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Resistance Literature Across Cultures: The Impact of Turkish Poetic Experience on Shaping Palestinian Poetic Discourse

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how the Turkish poetry influenced Arab poets' works, particularly in Palestine. The study sample consisted of all Palestinian poets who were influenced by the Turkish poet Hikmet's poetry and philosophy, following in his footsteps and drawing on his revolutionary spirit and anti-colonial fight. The descriptive-analytical approach was used to examine the poetry of both Hikmet's and Palestinians' poetry. The findings revealed the extent to which Hikmet's themes, revolutionary spirit and anti-colonial fight, affected modern Palestinian poetry, where Hikmet's captivity, revolt, and injustice resonated with the Palestinian people's battle for independence and dignity. Many Palestinian poets were inspired by his creative flair and revolutionary views, embracing his principles of freedom, optimism, and resistance against injustice. The study underlines that the relationship between Turkish and Palestinian literature shows the universality of human experience in the face of injustice, demonstrating literature's vital role in

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developing identity and resistance. The findings also revealed that Hikmet's impact went beyond creative characteristics to shape a collective consciousness among Palestinian poets, who reflected concerns of struggle in their poetry—issues that are relevant to the daily Palestinian experience. The study emphasises the universality of resistance literature and its capacity to inspire oppressed peoples worldwide. It promotes more study on transnational literary solidarity and the role of poetry in political mobilisation and cultural identity development.

Keywords: Anti-Colonialism Poetry; Nazım Hikmet; Palestinian Poetry; Transnational Literary Influence

1. Introduction

Poetry has long been one of the most important ways for humans to express their concerns and hopes. From the very beginning of humanity, poetry has been the means to speak about what is within, and about people's social, political, and intellectual problems. Poetry has always served as a reflection of life's details, as well as political, social, and cultural events. Poetry in modern times has become increasingly combative with the "other," as people's knowledge has grown, and poetry has been related to national problems, particularly themes of freedom from occupation. Poetry took on a new shape in the twentieth century, with the advent of national liberation movements, serving as a voice of opposition to colonialism as well as a means for identity formation ^[1–5].

The Turkish poet Nazım Hikmet was imprisoned many times due to his political beliefs and spent about 17 years in Turkish jails. However, incarceration did not ruin his lyrical soul; rather, it enhanced his creativity. Hikmet's poetry, composed during his imprisonment, emerges as a vibrant symbol of resilience and yearning for national liberation, profoundly resonating with the Palestinian experience, particularly among writers reflecting on their suffering in Israeli jails. The depiction of the steadfast prisoner in his work serves as a source of inspiration for Palestinian authors, who find in Hikmet's verses a mirror of their own struggles. His universal humanist views advocate for world peace and social justice, positioning poetry as a means of fostering a more equitable society, which the Palestinians embraced as a common linguistic expression of their quest for independence ^[6–10].

Hikmet's literary legacy extends beyond cultural borders; he aimed to transform reality through his art, promoting themes of freedom, love, peace, and human dignity. He has left a lasting mark on Arabic literature, especially within the realm of Palestinian poetry, influencing many poets

such as Qabbani, al-Haidari, and Al-Bayati. Notably, his impact resonates deeply among Palestinian writers emerging from the Nakba of 1948, who perceive him as an emblem of commitment and intellectual devotion ^[11,12].

The portrayal of the prisoner's suffering in Hikmet's works instills hope and confidence in liberation, fostering a shared humanitarian perspective on independence among Palestinian poets. His simple yet profound writing style facilitates a connection with the common people, making poetry a form of moral resistance amid the backdrop of widespread incarceration. Influential poets, including Darwish and Al-Qasim, draw upon Hikmet's humanistic language to blend themes of love and freedom, with other poets from occupied territories, such as Rashid Hussein, similarly inspired by his unwavering faith in humanity and liberation ^[13–15].

This exploration of Hikmet's influence on Palestinian poetry transcends mere textual analysis; it delves into the interconnectedness of human experiences in confronting injustice, illustrating how his life and struggles align with those faced by Palestinians, ultimately fostering a sense of collective resistance through the power of poetry.

2. Methodology

The present study aimed to explore the influence of Hikmet's prison experience on contemporary Palestinian poetry through a descriptive-analytical approach. It examined Hikmet's poetic works without preconceived notions, investigating linguistic aspects including vocabulary, structures, poetic styles, as well as semantic elements such as symbols and meanings related to revolution and intellect, alongside aesthetic elements like rhythm and internal music. The study also delved into psychological dimensions reflecting the poet's sorrow and shared human experiences, while addressing social and political themes, particularly around freedom and justice ^[16–18].

Employing a comparative method, the research contrasted Hikmet's literary journey with that of prominent Palestinian poets such as Darwish, al-Qasim, Ziyad, Bseiso, and Saleh. This comparison was intended to elucidate the intersections between Hikmet and these poets, highlighting shared language and symbols associated with freedom, resistance to colonialism, and social justice. Additionally, the study explored how varying political and social contexts influenced each poet's discourse, contributing to a defining resistant poetic narrative with universal human significance [18–20].

Through this integration of methodologies, the study provided a comprehensive interpretation of the texts, deepening the analysis of the literary works and emphasizing Hikmet's significant impact on resistance poetry. It unveiled the international implications of his poetry on the Palestinian literary scene, underscoring the revolutionary humanistic core of resistance literature and its capacity to connect the struggles of oppressed peoples while fostering literary unity, collective consciousness, and resilience.

