

## الرمز في الأدب العربي الحديث: مريد البرغوثي أنموذجا

### *Symbolism in Arabic Literature: Mourid Barghouti as a Model*

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## المخلص:

تتناول هذه الدراسة مفهوم "الرمز" في الأدب العربي ويحلل دوره في شعر مريد البرغوثي كنموذج. تستعرض الدراسة تطور الرمز عبر العصور الأدبية المختلفة، بدءًا من الرمز التراثي والديني إلى الرمز الأسطوري والرمز الطبيعي، وكيفية توظيفه ليعكس تجارب الشاعر ورؤيته لقضايا الأمة العربية، وخاصة القضية الفلسطينية. تم اعتماد المنهج التحليلي من خلال دراسة رموز مختارة في أعمال البرغوثي، مع التركيز على الرموز الدينية كرمز المسيح، والرموز التاريخية مثل بلقيس، والرموز الأسطورية المستوحاة من الأساطير الإغريقية. كما يدرس البحث الرموز الخاصة التي ابتكرها الشاعر لتعبر عن تجربته الذاتية .

وتوصلت الدراسة إلى مجموعة من النتائج أبرزها: أن مريد البرغوثي يوظف الرمز كأداة تعبيرية قوية ويعتمد على أنواع متعددة من الرموز، مثل الرموز الدينية، والتاريخية، والأسطورية، والطبيعية، وتعميق المعاني من خلال الرموز الدينية والتاريخية، ويوظف الرموز الأسطورية لربط الماضي بالواقع، واستخدامها كأداة لاستحضار رموز المقاومة والنضال، وكشفت الدراسة أن البرغوثي يوظف الرموز الطبيعية، كمصدر للتجديد والصمود.

وأوصت الدراسة بمجموعة من التوصيات، أبرزها: تشجيع المزيد من الدراسات حول الرموز في الأدب العربي الحديث وزيادة الاهتمام بالرموز التراثية والدينية في الشعر العربي، وتطوير المناهج التعليمية لتشمل تحليل الرموز الأدبية وإنشاء قاعدة بيانات لأهم الرموز الأدبية المستخدمة في الشعر العربي، ودراسة تفاعل المتلقي مع الرموز الأدبية، ويُنصح بإجراء أبحاث تركز على تفاعل المتلقي مع الرموز الأدبية في الشعر العربي.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الرمز، الأدب العربي، مريد البرغوثي، الرمز الديني، الرموز الأدبية.

## Abstract:

This study explores the concept of "symbolism" in Arabic literature, focusing on its role in the poetry of Mourid Barghouti as a model. It examines the evolution of symbolism through different literary eras, from traditional and religious symbols to mythological and natural symbols, and analyzes how Barghouti employs these symbols to reflect his experiences and views on Arab issues, particularly the Palestinian cause.

The study adopts an analytical methodology to study selected symbols in Barghouti's works, highlighting religious symbols such as Christ, historical

symbols like Queen Bilqis, and mythological symbols inspired by Greek mythology. The study also examines the unique symbols Barghouti created to express his personal experiences.

The results reveal that symbolism is a fundamental element in Barghouti's poetry. He uses it to convey themes of resilience, national identity, and human suffering. The study underscores the importance of symbolism in enriching poetic texts and deepening their meanings, enabling readers to gain a profound understanding of the human experience in literature.

Key conclusions include Barghouti's strategic use of various types of symbols—religious, historical, mythological, and natural—to deepen meaning and evoke connections between the past and the present. His use of natural symbols represents renewal and resilience.

The study recommended further studies on symbolism in modern Arabic literature, increased focus on traditional and religious symbols in Arabic poetry, the development of educational curricula to include the analysis of literary symbols, and the establishment of a database of key literary symbols in Arabic poetry. Additionally, it suggested exploring audience interaction with literary symbols, focusing on their reception in modern Arabic poetry.

**Keywords:** Symbolism, Arabic Literature, Mourid Barghouti, Religious Symbolism, Literary Symbols.

### ***Methodical framework:***

#### **Introduction:**

In language, symbolism refers to gestures, signs, or indications, while in rhetoric, it is associated with subtle allusions (Arabic Language Academy, 2004: 372).

Ibn Rachiq was among the first to reference symbolism in rhetorical and critical terminology, classifying it as a type of indication. He stated: “The essence of symbolism is subtle speech that is barely understood, later evolving into a form of gesture. Al-Farra said that symbolism pertains specifically to movements of the lips” (Ibn Rachiq).

