

Wisdom in Contemporary Palestinian Folk Poetry: Mūsā Ḥāfīz's Diwan "The Pain of Years" as a Model

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Abstract

Palestinian folk heritage is deep-rooted and significant, often expressing the experiences and concerns of the Palestinian people. Palestinian folk poetry has preserved many of the components of this heritage despite the significant changes that have occurred in Palestinian society in light of recent digital development and modernity. Evidence of this is the prevalence of folk poetry among a wide segment of various social groups in contemporary Palestinian society. The Palestinian folk poet, Mūsā Ḥāfīz, from the city of Jenīn, is perhaps the most prominent of these influential poets in the field of modern Palestinian folk poetry. His poetry collection, "The Pain of Years" is replete with poems that address various real-life themes and issues, reflecting the people's suffering. This study aims to pause on the theme of wisdom in the diwan to attempt to describe it and analyze the social values that Palestinian folk poetry advocates for preserving and rooting in a rapidly changing reality.

The study aims to uncover the type of folk social norms and values that the poet Mūsā Ḥāfīz employs in his diwan, "The Pain of Years," and to identify and understand their place in their social reality from the perspective of the poet and contemporary Palestinian folk poetry.

Keywords: Heritage, Palestinian Folk Poetry, Mūsā Ḥāfīz, Wisdom, "The Pain of Years", Diwan

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Introduction

Wisdom is considered a well-known poetic theme and objective in Arabic literature in general, and in folk literature as well. Folk literature in various countries, particularly vernacular poetry, is replete with texts expressing the theme of wisdom, which is employed by many folk poets, Zajal performers, and traditional singers who practice local folk singing at various occasions, gatherings, weddings, and folk poetry events. Thus, wisdom is a fundamental theme in contemporary written and oral Palestinian folk poetry.

The renowned folk poet Mūsā Ḥāfīz, a native of Jenin, has emerged as a prominent and prolific folk poet in Palestine and abroad. He is among the leading group of folk poets who have contributed to the dissemination of wisdom in folk poetry in the region. His well-known diwan, "*The Pain of Years*" published by the Palestinian Center for Culture and Media in 2010, contains numerous folk poetry texts on the theme of wisdom. This study aims to identify these documented materials to understand the content of wisdom in the aforementioned diwan, explore the poetic style employed by the folk poet in utilizing wisdom, and ultimately determine the significance of the theme of wisdom in his contemporary folk poetry and in Palestinian folk poetry in general. Mūsā Ḥāfīz has established a school of Palestinian folk poetry, and many Palestinian folk poets are influenced by his style and poetic material, which is widely accessible through social media networks.

Palestinian folkloric popular poetry is an authentic component of Palestinian cultural heritage, reflecting the history, roots, values, and struggles of the Palestinian people. Among its most prominent features is the use of Palestinian vernacular, which mirrors the local dialects of historic Palestine's cities and villages-whether rural, urban, or Bedouin in pronunciation. It relies on clear and simple linguistic structures, free from ambiguity, making it a direct poetic

medium that listeners and readers comprehend without complexity. This contributes to its rapid dissemination among people despite cultural differences. Another characteristic of Palestinian popular poetry is its adherence to traditional poetic forms and familiar frameworks, such as the *Qaṣīda* (ode), *Zajal* (colloquial strophic poetry), 'Atāba (a form of folkloric lament), *Mawwāl* (a traditional sung poem), and others. These forms address diverse themes and motifs, often expressing daily life and reality through songs performed on various occasions, typically delivered by the folk poet in measured rhythmic patterns (Mousa, 2009: 101-102). A close examination of the works documented by Palestinian poet Musa Hafez in his printed diwan "*The Pain of Years*" (*Ta'ab al-Sinīn*) quickly reveals that it is a paradigmatic diwan representing Palestinian popular poetry in its linguistic, semantic, and rhythmic characteristics. The poetic material, at its core, consists of lyrical pieces that the poet performed directly at real and authentic occasions and weddings.