3. Literature Review

The literature review revealed that numerous studies have focused on Nazim Hikmet's (1902–1963) prison experience, which is deemed pivotal for understanding his poetry. Most of these studies referenced his autobiographical works, particularly "Letters from Prison" and "My Country, My Country" that narrate his life during imprisonment. They concentrated on his protracted detention stemming from political beliefs, illustrating how his incarceration transformed his body into a symbol of resistance and prompted a hunger strike that nearly led to his demise, alongside triggering international sympathy. These investigations indicated that he utilized his prison years for extensive reading and writing, during which he produced his most notable poetry [21]. They also emphasised the significance of the letters he sent to his family, which helped him retain his mental equilibrium and fuel his innovative thinking.

The idea of prison as a source of symbols and poetic meanings has been one of the richest themes that critical studies have worked on, as they analyse how the experience of imprisonment shaped his poetic thought. These studies relied on critical research in specialised journals and ana-

lytical books. The longing for the simple life outside prison—like the taste of olives, the laughter of a child, and the colour of the sea—has become a recurring theme expressing the prisoner's yearning for absolute freedom. For Hikmet, freedom is more than just escaping the jail; it is both intellectual and spiritual liberty. He was not referring to a single prisoner, but rather a whole enslaved community. His poems described the misery of other prisoners, and used the jail as a mirror through which he saw societal injustices. The jail no longer served as a symbol of loss; rather, it became a place of resistance, and poetry became an indestructible weapon, with the human spirit triumphing against the might of oppression. Studies further explained how the sensation of time slowing down within the cell differs from the speed of life outside [22–24].

They all agreed that Hikmet succeeded in transforming the prison experience from a personal ordeal into a universal symbol of political and social oppression, and in this way, he gave his poetry a comprehensive human dimension.

Some studies focused on the artistic and aesthetic tools that Hikmet used to express the prison as a place, especially the poetic imagery. They noticed that he relied on realistic sensory images that convey the harshness of reality, like the annoying sound of keys, the coldness of iron, and the guards' whistles, while at the same time combining them with images from the world of freedom, like clouds, birds, and jasmine that would enter his imagination inside the cell. "The prison" became a symbol of all forms of slavery, and "freedom" was associated with the forces of nature that no one can imprison, and "the wall" became a symbol of both physical and spiritual barriers. These studies showed how the artistic form in Hikmet's work served the meaning with utmost sincerity, to the extent that the reader feels the weight of the prison walls and experiences the poet's longing for freedom.

Some researchers tried to compare Hikmet's imprisonment experience with the experiences of other writers and poets who went through similar circumstances. For example, they compared it to the experience of Mahmoud Darwish, who had the same longing for land and freedom, even if the contexts were different (occupation in Palestine versus political imprisonment in Turkey).

Although there are few studies that directly address Hikmet's relationship with Palestinian poetry, there are crit-

ical materials that clarify this influence. The experience of imprisonment was a central theme in Hikmet's poetry, and many critical studies and autobiographies have analysed and documented it. The researchers Blazing and Halman discussed the features of his autobiography and the circumstances of his repeated imprisonment, and how this reflected in his poetic style, which presented freedom as both an artistic and moral value at the same time.

Harlow examined resistance discourses in liberation movements, especially the Palestinian experience, focusing on the narrative structure of the writings [25]. Al-Jiusi offered essential writings and discussed the incarceration and captivity of poets such as Al-Qasim, Bseiso, and Ziyad [26]. Göksu and Timms investigated the synthesis of romanticism with political commitment in Hikmet's poetry, demonstrating how oppression evolved into an artistic impulse that produced visions of optimism [27]. Jail literature has become an important aspect of Palestinian resistance poetry, garnering the attention of writers such as Ghassan Kanafani, who developed a strong theoretical foundation for the concept of resistance literature and saw jail as one of its key emblems [28].

Al-Manasara gave critical interpretations that emphasised on the rhythmic and symbolic features of Palestinian poetry, as well as how incarceration shaped the development of the resistive poet's voice [29]. Nassar and Rahman concentrated on alienation and censorship in Darwish's poetry, emphasising the moral component coming from repression and incarceration, whilst Elad Bouskila discussed the depictions of violence, captivity, and identity [30]. The importance of all these studies is that they establish an understanding of prison not as a transient incident in Hikmet's life, but as a formative condition for his poetic voice, which combined individual and collective experience, and shaped a humanitarian vision that transcends borders [31].

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Hikmet's Prison Experience and Its Reflection on Modern Palestinian Poetry

Nazim Hikmet called in his poetic writings for liberation from injustice, colonialism, and enslavement, and he carried this message until his last days. He passed away on June 11, 1963, leaving behind a great literary and human

legacy. He lived a modest life and owned little in terms of material possessions, which he expressed in his verse:

ليس لدي جواد مسرج بالفضة أركبه،
لا إيراد لي من هنا وهناك،
لا مال ولا عقار،
ليس عندي سوى جفنة عسل،
جفنة أشد حمرة من النار.

I do not have a silver-saddled horse to ride,
No income coming from here or there,
No wealth, no estate,
I have only a bowl of honey,
A bowl redder than fire [21].

Among the most prominent poetic themes that Nazim Hikmet emphasised—deeply connected to struggle, rebellion, and resistance, and later adopted by Palestinian poets—were: internationalism, prison, freedom, and defiance. Nazim Hikmet gave his heart, mind, and thought to his people, and his poetry carried an energy that encouraged the struggles of all oppressed peoples, regardless of their location, color, or religion, always striving for their national independence and social justice. He saw the victory of these peoples, wherever they might be, as a victory for his own people and nation. He said:

أرى نفسي في عيون الأصدقاء
أصدقاء العمل والنضال وإخوة العمل
I see myself in the eyes of friends,
Friends of labor and struggle,
Brothers of work [21].

