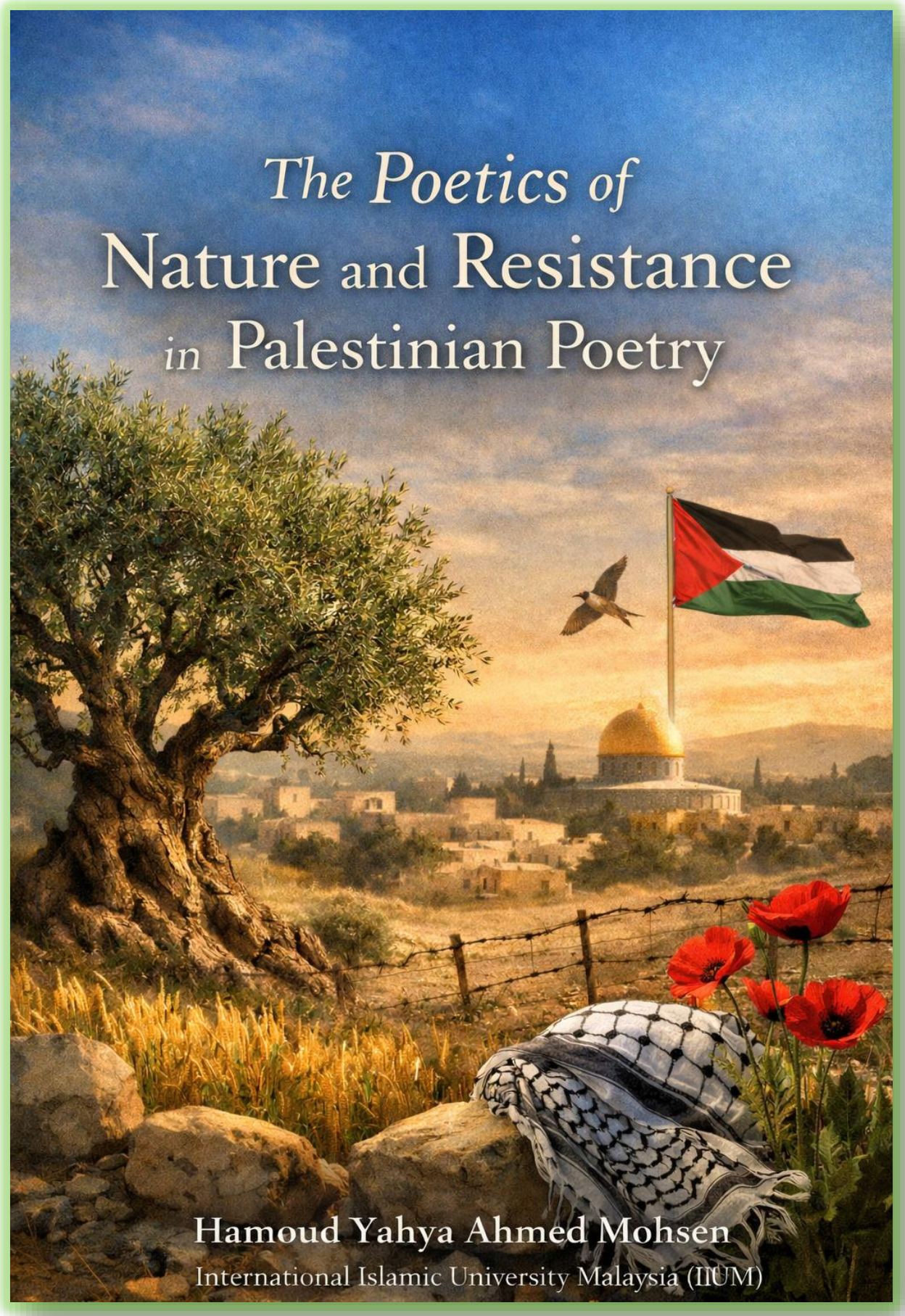


The background of the book cover is a detailed illustration. On the left, a large, gnarled olive tree stands in a field of golden wheat. In the foreground, a black and white checkered keffiyeh is draped over a rock, with several red poppies growing nearby. A barbed wire fence runs across the middle ground. In the background, a cityscape is visible under a sunset sky, featuring the Dome of the Rock and a tall flagpole flying the Palestinian flag. A dove is shown in flight between the tree and the flag.