Al-Jahiz also referred to the concept of symbolism but termed it "indication." He mentioned, “All types of indications to meanings, verbal or non-verbal, are five: words, gestures, knots, writing, and a state known as posture”. Symbolism aligns closely with three forms of gestures: hand, head, and eyebrow gestures. On gestures, he added: “Gestures can be made with the hand, head, eyes, eyebrows, or shoulders when individuals are distanced. Cloth, swords, and whips may also serve as deterrent or warning symbols” (Al-Jahiz).

In another view of symbolism, rhetoricians regard it as a vital element of metaphor, emphasizing its suggestive and allusive charge. Examples of symbolism presented by classical rhetoricians and those from the mid-20th century often overlap with metaphors since both employ concealment and indication (AlKraywi, 2014).

Among early critics who associated symbolism with ambiguity was AlQartājani, who acknowledged that certain types of ambiguity, such as riddles, metaphors, and allusions to past events and stories, must exist in poetry (AlKawa, 2006).

Abdul-Qahir Al-Jurjani is considered a pioneer of symbolic criticism in Arab literature. He remarked: “It is ingrained in nature that something obtained after seeking and longing for it becomes sweeter and more cherished, akin to cool water on thirst” (AbdulMonem, 1995).

Modern Arabic perspectives on symbolism include definitions such as: “Poetic and literary symbolism generally refers to a sensory metaphorical indication of something beyond sensory perception” (Zayed, 2002). Another

definition states: “Symbolism involves using a word or phrase to signify something else, not by similarity—unlike metaphor and simile, which rely on comparison—but by suggestion and indication” (Jayyusi, 2007).

Ibrahim Ramani (2008) defines literary symbolism as “a union between sensory objects representing a symbol and the abstract states they signify. The similarity here lies in psychological impact rather than mimicry, making symbolism evocative rather than explicit”. Emad Al-Khatib (2006) adds: “Symbolism represents an interaction between a tangible, sensory element and a hidden, subconscious psychological one”.

In language, symbolism refers to a method or style. In literature and art, it emerged as a movement first in poetry, emphasizing expressing meanings through symbols and implications, leaving room for the audience's imagination to enrich the image or emotion. Symbolism as a literary school originated in France in the late 19th century and became distinct in 1886. Its aim was to offer a literary experience using words to evoke emotional and psychological states, both conscious and subconscious.

### **Study Problem:**

This study addresses the role of symbolism in modern Arabic literature, focusing specifically on Mourid Barghouti’s poetry. It aims to understand how Barghouti employs various types of symbolism—traditional, religious, mythological, and natural—to express social, political, and human issues, particularly the Palestinian cause. The study problem stems from the need for an analytical study that highlights Barghouti’s contributions to developing literary symbolism as an expressive tool in modern Arabic poetry.

### **Study Methodology:**

The study employs an analytical methodology by analyzing Barghouti’s poems, identifying the symbols he uses, and interpreting their meanings.

The methodology focuses on deconstructing poetic texts and examining the symbols to uncover their deeper meanings and implicit messages.

### Study Objectives:

1. Analyzing the concept and significance of literary symbolism in modern Arabic literature.
2. Identifying the types of symbols used in Mourid Barghouti's poetry, including religious, historical, mythological, and natural symbols.
3. Exploring how symbolism enhances meaning and the human experience in Barghouti's poetry.
4. Highlighting the impact of Barghouti's use of symbolism on the aesthetic and thematic depth of his poetry.
5. Showcasing the role of symbolism in addressing social, political, and human issues, particularly the Palestinian cause.

### Study Significance:

This study is significant as it sheds light on Mourid Barghouti's technique of using symbolism as a central expressive tool in his poetry. Symbolism enables Barghouti to convey ideas and emotions related to resilience, identity, pain, and suffering. Furthermore, the study enriches literary research on symbolism as an essential element of modern Arabic literature, offering a deeper understanding of the dimensions and impact of poetic texts.

### Previous Studies:

**Zayed (2002)**, This study by Ali Ashry Zayed examines the use of literary symbols in constructing modern Arabic poetry. It explores how symbolism has enriched poetic texts and deepened their meanings. The study discusses the role of symbols in expressing social and political issues

and their contribution to the interaction between modern Arabic poetry and literary heritage.

**Jayyusi (2007)**, Jayyusi provides a comprehensive overview of symbolism in modern Arabic poetry and its development as a literary movement. The study highlights examples of poets who relied on symbols to express their ideas, focusing on the influence of global literary movements, such as symbolism and mythical style, on modern Arabic poetry. It also discusses how this influenced poets like Mourid Barghouti.

