⁴⁷ Bartolomeus Marulitua Simanjourang et al., “Pengaruh Konflik Palestina dengan Israel Terhadap Gerakan Perlawanan Hamas dan Dampaknya Bagi Indonesia,” *Mediation: Journal of Law* 2, no. 2 (2023): 24–30. <http://www.nber.org/papers/w16019>

⁴⁸ Ibnu Burdah, *Wajah Baru Zionisme VS Yabudi Ortodoks*, ed. Yaswinda, Cetakan Pe, (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2015), hlm. 29.

⁴⁹ Misri A. Muchsin, “Palestina dan Israel: Sejarah, Konflik dan Masa Depan,” *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 39, no. 2 (2015): 390–406. <https://www.academia.edu/download/87606620/20.pdf>

The peak of suffering occurred during the Nakba (catastrophe) in 1948. More than 500 Palestinian villages and towns were destroyed, 15,000 Palestinians were killed, and around 750,000 people were forced to flee. They lost their land and homes, and to this day many of their descendants live in refugee camps in neighboring countries in appalling conditions.⁵⁰

After the 1967 war, Israel occupied the remaining Palestinian territories and began illegal settlement construction. Palestinians were forced to live under repressive military occupation, discriminated against and denied political and civil liberties. The first (1987) and second (2000) intifada emerged as a form of resistance, but were met with violence, with thousands of Palestinians, including children, killed, arrested or their homes destroyed.

The situation worsened in the Gaza Strip, especially after the total blockade imposed by Israel in 2007. This blockade stopped the movement of people and goods, including essential supplies such as food, medicine and building materials. Gaza was then subjected to four major military offensives by Israel (2008, 2012, 2014 and 2021). Thousands of Palestinians, many of them children, were killed. Hundreds of thousands more were left homeless. In the 2014 offensive, around 2,100 Palestinians were killed and half a million displaced.⁵¹

This reality is evident in the spirit of patriotism among the Palestinian people, which persists despite facing violence and land seizures. A clear example of this can be seen in the residents of Sheikh Jarrah in Jerusalem who refused to leave their homes despite being surrounded by Israel, as well as the residents of Beita in Nablus who staged a popular uprising against the establishment of illegal settlements. Patriotism is also expressed through the media, such as Palestine TV and songs of struggle that showcase the resilience of the people in the face of occupation.⁵²

In his poetry, Darwish uses phrases such as “a new trap of the past,” “torn apart,” “gray tunnel,” “in the bloody night, a gem shining from afar, from afar it emits light... while we, who are inside, are alone and lost.” All of this shows that Darwish not only describes suffering directly, but also presents the psychological and emotional experiences of the Palestinian people regarding their sense of loss, alienation, and emptiness.

Darwish does not merely describe suffering as a mere complaint, but as the collective consciousness of the humanity of a nation that has lost its home, family, and right to life. Thus, Darwish's poems represent the reality of a humanitarian crisis born of colonialism and oppression, demonstrating the function of literature as a witness to the history of human suffering.

3. Economic Crisis

The economic crisis that has hit Palestine is a direct result of prolonged occupation and the loss of sovereignty over their homeland. Before the occupation, Palestine was known as a fertile and prosperous region. Its people lived from advanced agriculture and were able to export various crops such as cotton, olive oil, wheat, and soap to Europe. However, since the establishment of the state

⁵⁰ Ayla Zhafira, “*Berdirinya Negara di Atas Negara: Sejarah Perampasan Tanah Palestina oleh Israel yang Membawa pada Pelanggaran Hak Asasi Manusia*,” AL-BAHTS: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Politik, dan Hukum 1, no. 1 (2023): 15–22. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32520/albahts.v1i1.3007>

⁵¹ Tommy Patrio Sorongan, “*Ini Sejarah Panjang Konflik Israel-Palestina, Awal Kronologi*,” CNBC Indonesia, 2023. <https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/news/20231016071343-4-480765/ini-sejarah-panjang-konflik-israel-palestina-awal-kronologi>

⁵² Ahmed A.O. Shibar, “*Patriotisme dalam Pemberitaan Palestine TV Saat Agresi Penjajahan Israel pada Tahun 2021*” (Universitas Diponegoro, 2022). https://scholar.google.com/citations?view_op=view_citation&hl=id&user=Yamc8BUAAAAJ&citation_for_view=Yamc8BUAAAAJ:2osOgNQ5qMEC

of Israel in 1948, the Palestinian economy began to deteriorate. Israel took over fertile lands and exploited Palestinian farmers without regard to their economic sustainability. Due to Israel's domination of borders and markets, productive sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing have declined drastically. The agricultural sector's contribution to Palestinian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) declined sharply from around 37-53% in the late 1960s to only around 18-25% in the mid-1980s. Labor absorption in this sector also fell from 46% to around 27% during the same period.⁵³ This reflects the shift of the Palestinian economy from the production sector to the service sector and domestic trade that is highly dependent on Israel. The Trading Economics website states that the cause of Palestine's high economic dependence on Israel is because Israel has control over the flow of goods and labor, as well as control over customs revenues. This situation results in reduced national production capabilities and limited access to natural resources. Under these conditions, the service sector is the main backbone of the Palestinian economy, contributing nearly 83 percent to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Palestine still relies heavily on international aid to fund the state budget and infrastructure projects.⁵⁴

The economic crisis facing Palestine reflects the depth of suffering felt by its people. In his poetry, Mahmoud Darwish describes this condition with the phrase “poor as the wings of a desert bird,” a powerful metaphor for the difficulty of living amid limitations. The inability to fly freely, like a desert bird that has lost its wings, illustrates the poverty that shackles their lives. Not only that, but this economic crisis also reflects severe resource shortages, dependence on outside parties, and limited access that is exacerbated by ongoing occupation. These limitations affect all aspects of life, from the difficulty of obtaining food to the limited opportunities to build a better future.

In this context, the symbol of the “wings of a desert bird” reflects the socio-economic reality of Palestine, a society living under economic pressure and loss of sovereignty due to modern occupation. Thus, Darwish's poetry not only highlights the spiritual suffering of his people, but also presents a sharp social critique of economic injustice as part of the structural oppression that has befallen the Palestinian people.

Closing

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that *Li-Bilādinā* and *Wa Lanā Bilād* by Mahmoud Darwish represent Palestine as a sacred yet oppressed land that has lost its sovereignty, identity, and living space due to colonization. Through the perspective of Alan Swingewood's sociology of literature, the two poems reflect the socio-political realities of Palestine in three main aspects: territorial sovereignty conflicts, humanitarian crises resulting from displacement and exile, and structural economic inequality. These findings affirm that Darwish's poetry functions not only as an aesthetic expression but also as a social document and a form of symbolic resistance that records the collective experiences of an oppressed society. Therefore, this study is significant in strengthening sociological literary studies by demonstrating the relevance of poetry as a medium for

⁵³ Ihdal Husnayain, “*Bagaimana Israel Menghancurkan Ekonomi Palestina, Sebuah Matriks Kontrol yang Mengakibatkan Palestina Bergantung pada Israel dan Bantuan Internasional*,” Adara Relief Internasional, 2023. <https://adararelief.com/bagaimana-israel-menghancurkan-ekonomi-palestina-sebuah-matriks-kontrol-yang-mengakibatkan-palestina-bergantung-pada-israel-dan-bantuan-internasional/>

⁵⁴ Trading Economics, “*Palestine GDP Growth Rate Annual*,” 2025. <https://id.tradingeconomics.com/palestine/gdp-growth-annual>

representing socio-political realities and its contribution to fostering humanitarian awareness and global solidarity.

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