Nazim Hikmet was a revolutionary poet, living the pains and hopes of peoples from behind the bars of his cell. He was internationalist in every sense of the word—even writing about the American invasion of Korea while imprisoned:

في الوقت الذي جاء فيه ولدي إلى الدنيا،
وُلد أطفال يشبهون عباد الشمس،
في كوريا،
”لقد ذبحهم“، مارك آرثر
فماتوا قبل أن يذوقوا حليب أمهاتهم
عندما جاء ولدي إلى الدنيا،
وُلد أطفال في سجون اليونان،
أُعدم آبائهم رميًا بالرصاص.

At the time my son came into this world,
Children like sunflowers were born,

In Korea,
They were slaughtered by “Mark Arthur,”
And died before tasting their mothers’ milk.
When my son was born,
Children were born in Greece’s prisons,
Their fathers executed by firing squad ^[21].

Nazim Hikmet sympathised with all oppressed peoples who suffered under colonialism, injustice, and poverty. In his poem *Angina Pectoris* he wrote:

إذا كان نصف قلبي هنا أيها الطبيب،
فنصفه الآخر هناك في الصين،
مع الجيش الزاحف نحو النهر الأصفر
وكل صباح، عند شروق الشمس،
يعدمون قلبي في اليونان
وفي كل ليلة، أيها الطبيب،
عندما ينام السجناء، ويغادر الكل المستشفى،
يطير قلبي،
ليحط على منزل مهدم في إسطنبول
وبعد عشر سنوات،
ليس لدي ما أقدمه لشعبي الفقير،
سوى هذه التفاحة،

تفاحة واحدة حمراء، هي قلبي
هذا هو سبب الذبحة الصدرية، أيها الطبيب

If half my heart is here, Doctor,
The other half is in China,
With the army marching toward the Yellow River.
And every morning, at sunrise,
They execute my heart in Greece.
And every night, Doctor,
When the prisoners sleep and all leave the hospital,

My heart takes flight,
To land on a ruined house in Istanbul.
After ten years,
I have nothing to offer my poor people
But this apple,
One single red apple: my heart.
That is the cause of the angina, doctor ^[21].

The internationalism Hikmet envisioned was a call for human equality beyond color, class, or nationality. It reflected the human crisis and conveyed universal emotions, thoughts, and aspirations. As he put it:

ونفس الشاعر التي تتسع لاستيعاب كل أشكال الحياة،

يجب أن تحركها الأشكال المشرقة،
كما تقف عند الصور الصعبة

And the poet’s soul, vast enough to embrace all
forms of life,
Must be stirred by radiant images,
Even as it halts before darker scenes ^[21].

4.1.1. Echoes in Palestinian Poetry

Palestinian poets echoed Hikmet’s universalist values. Tawfiq Ziyad wrote:

نحن لا نأكل لحم الآخرين،
نحن لا نذبح الأطفال،
ولا نصرع أناساً آمنين.
نحن لا نسرق البيوت،
نحن لا نعرف طعم الجريمة،
ولا نكسر الأقلام
We do not eat the flesh of others,
We do not slaughter children,
Nor do we strike down the innocent.
We do not steal homes,
We do not know the taste of crime,
Nor do we break the pens (p. 37–38) ^[32].

And Hikmet himself declared:

أصدقاء لم أصافحهم أبداً،
ولكننا مستعدون أن نموت،
من أجل نفس الخبز،
ونفس الحرية،
ونفس الحلم
Friends I have never shaken hands with,
Yet we are ready to die,
For the same bread,
The same freedom,
The same dream ^[21].

Abdul Nasser Saleh also echoed this universal spirit:

تعزف أوتار قلبي لحن السلام،
حتى يزول الغمام.
سلام، سلام،
على وطن السلام
تحيا البلاد،
وسرب الحمام،
يحيا السلام

The strings of my heart play the melody of peace,

Until the clouds disperse.
Peace, peace,
Upon the homeland of peace.
Long live the country,
And the flock of doves,
Long live peace ^[33].

Ziyad, once more, addressed the oppressed:

لكم، من كل الصعاليك اليتامى،
أنتم يا زهرة الرايات،
لكم سلامًا

For you, from all the orphaned vagabonds,
You, O flower of banners,
For you, greetings ^[32].

(لأهل أفريقيا)
يدي ممدودة للشعب،
للعمال،
هم أصحابي وإخوان طريقي.

إنما أكره حكمًا جائرًا،
لا أكره أحدًا

(To the people of Africa)

My hand is outstretched to the people,
To the workers,

They are my companions and brothers along the path.

I hate only an unjust rule,
I do not hate anyone ^[32].

The social and ideological dimensions of Nazim Hikmet's thought made him an internationalist and universal poet, moving within the orbit of European culture and thought. His defense of these values encouraged world writers to defend him when he was imprisoned, exerting pressure on the Turkish government to release him. Nazim Hikmet was one of the poets who defended human dignity regardless of color, religion, or ethnicity. He represented the simple classes, saying:

يا أخوتي،
لا تنتظروا إلى أنني أشقر الشعر،
أنا آسيوي.
لا تنتظروا إلى أنني أزرق العينين،
أنا أفريقي

My brothers,
Do not look at my blond hair,
I am Asian.

Do not look at my blue eyes,
I am African ^[21].