**AlKariwi (2014)**, This study reviews the use of symbols in Arabic literary narratives and discusses how symbols function as a rhetorical element that deepens the literary experience. Although focused on narrative, the study sheds light on the role of symbolism in enhancing literary meanings, which aligns with Mourid Barghouti's use of symbols in poetry.

**Ibrahim Ramani (2008)**, Ibrahim Ramani's study addresses the topic of ambiguity in modern Arabic poetry and the role of symbols in enhancing this ambiguity and conveying messages indirectly. The study examines the impact of mythical and historical symbols on Arab poets, highlighting the use of symbols as a tool to engage readers in deep reflection on the text.

**AlBatal (1982)**, This study explores mythical symbols in the poetry of the Iraqi poet Badr Shakir Al-Sayyab, analyzing how he utilized myths and historical symbols to express his personal experiences and political stances. The study shows that Al-Sayyab and other poets employed mythical symbols as a means of addressing social and human issues, resembling Mourid Barghouti's tendencies in using symbols.

These studies provide a crucial framework for understanding the use of symbolism as an expressive tool that deepens literary texts. They

highlight various aspects of symbol usage by Arab poets, offering a theoretical basis for studying Mourid Barghouti's poetry.

### **Study Plan:**

The study consists of an introduction and a preface defining literary symbolism, its concept, and its evolution in modern Arabic literature.

#### **• Discussion Topics:**

- Types of symbols in Mourid Barghouti's poetry: religious, historical, mythical, natural, and personal symbols tied to the poet's experiences.
- The role of symbolism in deepening literary meanings and analyzing its impact on the aesthetic value of texts.
- How symbols are utilized to convey humanitarian issues.

#### **• Structure:**

- Results and recommendations are presented, followed by the conclusion.

### ***Symbolism in Arabic Literature:***

The employment of symbols in modern poetry is a common trait among most poets, varying from simple to profound to the most intricate symbols.

- While symbolism is a stylistic feature and a fundamental element of literary texts since ancient times, it has diversified and deepened, dominating the language of modern poetry, its structures, and its imagery.
- Symbolism, in its various figurative, rhetorical, and suggestive forms, enriches the poetic meaning. When employed aesthetically and intellectually cohesively, it enhances the poetic depth and impact on the reader.

- Modern Arab poets have drawn on mythical, historical, and cultural symbolism to enrich and intellectually and aesthetically deepen their poetic texts.

### **Emergence of Symbolism in Modern Arabic Poetry:**

- The rise of symbolism as a school of thought in modern Arabic poetry has been a subject of debate among scholars. Questions have been raised about the causes of its emergence, its pioneers, and whether Arabic symbolism mirrored its Western counterpart.
- It is believed that the emergence of symbolism in modern Arabic poetry resulted from political connections, including the French and later British colonization of the Arab world in the late 18th century. These connections paved the way for social and cultural exchanges, which included translating many aspects of Western thought, such as symbolic poetry, influencing Arab poets.
- Unlike the complex social and psychological reactions that led to the emergence of symbolism in the West, symbolism in Arabic poetry may have been further encouraged when the literary elite, trained in modern Arab heritage, sought alternatives to occasion-driven poetry and the rhetoric characteristic of the classical modern school.
- Romanticism, which often contains elements of symbolism, had already begun to address these forces, as seen in the works of Romantic poets such as Khalil Gibran and other Mahjar poets (Jayyusi, 2007).

### **Types of Symbols in Murid Al-Barghouti's Poems:**

Symbols in Murid Al-Barghouti's poetry are diverse and derived from various sources. This diversity aligns with the categorization of symbols outlined by René Wellek and Austin Warren in their book *The Theory of*

*Literature*, which identifies three types of symbols: traditional symbols, personal symbols, and natural symbolism.

### A. Traditional Symbols:

When a poet draws inspiration for their symbols primarily from reality, they often also derive them from heritage — a vast reservoir of suggestive energies that never runs dry. Heritage-based symbols enable poets to convey the emotional and psychological dimensions of their poetic vision effectively and impactfully. Additionally, using traditional symbols lends antiquity and authenticity to the work, bridging the past with the present (Ashry, 2002).

Traditional symbols in modern Arabic poetry are derived from various sources, including religious, Sufi, historical, literary, and mythological or folkloric heritage. These symbols encompass a range of elements, such as events, characters, and references, which poets employ to enrich their vision. These symbols may be used as partial representations of a particular poetic aspect or as comprehensive symbols embodying the poem's entire vision (Ashry, 2002).