The Poetics of Nature and Resistance *in* Palestinian Poetry

Hamoud Yahya Ahmed Mohsen
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NATURE AND RESISTANCE
IN
PALESTINIAN POETRY**

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Preface

This book unveils the poetics of nature and resistance in Palestinian poetry through the analysis of Mahmoud Darwish's poetry of resistance. Throughout the fifty years of Darwish's writing life, the core of his poetry is to resist colonialism of his homeland of Palestine. The book is aimed to explore how nature is employed as a form of Palestinian resistance by tracing the different faces and phases of development in Darwish's employment of nature that becomes the basis of his agenda as a literary activist. Since his poems are written in three different phases and each one has its characteristic context, sequences and consequences on the poet's depiction of resistance, it is crucial that these three stages underpin the chapters of our analysis that is carried out in accordance to his three poetic phases. Undeniably, by a sleight of hand, Darwish shows an unwavering faith in the integrity between Palestinians and their occupied land. As the title of the book advocates, it is a combined lens of the two theories - ecocriticism and postcolonial theory. Ecocriticism is an aspect of literary theory, which has been growing swiftly since the early 1990s that focuses mainly on the study of the relationship between humans and the natural world. It has evolved out of many traditional approaches to literature and the literary works are viewed in terms of place or environment. The postcolonial theory stems from the dissatisfaction over colonial ways of reading the natives, and as a response to approaches of reading works that are produced in the aftermath of colonial rule. We combined these two theories by linking between the marginality of nature in postcolonial theorizing and the centrism of nature in ecocriticism. The blending of the two theories illuminates the new ways Darwish uses the imagery of nature for resistance throughout the span of his poetic production.

The book is divided into eight chapters. Since the setting of the study folded in this book is Palestine, which is one of the most ancient Arab homelands in all ages, chapter 1 of the book exhibits a brief historical background of Palestine both in the ancient epoch and in the twentieth century. Chapter 2, exceptionally, presents a new approach to Darwish's poetic output in terms of three distinctive phases: the first phase (1958-1970) focuses on the early

poems of the first twelve years of his writing life; the second phase (1970-1996) covers the poems of the next twenty-six years in exile; the final phase (1996-2008) dwells on the poems upon returning home that span the last twelve years of Darwish's life. The rationale behind this partition is that each phase has its own context, sequences and consequences according to which the poet's employment of nature for resistance changes. Analyzing the selected poems of each phase in a separate chapter can be of assistance in tracing the different faces and phases of development in Darwish's utilization of nature for resistance throughout his writing life. Chapter 3 focuses on Darwish's poetry of resistance in the light of the previous academic studies that addressed Darwish's poetry of resistance from different perspectives. Chapter 4 is devoted to familiarize the readers with the philosophy of ecocriticism and how it has been used as a new lens for reading poetry in the postcolonial context with some illustrative examples of the most recent ecocritical studies that have been conducted on postcolonial literature. Chapter 5 discusses and interprets the proposed lens of ecoresistance as an analytical lens for reading Darwish's poetry of resistance. While chapter 6 will focus on Darwish's early poems of resistance and chapter 7 on the poems of exile, chapter 8 will highlight and discuss the aspects of ecoresistance in Darwish's final phase as manifests in the poems upon returning home. The conclusion highlights how Darwish's poetry transcends its national boundaries by reflecting on humans' connection to land through the mirror of the Palestinian experience. It also reveals how Darwish's work transcends its human boundaries revealing the poetics of nature and resistance in Palestinian poetry.

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