Such words embody humanistic thought and the poet's sympathy with the poor classes, urging them to revolt and rebel against tyranny, to take their role in the struggle for independence and freedom. Following in Nazim Hikmet's footsteps, the great Palestinian poet Tawfiq Ziyad was deeply influenced by his poetry and thought. Ziyad translated some of Hikmet's works into Arabic, reflecting Hikmet's strong place in his mind and heart. Ziyad even wrote more than one poem for Hikmet, considering him a role model, a candle burning to illuminate Anatolia:

لا تذهبُ عبثًا تلك الأسفار،
واللحنُ الثائرُ كالإعصار.
لم تحرق تلك السنوات العشر،
إلا لينور في الأناضول الزهر

Those journeys are never in vain,
And the rebellious tune is like a storm.
Those ten burning years did not consume,
But to make Anatolia's flowers bloom ^[32].

In another poem about hunger, terror, and shackles—experiences that Hikmet himself endured—Ziyad wrote in a style very close to Hikmet's:

يا أخوتي في الجوع والإرهاب،
يا أخوتي في الثورة الحمراء،
تزحف في العروق
يا أخوتي،
في شمس عودتهم اقترب السلام

My brothers in hunger and terror,
My brothers in the red revolution
That creeps in the veins ^[31].

My brothers,
In the sun of their return, peace draws near.

Since both Hikmet and Ziyad drew from the same ideological current, their visions of peasants and the poor were similar: both saw the peasant as a struggler fighting for freedom, and both supported the peasants' and laborers' revolt for liberation. Ziyad declared:

يا إخوتي العمال،
أحبكم جميعًا.
أحب كل قبضة مهزوزة،
في أوجه الأنذال.

وكل جبهة شامخة،
في ساحة النضال
وكل كلمة جريئة تُقال
My worker brothers,
I love you all.
I love every trembling fist
In the faces of the vile,
And every proud forehead
In the square of struggle,
And every brave word spoken ^[31].

In his poem "*The Army of the Hungry Marches*", Samih al-Qasim echoed the same theme, portraying the hungry as a marching army:

جيش الجائعين يسير،
يسير من أجل أن يشبع خبزاً
من أجل أن يشبع لحماً،
من أجل أن يشبع كتباً،
من أجل أن يشبع حرية
The army of the hungry marches,
Marches to be filled with bread,
To be filled with meat,
To be filled with books,
To be filled with freedom ^[31].

Nazim Hikmet adopted a philosophy aligned with humanitarian causes and with the oppressed and afflicted. He wrote about collective pain regardless of ideology, calling for unity and solidarity hand in hand ^[33]. This type of poetry connects freedom, culture, and the struggle against hunger, poverty, and oppression. Palestinian poets embraced this same vision. Abdul Nasser Saleh wrote:

أنا السلم والحرب،
والجذب والخصب،
البعيد القريب،
السجين الطليق.
I am peace and war,
Drought and fertility,
The distant, the near,
The prisoner, the free ^[34].

Hikmet himself expressed similar meanings in his words:

أنا أعيش بين الناس، وأحب الناس،
أحب العمل، وأحب الفكر،

أحب نضالي، وأنت إنسان نضالي،
فأنا أحبك
I live among people, and I love people,
I love work, and I love thought,
I love my struggle, and you are a human of struggle,
So I love you ^[21].

Tawfiq Ziyad followed in Hikmet's path, writing about figures such as the African revolutionary Patrice Lumumba, the Russian poet Mayakovsky, the victory of Cuba, Lenin, and also about Arab struggles: Amman, Port Said, Gamal Abdel Nasser, the July 14 Revolution, and Omdurman. He wrote about the dream of return, the suffering of prisons, and the lives of the poor and simple folk.

4.1.2. Nazim Hikmet: The Poet of Homeland, Hope, and Resistance

Nazim Hikmet was a poet who defended his homeland from a young age. He was imprisoned several times for this reason, yet he never lost hope in its liberation. He defended his country with strength and determination, never distracted by anything from loving it. He had a special love and belonging to his birthplace and firmly believed that his homeland would soon be free. He could not remain silent when witnessing the suffering of his people. His language became a reaction against colonialism—capturing misery, deprivation, killing, expulsion, exile, and imprisonment—yet he remained convinced of independence and liberation. He wrote:

سيولد من أفضل من ولد
من التراب والنار والحديد
وستتصافح الأيدي
أيدي الناس
وسيقولون: ما أجمل الحياة
From soil, from fire, from iron,
Will be born the best ever born.
And hands will clasp,
The hands of the people,
And they will say: How beautiful is life ^[21].

Hikmet saw himself as deprived in his own country. When he remembered the stillness of his childhood days, he grieved and cried out. His only weapon was poetry, through which he defied colonialism, called for unity and revolu-

tion, and never lost hope in the future. He believed that in his homeland a tree would bloom, nourished by the blood of heroes. Hikmet always longed for hope, freedom, and a bright future. He said:

نحمل بأيدينا فانوسا يطلق ألسنة اللهب
آن لنا أن نشعل حريقا في بيت الليل
الذين سيأتون بعدنا سيشاهدون ليالي الربيع
لا من خلال القضبان الحديدية
بل من خلال كروم العنب المزدهرة

In our hands we carry a lantern that breathes
flames,
It is time we set fire to the house of night.
Those who come after us will see the nights of
spring,
Not through iron bars,
But through flourishing vineyards ^[21].

In such a context, it was natural that humanist and universal poets like Hikmet had a strong presence in modern poetry. Salah Abdel-Sabour wrote about Lorca, Ahmad Abdel-Mo'ti Hijazi about Neruda, Hassan Al-Bab about Hikmet, Saadi Youssef about Éluard, Adonis about Picasso, Fuad Haddad about Aragon, and Baland al-Haidari about Lorca. Hikmet himself wrote:

يا عراة أوروبا
نركض جنبا إلى جنب
على الخيول الحمراء
الهدف قريب جدا
فانظروا إلى الأيام المعدودة التي تفصلنا عن الحرية

O naked ones of Europe
We run side by side
On red horses
The goal is very near
Look at the few days that separate us from freedom (p. 159) ^[21].