In Murid Al-Barghouti's poetry, traditional symbols manifest in various forms, particularly historical and religious symbols.

- **Religious Symbols:** These provide the text with deep spiritual, metaphysical, and existential dimensions, challenging stereotypical rhetorical implications (Al-Saeed, 2008).
- **Historical Symbols:** These involve referencing historical events or places associated with significant occurrences (Bou Salah, 2003).

In AlBarghouti's work, religious and historical symbols are intertwined, often inseparable, as historical symbols frequently carry religious connotations and vice versa. Al-Barghouti selects symbols and events from history that resonate with the concerns and struggles he aims to convey to

the audience. The choice of historical and religious subjects reflects the varying circumstances experienced by the Arab world.

### **Examples of Symbol Usage in Al-Barghouti's Poetry:**

To fully grasp Al-Barghouti's approach to symbolism, one needs extensive familiarity with multiple sources and sharp critical insight. Deciphering his symbols often requires deep engagement with the poem and broad literary knowledge.

For instance, the symbol of Christ and Mary as presented in *The People in Their Night* necessitates familiarity with Christian sources, including the life, teachings, and miracles of Christ. This understanding helps link the symbol to its purpose and emotional significance in the poem.

#### **Example 1: Christ Under Fire**

Al-Barghouti writes:

I saw Christ under fire,  
At two thousand years of age,  
Leaning on a staff,  
Afraid to cross the street,  
And no hand to help him.

*(Al-Barghouti, Murid. The People in Their Night, 1999)*

Here, the pronoun "I" emphasizes identity and shared suffering. The irony lies in depicting Christ, the savior, under fire, juxtaposing divine salvation with earthly oppression. The poet stresses that these atrocities occur in Palestine, not in myths or tales.

#### **Example 2: Mary and the Child**

O Mary, carry the infant,  
Limp-armed,  
Not on a marble base in a golden church,

But here, on our dust,  
On this threshold.

*(Al-Barghouti, 1999, The People in Their Night).*

If Christ symbolizes Palestinians, then Mary represents grieving mothers in their homeland, who cradle their children as martyrs to their graves.

### **Example 3: The Deceptive Veil**

In another symbolic depiction, Al-Barghouti portrays deceit through the image of a veiled young woman walking modestly through the city. Despite appearances, she engages in hidden acts.

A girl wrapped her beautiful face with a veil,  
At the window,  
Her eyes peering between two slits in the veil.  
(For God commanded modesty among believers).  
A passerby spoke to her behind the veil;  
They bargained over the price,  
Behind the veil,  
And he came to her on Thursday night as she waited.  
*(AlBarghouti, 1972, The Flood and the Re-Creation)*

The girl symbolizes a city, while the passerby represents a state. Deception and betrayal are evident, as agreements occur behind the scenes under the guise of assistance. The poem, written in 1967, hints at events related to that year's war, such as peace agreements. The poet draws upon religious teachings of modesty to amplify the symbolism.

### **Example 4: Abel as a Symbol of the Oppressed**

In the following lines, Al-Barghouti uses Abel, son of Adam, as a religious symbol of the oppressed—representing the Palestinian who endures pain inflicted by Arab kin yet remains resilient. Abel, depicted as

returning "curled up like a fetus," evokes themes of rebirth and unyielding perseverance, akin to deep roots.

Under the title "Hidden Roots," Barghouti writes:

**"Slave traders pass by, followed by maidens,  
And the cries of auctioneers remain unchanged, neither do their  
calls differ.**

**Abel listens to their voices in the grave, bent as a fetus".** (*Barghouti*)

In a beautiful juxtaposition between male and female imagery, the poet presents an excerpt titled *"The Steps of Bilqis (Vision)"*, where he does not use Bilqis as a symbol of beauty as in traditional Arabic poetry. Instead, he transforms her into a symbol of a struggling woman refusing to abandon her homeland. The poet writes:

\*\*\*"Bilqis has been resurrected, wandering without eyes,  
Feeling her way among grieving women in a daze,  
Extending her hands to sense the wrinkled breasts of nursing mothers.

- Come, the deluge does not wait for us.
- No, I will remain here.

...

Bilqis, blind, carves her path through the rubble,  
Stumbling in thirst,

As if a lamp briefly lit up, only to extinguish".\*\* (*Barghouti*)

Bilqis's hesitant steps reflect a clear sense of loss; she wanders aimlessly, uncertain of what to do. Yet, this hesitation might have made her more cautious than before. Here, Bilqis symbolizes present-day Palestine, slowly moving forward, hindered by its faltering steps. The poet may be urging Palestine to be wary of what lies ahead, suggesting that Arab and international agreements have done more harm than good, stripping

Palestine of its rights. However, like Bilqis eventually recognizing her palace, Palestine will regain its footing and stride with confidence.

