

Abstract

This thesis is about place and the transformation of identity in the writings of Mahmoud Darwish. It constitutes a theoretical introduction that deals with the significance of the topic, the problem of the fundamental questions raised by the research, the applied methodology, the theoretical framework, its aims, and a review of previous related works, as well as the general plan of the research.

Chapter one concentrates upon the relation between place and identity among Palestinians as a people who lost their land, employing various tools that deal with the question of identity and place. It also looks into the meanings of identity and place in this special case of an exiled and dispossessed people. It tries to investigate the relation between the “Naqba” and the loss of land and the consequences of the problematic relation between place and identity, noting that identity itself is an act that creates new realities in the face of dispossession. This chapter also deals with the place where place and identity are combined in the Palestinian case. There is concentration in this study on the impact of the different temporal stages of the poet’s life (the first homeland, exile and Return).

The second chapter deals with the poet’s identity transformations in parallel with place within homeland, together with the connection of

language with place and identity, the meaning of place in the poet's life and poetry, as well as the life story of the poet, of place and its mythological background and the poet's preoccupation with the significances of the different meanings of the names related to the place.

The third chapter looks into identity transformations during the poet's exile and his return to his homeland. Here the poet looks for the place, its mythological background and the significance of the names of many places and its connection with the many identities, the change of the identity's meaning when one is out of place, and the use of place as a factor in changing the meaning of identity, as well as the paradoxes of identity and places (homeland, exile).

Conclusions display the effect of place on the identity's transformations.