He also uttered his famous words:

إن لم أحترق أنا
وإن لم تحترق أنت
وإن لم نحترق كلنا
كيف يمكن للظلمات أن تصبح ضياء
If I do not burn,
If you do not burn,
If we do not all burn,

How will the darkness ever turn into light ^[22]?

Such words reveal a poet strong in voice and thought, unyielding before the goal he envisioned until he achieved it. He wrote:

أصبحت معدودة الأيام التي تفصلنا عن الحرية
انتظروا بعث الشرق يقبل من بعيد
ملوحا بمنديله بالدم
انظروا خيولنا الراقصة على أشلاء الاستعمار

The days that separate us from freedom are now
few.
Await the resurrection of the East, approaching
from afar,
Waving its blood-soaked handkerchief.
Look at our horses dancing upon the corpses of
colonialism ^[22].

Hikmet's thought and poetry profoundly influenced modern Arabic poetry, especially Palestinian poetry. His work reached global stature at a time when the revolutionary socialist movement was at its peak, with the rise of the Soviet Union, the flourishing of socialist realism, the emergence of surrealism, and the fame of figures such as Neruda, Lorca, Éluard, Aragon, Mayakovsky, Sartre, Che Guevara, Gaudy, Albert Camus, André Malraux, Jiménez, Machado, Unamuno, Picasso, André Breton, and others.

In the Arab world, the national liberation movement was at its height, with many countries freed from colonialism, Arab socialism rising in several states, and the free verse movement carrying the banners of renewal, commitment, liberty, and universal humanism. There were also strong slogans of solidarity with oppressed peoples everywhere. Hikmet visited Egypt in 1962 with a delegation from the Conference of Asian and African Writers, expressing solidarity and meeting its writers and poets.

Here, the vision of Tawfiq Ziyad regarding freedom and resistance did not differ from Hikmet's. Ziyad used direct meanings without stripping them of their depth and beauty. We can therefore say that Ziyad followed Hikmet's path in national struggle, as their political and economic circumstances were similar, both rebelling against tyrannical societies oppressing the poor. Marxist thought played a clear role in shaping this humanistic and resistant poetry. Ziyad wrote:

أنا من شدة حبي لبلادي لا أفنى

ولا أموت
لكن دائما أتجدد
وطني يسكن في جرحي وذاك لاجئ مغترب
So deep is my love for my homeland that I do
not perish,
Nor do I die,
But I am always renewed.
My homeland dwells in my wound,
And that wound is an exiled refugee ^[32].

The role of the poet was active in confronting dangers and challenges. Hikmet aspired to embody the role of the rebel, rejecting all forms of injustice, tyranny, and corruption, looking toward dignity, overcoming hardship, and seeking total liberation from painful realities. Poetry became his instrument to inspire struggle. He thus channeled his poetic energy to express his simple self, envisioning his homeland freed from the chains of oppression and occupation, in verses rejecting every form of injustice. He wrote:

لقد وضعوا في الأغلال إنسانا كان يمشي
لهذا السبب لن أتنازل لن أتنازل
إن ذلك لا يهمني أن أرى إنسانا يمنعونه من السير
إنسان يكبلونه في الأغلال
They shackled a man who was walking.
For this reason I will not yield, I will not yield.
It does not matter to me to see a man forbidden
from walking,
A man bound in chains ^[21].

Ziyad echoed:

يا من كسرتم قلمي واغتصبتم حق شعب
وأهنتم علمي وطعنتم حلم
إن غدا لن يهز
O you who broke my pen and raped my people's
right,
Who insulted my flag and stabbed my dream—
Tomorrow shall not be defeated ^[32].

Hope, freedom, and independence always remained in Hikmet's imagination and thought. He wrote:

إنه يمشي خطوة خطوة
ببطء
إنه يمشي ويمشي نحو العدو
عيناه مثل السكين
إنه يمشي خطوة إنه يمشي ويمشي

He walks step by step,
Slowly.
He walks and walks toward the enemy,
His eyes like knives.
He walks a step, he walks and walks ^[21].

And Ziyad sang in the same spirit:

سأغني للإنسان المتحرر
من كل المغتصبين
من كل المحتلين الغاصبين
I will sing for the human being
Freed from every rapist,
From every occupier, every usurper ^[32].

4.1.3. Samih al-Qasim, Ziyad, Hikmet, Darwish, and the Poetry of Rebellion

Samih al-Qasim says:

إنني في الفجر راجع لحما وصوتا ودما
ولو على أطراف الأصابع
At dawn I shall return—flesh, voice, and blood,
Even if only on the tips of my fingers ^[31].

Ziyad says:

أكره أن تبكي أم أو زوجة
أكره أن تسقط قنبلة فوق الطرقات
أعطي صوتي لحرب واحدة هي حرب التحرير
I hate to see a mother or wife weep.
I hate to see a bomb fall upon the streets.
I give my voice to only one war—
The war of liberation. (p. 98) ^[32].

Nazim Hikmet believed that poetry of resistance, pain, misery, and deprivation could be a bridge to freedom. He was confident that the day of victory was near. He believed in tomorrow, seeing it as better than today. He prophesied of a day when prison cells and chains would fall, a future realised by children who would grow up to uproot the stones and fangs of tyrants.

أطفالنا الآتون
من يظفر الأحزان
إكليل ورد في جبين الزمان
إنه يمشي نحو العدو
مثل خنجرين
إنه يتقدم خطوة خطوة

إنه يمشي ببطء إنه يمشي

Our children are coming,

To crown sorrows

With a garland of roses on the brow of time.