In his poem *"The Wolf Devoured Him,"* Barghouti uses the wolf as a symbol for the occupying enemy, drawing a parallel between the Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) and the Palestinian people. Yusuf was not devoured by a physical wolf, and the story of the wolf's guilt was fabricated by his brothers. Similarly, the Palestinian is preyed upon by the Israeli occupation, in a manner far more brutal than any animal, with some Arab nations complicit in the tragedy:

**"He told me,**

**'The wolf is innocent of my murder, Mourid.**

**The wolves of the wilderness are far more noble than the crime.**

**Some would do well to learn from their virtues,**

**If they were just". (Barghouti, 1993)**

The speaker, a Palestinian, confirms the superiority of the wolf over his (Arab) brothers, who abandoned him, leaving him alone without assistance and actively contributing to his plight:

**"And compare, if you will, the wolves**

**To those who came at me from behind.**

**The wolf appears tame,**

**Elegant in claws and soul,**

**When compared to the one who fired shots in the street,**

**Counted his thirty pieces of silver, and vanished!". (Barghouti, 1993)**

Barghouti continues:

**"Let the wolves accept my apology,**

**For the wolf never devoured Yusuf.**

**But Yusuf is not one to flee,**

**Nor one to meet his end trembling". (Barghouti, 1993)**

Barghouti portrays the Palestinian as one who stands unflinching, refusing to flee even in death. The present-day Yusuf is the Palestinian artist Naji al-Ali, or any Palestinian who is assassinated. In this poem, Barghouti recalls a caricature by Naji titled *"The Wolf's Prey,"* depicting Yusuf's story. His brothers, holding a blood-stained shirt, justify their actions to Hanzala, Naji's iconic child figure, as though Barghouti sees Naji as the betrayed victim.

The mythological symbolism crafted by cultural mythology emerges from intuition and direct experience, conveying a collective impression tinged with emotion. Mythological symbols rely on condensation and integration, blending similar ideas and merging analogous meanings, where boundaries dissolve, and distinctions blur. Mythological symbols aspire to affirm the sacred (Judeh, 1998).

In modern Arabic poetry, the incorporation of mythology is highly significant. Almost every poet has employed myth in their works, with rare exceptions. Mythology forms a distinct structure within poetic discourse and is a vital aspect of modern poetry (Deir, 1986). It captivates both traditional and modern readers. A psychological impetus drives poets to draw upon heritage—a reaction to alienation and a longing for childhood, recovering the past, and constructing an ideal city to satisfy personal hardships like poverty, homelessness, and illness (Al-Batal, 1982).

Barghouti's use of mythology and symbolism evolved alongside his poetic maturation. In his poem *"Not in Olympus,"* he incorporates abundant symbols, opening with:

**"No, not in Olympus,  
Where gods plot intrigues,  
No, not beneath the broomsticks,  
Ridden above the clouds by witches of doom". (Barghouti, 1999)**

Barghouti invested in myths to reinforce his intended meanings, drawing on Greek mythology and blending it with his poem to engage the reader through familiar references. In this instance, he focuses on mythological symbols that have come to represent betrayal, deception, and trickery, particularly associated with the Olympian gods. The poem's title itself reflects these themes, hinting at betrayal and cunning. Barghouti's approach suggests to the reader that, just as in Greek mythology, schemes are devised and planned, so too are the events unfolding in his own time. By referencing these myths, he presents them as a metaphor for the reality of Palestine, hinting at the political machinations behind international and Arab meetings. Barghouti continues to emphasize the realism of the events, denying that they take place in some distant, mythical land, as seen in the line:

"No, not in Troy, but here" (Barghouti, 1999).

He further clarifies this with:

"No, not in Denmark, but here I saw one in this garden, here, and the age of this merciful palm in Bethlehem is over a thousand years old" (Barghouti, 1999).

This clear reference to Bethlehem underscores Palestine as the setting, utilizing myth to highlight the truth of the situation. The author of *Horizons of Poetic Vision* suggests that the symbols in this poem operate in two directions: one, the difficulty of these symbols and the need for the reader to understand them; and two, guiding the reader to a psychological and moral crisis, reflecting Barghouti's own mental turmoil. This opinion seems valid, as the numerous mythological symbols create a barrier to the enjoyment of the poem, requiring knowledge of them to fully appreciate their use in the poetry.