He walks toward the enemy,

Like two daggers.

He advances step by step,

He walks slowly, he walks ^[21].

كان الحلم في هذا العالم الفاني كان بالإمكان أن تسعد فيه الحياة

The dream—in this fleeting world—

Was that life could be made joyful ^[21].

Ziyad says:

سأعيش وأتجدد في وطن الأجداد

فأنا والنصر وشمس الأحرار على ميعاد

I shall live and be renewed in the homeland of my forefathers.

For victory and I, and the sun of the free, have an appointment ^[32].

Nazim Hikmet declares:

أغنياتنا يجب أن تخرج إلى الريح

Our songs must go out into the wind ^[21].

From this, Mahmoud Darwish drew inspiration for his famous poem:

:على هذه الأرض ما يستحق الحياة

.على هذه الأرض سيدة الأرض، أم البدايات أم النهايات

.كانت تسمى فلسطين. صارت تسمى فلسطين

سيدتي: أستحق، لأنك سيدتي، أستحق الحياة

On this earth there is that which deserves life:

On this earth, the Lady of Earth, mother of beginnings, mother of endings.

It was once called Palestine. It is still called Palestine.

My lady: because you are my lady, I deserve life ^[35].

Nazim Hikmet, addressing his people, with certainty of liberation and independence, says:

صدقوني إننا سنرى أياما جميلة

مفعمة بالشمس

ستدفع بالمحركات في بحور الزرقة المضيئة يا أولاد

Believe me, we shall see beautiful days,

Filled with sunlight,

Days that will push engines across luminous blue seas, O children ^[21].

Nazim Hikmet's thought and poetry were not confined to the Turkish people alone. They extended across the world wherever there was oppression. His universalist spirit resonated with freedom fighters globally, particularly during the Nazi war of conquest, including the Soviet campaign that turned into a furnace under the feet of colonizers, ending with the crushing of the Nazi beast and the entry of the Red Army into Berlin.

He wrote:

إن لم أحترق أنا وإن لم تحترق أنت وإن لم نحترق كلنا

كيف يمكن للظلمات أن تصبح ضياء

تعالوا سراعا أنا أدعوكم كي تصبوا الرصاص

If I do not burn, if you do not burn, if we do not all burn,

How will the darkness ever turn to light?

Come quickly—I call upon you to pour out the bullets ^[21].

And he also wrote:

لا تخف من الثورات

إنهم لا يتركوننا نغني يا أخي الأسود

إنهم يخافون الفجر يخافون من أغانينا

يخافون الحبة والأرض

Do not fear revolutions.

They do not let us sing, my Black brother.

They fear the dawn, they fear our songs,

They fear the grain and the earth ^[21].

Hikmet's poems, charged with rebellion, rejection, revolution, and anger, became torches for Palestinian poets living under oppression. Abdul Nasser Saleh writes:

تمرد

أحرق من أرضي ما شئت

فأنا أصرخ في هذا الليل ما زالت أرضي خضراء

Rebel!

Burn of my land what you will—

I cry in this night: my land is still green ^[33].

And he says:

السلح خلاصك

أنت امتداد المكان والزمان

أنت شجر لا يموت

أنت الفارس في المعركة

Your weapon is your salvation.

You are the extension of place and time.

You are a tree that never dies.

You are the knight in the battle ^[34].

His poetic fabric was woven from simple, liberated language—sharp in confrontation, inflamed in reaction—inciting the people to act. Mahmoud Darwish writes:

حاصر حصارك لا مفر

اضرب عدوك لا مفر

سقطت ذراعك فالتقطها

وسقطت قربك فالتقطني

واضرب عدوك بي

فأنت الآن حرّ وحرّ وحرّ

حاصر حصارك بالجنون

وبالجنون ذهب الذين تحبهم

ذهبوا فلما أن تكون أو

لا تكون

Besiege your siege—there is no escape.

Strike your enemy—there is no escape.

Your arm has fallen—pick it up.

I fell beside you—pick me up.

Strike your enemy with me.

For now you are free, free, free.

Besiege your siege with madness.

With madness went those you loved.

They are gone—so either you be,

Or not be ^[36].

Hikmet's poetry, which Palestinian poets followed, was marked by rebellion. His words embodied a spirit of resistance, refusing occupation. He recognised early the national and emotional need of readers and thus produced poems brimming with the spirit of resistance, sincerity of feeling, and the fire of passion. They mirrored the struggle, challenge, and fight of a people uprooted from their land, left with no path to salvation but rebellion. Thus, rebellion became a concept shaped by the objective reality confronting every usurper of humanity.

Nazim Hikmet was an inspiration to poets of humanity, as Abdul Nasser Saleh says, a rebel with a strong and firm voice against the occupier:

فجرني يا بركان الغضب الثوري على أعدائي قنبلة

احملني نارا تحرق أجساد الدخلاء

دعني أسجد للشهداء

سأقدم روحي من أجل بلادي

وأضحى بدمي

وأزين مدينتنا بالأضواء

لا أتحمل النار السوداء

Explode me, O volcano of revolutionary rage, as a bomb upon my enemies.

Carry me as fire to burn the bodies of intruders.

Let me prostrate to the martyrs.

I shall offer my soul for my country,

And sacrifice my blood,

And adorn our city with lights.

I cannot bear the black fire ^[33].

And Mahmoud Darwish, addressing the Palestinian people, says:

احموا سنابلكم من الإعصار،

اقبض على السنابل كم تقبض على خنجر

(درويش، 1989، 41)

Protect your wheat stalks from the storm.