Barghouti's use of fertility myths and their symbols, such as in his poem *The Flood and Reconstitution*, reflects a recurring theme of renewal and hope. For instance, he writes:

"They left, were brought back, and went away again, settling into the shade of the wall, while the earth was a burning ember!".

- "Has Ulysses returned from the depths of the sea?"
- "Is he the singer along the road, counting the steps of the day?"
- "Socrates waits for life, and a cup of poison waits too."
- "And his judges are idols waiting."
- "What is being planned for tomorrow?"
- "What is being planned for tomorrow?"

The symbols of *Ulysses* and *Socrates* in the section "Shadow and Fire" present a clear contrast: shadow offering rest and fire symbolizing toil and suffering. These symbols serve to express the theme of waiting, where waiting itself is stagnant like an idol, and the future remains uncertain. Additionally, Socrates, with his unwavering principles, becomes a symbol of steadfastness.

In the poem *Hera*, the mythical traits of gentleness, beauty, and courage are explored, with Barghouti writing:

"Her laugh, gardens beneath lightning,  
Her gentleness, a cypress forest under drizzle,  
Her courage, sparks above the oak's night" (Barghouti, 2002).

And later:

"Crafty, full of schemes,  
She passes her tricks through Athena,  
Like water flowing over pebbles,

... ..

Jealous of the great crowned one,  
But she knows  
That choosing adversaries is an art,  
Like choosing friends".

This myth of Hera allows the poet to use it in a real-world context, as Hera symbolizes trickery and betrayal. Her good traits mask her jealousy and malice, enabling her to achieve her desires, reflecting the deceit present in the poem. The final lines, where Hera orders the gardens to flourish in Hell, create an ironic contrast, merging the symbols of fertility and despair.

Barghouti also incorporates *Ishtar*, the goddess of fertility, to express his longing for love from his wife, Rawda. He writes:

"The women of our village go out,  
Carrying buckets,  
Sipping the sky's moisture with a drizzle of water,  
Singing the rain's song,  
Oh Rawda,  
And I ask for your rain..."  
(Barghouti, 1974).

The use of present tense verbs like "go out," "carry," "sip," and "sing" strongly indicates the ongoing nature of this tradition in the village, just as the poet's need for love from Rawda continues. By referencing *Ishtar*, Barghouti expands the mythological metaphor to express his personal longing, paralleling the village's need for rain with his need for affection.

### Private Symbols:

Private symbols offer the poet a broader range for self-expression, as they reflect personal experiences and deeper meanings. These symbols are unique, created by the poet, and may not follow traditional or conventional

interpretations. They are drawn from the poet's individual experiences and poetic vision, becoming integral to his style and language.

Barghouti's personal symbols deeply reflect his inner world and literary concerns. One such symbol is the threshold or *Ataba*, used in a poem where he writes:

"And the threshold  
Is our path to...  
Did I say there was a fig tree in the yard?  
We race the birds towards  
Its dawn higher than the call to prayer.  
Its branches were our summer stage  
Or our refuge  
From the children's weariness from their visitors' guests.  
Dimly lit, yet bright" (Barghouti, 1999).

This personal symbol evokes a sense of continuity, both in nature and in the poet's life, capturing moments of stillness, shelter, and youth. It serves as a point of entry into Barghouti's poetic realm, inviting the reader into his intimate reflections on the passage of time and human connections.

The threshold is a symbol that the poet repeats in the poem, serving as a gateway to memories — beautiful memories ranging from grandmothers to weddings, then to death, followed by scenes from daily life and finally leading to the home. The omitted word in the phrase "and the threshold is our way to ..." is hinted at by the context mentioned by the poet. The song contains a stable, fruitful fig tree, which forms the stage for play, the feeling of absolute freedom, a refuge from family when guests arrive, and symbols fill the stanza: the fig tree represents stability and resilience, the highest dawn symbolizes awaited freedom, and the birds represent childhood innocence and mischief, moving from one place to another. The verb "we race" supports the idea of unrestrained movement,

not just for one person, but for the entire Palestinian community. A new element introduced in the poem is the combination of the good and the bad in each threshold, with darkness and light coming together — hope and despair, each creating an inherent paradox.