Grip the stalks as you would grip a dagger ^[37].

The poet calls upon the people for loyalty and sacrifice for the freedom of their homeland and the defense of their land. He urges them to cling to the homeland in difficult times, and to hold tightly to the wheat stalks, for they symbolize goodness and freedom. They are a metaphor for the steadfastness of the simple Palestinian farmer and his defense of his land. Wheat and land are the essential pillars of defending and preserving the freedom and independence of the nation. Thus, Darwish represents rebellious poetry through his insistence on defending the land and urging the people to remain steadfast.

Nazim Hikmet focused on prison and the jailer, describing the conditions of prisoners and how they were treated and punished, as in his poem *Prison Memoirs of Hopa*. The very title “memoirs” suggests the events he chronicled and remembered during his long imprisonment. In it, he describes the urine bucket used by prisoners in the same room where they slept:

سقط المنديل في صفيحة البول

The handkerchief fell into the urine bucket ^[21].

The days of prison and torment were the greenhouse and womb of the finest works Hikmet ever wrote—poems

and plays dedicated to his fellow workers and the down-trodden, as well as beautiful verses for his wife, life companion, and for his son, Mehmet, whom he only ever saw from behind bars. His writings radiated with genuine artistic imagery and unwavering commitment, serving as the candle that lit the way toward freedom and independence, and as a revolutionary guide on the path to the sun of liberty. He describes his state in prison:

وحدي بعيد عنهم
محروم من رؤية الشمس
ولم أنزل من القمم
Alone, far from them,
Deprived of seeing the sun,
And I have not descended from the peaks ^[21].
In Ankara prison, Hikmet wrote:
اليوم الأحد لأول مرة يخرجونني إلى الشمس
لأول مرة في حياتي
وحدنا: الأرض والشمس وأنا
Today is Sunday—
For the first time they let me out into the sun.
For the first time in my life,
It is just us: the earth, the sun, and I ^[21].

Hikmet took part in Atatürk's reformist movement but opposed Turkish feudalism. Later, he became an opponent of the regime, and his poems were banned in Turkey. He adopted pseudonyms such as Orhan Selim, Ahmed Oguz, and Mumtaz Osman to sign his works. Because of his writings, he was imprisoned in Istanbul, Ankara, and Çankırı, serving nearly fifteen years behind bars.

He vividly describes what happened to "Bayramoğlu" during his arrest:

يداه مقيدتان بإحكام
دركي عن يمينه وآخر عن يساره
إلى طريق الموت
هل هناك مكان خلف جدار الموت
His hands bound tightly,
A gendarme on his right, another on his left,
On the road to death.
Is there any place beyond the wall of death ^[21]?

He describes a fellow prisoner:

ألقوا به في النظارة المقابلة
ارتفع هدير الصوت

لا تضربني
تحطم مثل الخشب في النار
صاح وهو يمسك بالقضبان الحديدية
They threw him into the opposite cell.
A roar of sound rose up:
"Do not beat me!"
He shattered like wood in fire,
He cried out, gripping the iron bars ^[21].

Despite the daily torments inflicted upon him, Hikmet continued to write poetry in prison. He produced remarkable works that immortalized his name in the history of human poetry. These works reflected the tragedy of imprisonment forced upon him and the great crises that shook the world. Fellow inmates called him "the teacher," while he called them "my brothers."

Had he lived to witness the tragedy of the Palestinian people, he would have immortalised it with his epic poems. Just as he wrote of revolutions and revolutionaries around the world, his great heart also had space for love and tenderness—for his wife, his life companion, and his son—to complete the human epic with its most beautiful details.

From prison, he wrote to his wife Munevver:

حفرت اسمك بظفر
على جلد سوار
فأنت تعلمين بأنه لا يوج
في السجن سكين ذات مقبض صدف
ولا شجرة شربين ينطح رأسها السما
بل توجد بالباحة شجرة صغيرة
ولكن ممنوع حتى على السحا
أن يعلو رؤوسن
I carved your name with my fingernail
On the skin of my cuf.
For you know that in prison there is no knife
With a pearl handle,
And no maple tree thrusting its head into the sky.
There is only a small tree in the yard,
But even the clouds are forbidden
From passing above our heads ^[21].

Nazim Hikmet, like other writers of resistance, was not prevented by prison from fulfilling his revolutionary project as a poet and a dissenter. He endured the torment of the jailer in order to awaken the sleepers and breathe into them the spirit of liberation and rebellion. The whip did

not stop him from practicing his struggle and revolutionary role.

In the later years of his imprisonment, he declared a hunger strike as an expression of refusal. The harshness of prison—its psychological suppression, enforced deprivation, and physical torture—became fertile soil for the explosion of creative energy, a natural and logical reaction to the practices of an oppressive authority.

He was able to build a bridge of communication with prisoners regardless of their crimes, so that all listened to him: thieves, murderers, smugglers, workers, peasants, outcasts, the marginalized, intellectuals, and the oppressed. He would say to them:

إنني أحسّ بأوجاعكم
مثلاً تحسّون بها تماماً،
وإذا بقيتُ سالمًا
سأكتبُ على الجدران وفوق الأرصفة
في السّاحات العامّة أشعار
وسأعزفُ على الكمان في ليالي العيد
لمن يبقون من المعركة الأخيرة،
وكذلك سأعزفُ على الأرصفة المغمورة بضياء ليلة رائعة

I feel your pains

Just as you feel them.

And if I remain alive,

I shall write upon the walls and across the pavements

Poems in the public squares.

I shall play the violin on festival nights

For those who survive the final battle.

And I shall play, too, on pavements flooded

With the light of a wondrous night ^[21].

In his *Palestinian Notebooks*, the Palestinian writer Bseiso noted his friendship with Nazim Hikmet during their time in Iraq. He recalls that on one of his visits to Turkey, he took a handful of its soil and scattered it around Hikmet's grave, which at the time was in Moscow before his remains were honored and returned to Turkey.

Muin Bseiso summarised Hikmet's words in the phrase:

“أفضل أن تكون سجيناً في وطنك، من أن تكون امبراطوراً في المنفى”

“It is better to be a prisoner in your homeland than an emperor in exile.” ^[38]

His jailers left, but his words remained. People in Moscow still recite them:

أجمل الأيام، تلك التي لم نعيشها بعد
أجمل البحار، تلك التي لم نبحر فيها بعد
أجمل الأطفال، هم الذين لم يولدوا بعد
أجمل الزهور، تلك التي لم نرها بعد
أجمل الكلمات، تلك التي لم أقلها لك بعد
وأجمل القصائد، تلك التي لم أكتبها بعد

The most beautiful days are those we have not yet lived.

The most beautiful seas are those we have not yet sailed.

The most beautiful children are those not yet born.

The most beautiful flowers are those we have not yet seen.

The most beautiful words are those I have not yet said to you.

And the most beautiful poems are those I have not yet written ^[21].

He likens the prisoner to a lion—for his patience, courage, strength, and pride. He says:

انظر إلى الأسد يتجول داخل القفص الحديدي
دون أن يفقد اتزاناً
يحمل حقداً في عينيه
مثل سكّين من الفولاذ

Look at the lion pacing inside the iron cage,

Without losing his balance,

Carrying hatred in his eyes,

Like a blade of steel ^[21].

The pain of prison was softened by his love of his homeland and longing for it from behind bars. His only request was to live free under the light of his homeland, yearning to return to his birthplace. In his prison writings, he always dreamed of freedom and returning to the mother's embrace. Prison changed his perspective on life; it altered the meaning of things. From within prison, the moon seemed sweeter and larger, the scent of earth became perfume. He saw freedom on the prison walls, cried out to the jailer to release the prisoners, and envisioned the sorrows of prison dying away once the olive trees regained their greenness and lightning flashed across his homeland.

Out of admiration for Hikmet's prison poetry, Tawfiq

Ziyad titled his collection *Prisoners of Freedom*. In it, he writes:

هذه أغنية لعشرة آلاف سجين في سجونك يا إسرائيل تتحدى
This is a song for ten thousand prisoners
In your prisons, O Israel—defying you ^[32].

He also says:

لتقطع يدك يا سجان
اسحب يا غازي جيشك من وطني المحتل
May your hand be severed, O jailer.
Withdraw, O invader, your army from my occupied homeland ^[32].

And again:

ضعوا في رجلي القيد،
ضعوا في يدي القيد،
اقطعوا لساني،
ضعوا في عنقي حبل المشنقة،
أنا لا أفنى أنا أتجدد
Place the shackle on my foot,
Place the shackle on my hand,
Cut out my tongue,
Place the noose upon my neck.
I shall not perish—I shall be renewed ^[21].

Mahmoud Darwish also wrote poems carrying titles like *Telegram from Prison*, *The Prison*, *Challenge*, *The Prisoner Grew*, *The Murdered No. 48*, *Reaction*, and *No Walls for the Cell*. In one of them he says:

أنقذتني من الموت الزنزانة
وجدت على سقفها حريتي
ارفع جبينك فوق الجدار
The cell saved me from death.
On its ceiling I found my freedom.
Raise your brow above the wall ^[32].

Samih al-Qasim blended the feminine with the homeland through the lens of prison, saying:

أرى عينيك على جدران السجن
ويظهر وجهك على جدران السجن
I see your eyes upon the prison walls.
Your face appears upon the prison walls ^[31].

He also says:

ما الذي تفعله قضبان السجن

في السجن آلات العذاب
لكن الموت نزهة
والسجن ضحكة
What can prison bars do?
In prison there are tools of torment.
But death is an outing,
And prison is a laugh ^[37].

And again:

من نافذة السجن الصغيرة
أرى أشجاراً تبتسم
ونوافذ تبكي
وتصلي من أجلي
من نافذة الزنزانة الصغرى
أرى زنزانتك الكبرى
From the small prison window
I see trees smiling,
And windows weeping,
And praying for me.
From the window of my small cell
I see your greater prison ^[38].

Samih al-Qasim himself was arrested, thrown into prisons and solitary cells, and subjected to house arrest because of his activism and national struggle. Yet all this only strengthened his resolve, deepened his faith in his political and militant path, and fortified his commitment to the causes of his people and his national duty.

5. Conclusions

The study confirms the strong interconnection between political poetry and society's political needs, such as the hope for freedom, internationalism, dignity, and the rejection of injustice. The poetry of the Palestinian poets influenced by Nazim Hikmet is characterised by simplicity and clarity, without descending into colloquialism or losing the artistic essence of the texts; the aim is to deliver the message directly without unnecessary complication. Palestinian poetry influenced by Hikmet reflects the hopes and aspirations of international and human universalism, as well as the ambitions of the Palestinian people and oppressed nations worldwide in their quest for freedom.

The most significant aspect of Hikmet's influence on Palestinian poets lies in themes related to rebellion, imprisonment, and the longing for freedom. This is natural and

logical, since the Palestinian people have endured decades of occupation—they seek liberation from oppression while wishing no other nation to remain subjugated. Ultimately, these collective poetic voices call for rebellion against oppression wherever it exists, for striving toward freedom, dreaming of it, and defending it. They also emphasise that colonised nations share these struggles and must free themselves from them.

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