The tent is another symbol used by Barghouti in his poetry, representing exile and refuge. It has taken away from the Palestinian all that he owns: land, homeland, life, and hope: "We are those who have not died yet.. We still have the ability to care for the new tents Month by month, year by year.. We become familiar with our coffee in exile.. And we yearn for our impossible, miraculous dreams.. Like when a child grows up.. Or an elderly person is stabbed in the age.. Or two absent ones meet and the family is reunited" (Barghouti, 1987). The poet presents another image of the tent, though it is no better than the refugee tent — in fact, it is worse. This deterioration corresponds with the poet's reference to the ordinary dreams of Palestinians, which others see as impossible, and he uses the worst tent as a reprimand to the Gulf countries for their preoccupation with money, themselves, palaces, and women, all while maintaining a superficial new form of Bedouinism, the essence of which remains unchanged: "Our tribes reclaim their beauty Tents, Tents made of comfortable stone, with strings of marble or marble Engravings on the ceiling, and velvet paper covers the walls". (Barghouti, 1980).

**The Natural Symbol** Nature — a term that is elegant, beautifully described, wears a white robe in winter, dresses in flowers in spring, caresses us with its refreshing breeze in summer, and saddens us in autumn. Nature is not only these things; it is also a nightingale singing, a colorful butterfly, a graceful gazelle, a towering mountain, a rushing river, and a shining sun. Nature appeared in Arabic poetry through different phases: it was either fully present through the "description of nature and its elements," which we call nature poetry (Hasaballah, 2001), or partially present when the poet used natural elements to form artistic images like

metaphor, metonymy, and simile, which is known as general symbolism. It later evolved into the use of both living and non-living elements of nature as symbols through which the poet expresses his poetic experience, a development known as literary or artistic symbolism. This is affirmed by some scholars who emphasize that "symbolism, in all its figurative, rhetorical, and suggestive forms, deepens the poetic meaning, is a source of astonishment and influence, and embodies the aesthetics of poetic formation" (Zoghbi, 2000). This applies to the natural symbol in any form of imagery it takes, as it has been a rich and overflowing source for poets, accompanying the stages of Arabic poetry. Its use became widespread among modern poets, who celebrated it according to their personal aspirations. For example, in modern poetry, rain symbolizes goodness, change, and revolution; drought, desolation, and ruin symbolize oppression, control, and slavery; and the desert represents spiritual emptiness and material poverty.

The poet's interaction with nature has become a living interaction; nature is no longer a separate entity from the poet's experience but has become a symbol for the poet's emotional state (Ashmawi, 1997). Nature remains an endless source of symbols and myths, having embraced human action from the very beginning, stimulating, nurturing, and conversing with it. With its mysterious and majestic charm, it has been a source of wonder, longing, and a sense of beauty for humanity. In other words, nature symbolizes human longing for the absolute, the sublime, and the distant.

Our poet, Mourid Barghouti, drew from nature, making its elements symbols that he used as a means of expression in his poetic works. These symbols provided a rich source of powerful connotations, supporting his poetic output both aesthetically and humanely. Barghouti drew a number of words from nature in building his poetic language. It is evident in his use of elements such as olives, oranges, pomegranates, doves, tigers, butterflies, wolves, the moon, dawn, and rain.

*Olives:* The olive tree, blessed and central, was one of the key elements the poet drew from nature. He writes: "All the keys rusted / And the old men, weary, gather in the foyer / Faces etched from the trunk of 'olive' trees / The old bombshells / Their colors faded except for a strip hidden beneath the belt" (Barghouti, 1974). The poet uses the olive as a symbol of steadfastness, resilience, and renewal. The Palestinian is firmly rooted in the land to the point that the wrinkles on their face resemble the perseverance of olive trees. The poet urges his people to hold on to their heritage, which refuses to be forgotten and resists in order to survive. He writes about the sacrifice of lives for the country: "How many times must I set my grandfather's traps in their places? / How can I train my eyes to climb a Roman olive tree?"

The Roman olive is considered the best variety in Palestine, but it was torn apart by occupation. Perhaps here it symbolizes the loss of the homeland, as it has been severed and divided into many parts — the 1967 borders and the partition resolution — evoking sorrow, despair, and a sense of the injury inflicted on Palestine.

*Oranges:* Barghouti symbolizes the homeland with oranges, which have been celebrated by many poets. The poet is addressing those who take pride in the bounty of the land, affirming the fertility of the land and its continued existence. He writes: "Leave space so we can peel this sanctity / From every blunted poem that loves you / And the symbol of the orange seed" (Barghouti, 1999).

For Palestinians, the poet expresses a longing for the land, and the scent of oranges reminds him of his homeland. In another poem, he says: "I rubbed the orange leaf between my palms / I rubbed it to smell it as advised / On my way to my nose / I became a refugee, without a homeland!" (Barghouti, 2005).

*Animal Symbolism:* There are many symbols in Arabic poetry, and animals have often been used to convey political and national meanings. For example, the dove has become associated with peace: He says: "In my rented room, Among the few seats, I saw ostriches Carrying military ranks on their clouds and tigers, as they approached their females, Their lines wrinkled above their thighs, And a blind dove Searching for what it searches for" (Barghouti, 2002).

In these lines, ostriches symbolize flight (or escape), tigers represent strength, but they are here following their instincts, ignoring their true strength. The dove, which usually symbolizes peace, is now blind, searching for the lost peace that no longer exists. The poet transforms the birds, which are often symbols of freedom, into a different context where they are prisoners, yearning for the freedom to fly.

"Spring, pomegranates, and their flowers, along with the flowers themselves, all symbolize hope and optimism. However, in this context, the poet does not want them, as he sees no signs or indications of hope. The words 'graves' and 'I cannot see' negate the ability to reflect and see a bright future. The modern Arabic poet still relies on symbolism as an expressive tool to enrich his poetry and to convey the resonance of his poetry to the audience. Since each poet's experience is unique, it was necessary to diversify the sources of symbols, with the most present being the traditional ones in modern Arabic poetry, followed by personal symbols, and finally, natural symbols. The use of symbols in various forms, as seen by one researcher, can mislead the reader and obscure the objective vision of the subject. It also limits its effectiveness because it encourages reliance on the 'savior.' On the contrary, others argue that through symbolism, the text enables the reader to rediscover things, not as they appear in the ordinary view related to daily concerns, but as they truly are—seeing them as if for the first time, almost as if the reader is regaining the perspective of a child. Thus, the symbol in the text enters, shockingly and admirably,

returning the reader to the initial amazement when faced with objects, as though discovering them for the first time".

### **Conclusion:**

At the conclusion of this study, we find that the symbol played a pivotal role in the works of the poet Mired Barghouti, contributing to enriching his poetry and adding profound intellectual and aesthetic dimensions. Through religious, historical, mythical, and natural symbols, Barghouti managed to express his personal experiences and the issues of his nation, especially the Palestinian cause, in a way that transcended direct language, allowing the audience a vast space for reflection and interpretation.

This study has shown that Barghouti does not use the symbol as a mere literary ornament but as an expressive tool employed to emphasize meanings of steadfastness, identity, and alienation. Thus, the symbol in his poetry becomes a tool of resistance, opening new horizons for understanding and enhancing interaction between the text and the audience.

Finally, we hope that this study will highlight the importance of the symbol in modern Arabic poetry and encourage further studies that explore literary symbols and their role in expressing human and national issues in a renewed style.

### **Results:**

- The study showed that Mourid Barghouti uses the symbol as an effective expressive tool to convey deep and complex meanings related to steadfastness, identity, and alienation. Literary symbols allow him to express feelings and ideas that cannot be conveyed directly, giving his poems an aesthetic dimension and strong psychological impact on the reader.

- It also revealed that Barghouti relies on various types of symbols, such as religious, historical, mythical, and natural symbols. He uses each type in a way that reflects his vision of Palestinian and Arab issues, adding cultural and intellectual depth to his poetry.
- The study found that Barghouti uses religious and historical symbols to deepen the meanings of struggle and identity in his poetry, invoking symbols like Christ, Mary, and Bilqis to reflect the suffering of Palestinians and reinforce his affiliation with the Palestinian cause.
- The study also discovered that Barghouti uses mythical symbols to link the past with the present, employing them as a tool to evoke resistance and struggle symbols, creating space for reflection on ongoing challenges. Thus, Barghouti presents his vision of the Palestinian reality in a way that goes beyond the daily event, making it a symbol of hope and resistance.
- The study showed that Barghouti uses natural symbols, such as olives, oranges, and butterflies, as symbols of steadfastness and renewal in his poetry, emphasizing the strength of nature as part of Palestinian identity, reflecting the Palestinian connection to their land and embodying the longing for home.
- The results showed that Barghouti's use of symbols enhances the interaction between the text and the reader, making the reader a partner in interpreting the meanings, adding depth to the texts and allowing the reader to interpret the symbols according to their own experiences and culture.

### ***Recommendations:***

- Encouraging more studies on symbols in modern Arabic literature.
- Increasing focus on traditional and religious symbols in Arabic poetry.
- Developing educational curricula to include the analysis of literary symbols.

- Creating a database of the most significant literary symbols used in Arabic poetry.
- Studying the interaction of the audience with literary symbols.
- Conducting research that focuses on the reader's interaction with literary symbols in Arabic poetry.

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