This study employs a descriptive-analytical approach, analyzing the content of selected poems from the diwan "*The Pain of Years*" by the folk poet Mūsā Ḥāfiz, relying on relevant critical and theoretical references, and drawing on personal perspectives and a personal interview with the poet. The study is based on a careful analytical reading and review of theoretical materials related to the subject of the study, namely wisdom in folk poetry, with a contemporary Palestinian folk poetic reference such as Mūsā Ḥāfiz. The study seeks to answer central questions, including:

1. What is meant by the poetic theme of wisdom, and what are its types?
2. What are the goals of wisdom as a theme in poetry in general and folk poetry in particular?
3. What issues has wisdom been employed for in the diwan "*The Pain of Years*"?

4. What are the most prominent styles used in the poetry of wisdom in the diwan?

The poet Mūsā Ḥāfiz has extensively employed wisdom and reiterated ideas related to his perspective on life, society, and reality in his printed diwan "*The Pain of Years*" and in many of its poems and poetic pieces. As a result, the reader finds numerous pieces of wisdom in his aforementioned diwan that offer social, intellectual, and moral guidance. These materials were originally oral and were documented for reading purposes.

The study's textual analysis is based on a curated selection of poems from Mūsā Ḥāfiz's *The Pain of Years*, chosen after a comprehensive reading of the entire diwan. The selected samples prominently feature the motif of wisdom, as they most vividly encapsulate the poet's didactic and socially rooted philosophy. Ḥāfiz was specifically chosen as the focus of this study due to his unparalleled influence in contemporary Palestinian folk poetry over the past three decades. His dual role as a pioneering poet and as Secretary-General of the Union of Palestinian Expressive Artists and Heritage further underscores his authority in preserving and revitalizing folk traditions. This unique position allows his poetry to serve as both a cultural archive and a dynamic force in shaping modern Palestinian identity.

Ḥikmah: Concept and Meaning

The word "Ḥikmah" (wisdom) carries both linguistic and technical meanings. In general, it signifies the ability to know and appreciate things through experience, knowledge, and perception, enabling one to attract benefits and avert harm (al-Farāhīdī, 1981: 3: 66). In classical Arabic lexicons and terminology, wisdom is intrinsically linked to the Islamic understanding of wisdom, its connection to the Quran, the Prophet's hadiths, Islamic law, and Islamic ethics. In the Islamic context, wisdom stems from piety and good conduct that aligns with what is

lawful and avoids what is forbidden according to the religion ('Omar, 2008: 1: 540-541).

Renowned Arabic lexicons have meticulously examined the concept of al-Ḥikmah from both linguistic and semantic perspectives. In his monumental work *Lisān al-'Arab*, the esteemed linguist Ibn Manẓūr al-Miṣrī distilled its essence under the root "ḥ-k-m", stating: "al-Ḥikmah signifies the knowledge of the most exalted matters through the most exalted sciences. It is also said of one who masters the intricacies of crafts and perfects them: Ḥakīm (wise/skilled). The term ḥakīm may likewise denote ḥakīm (judge/ruler)" (Ibn Manẓūr, 1990: 12: 140). The definition of wisdom in the Hebrew dictionary of terms is close and consistent with the one mentioned above: "Wisdom (ḥokmah): The capacity to judge rightly and discern between good and evil; deep knowledge acquired through experience and reflection" (Even-Shoshan, 2003, 2: 457).

The term "al-Ḥikmah" appears in nineteen Quranic verses across twelve different surahs of the Qur'an, each time conveying a meaning derived from its contextual usage. Among the meanings it carries is that of the Qur'an itself, as indicated in the verse: "Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best" (Qur'an 16: 125). Here, "al-Ḥikmah" signifies divine guidance and the teachings of the Qur'an, demonstrating that wisdom, in this context, is intrinsically linked to revelation and sound moral exhortation.

There are close relationships between the view of the Qur'anic text on the concept of wisdom and the view and interpretation of it in the biblical texts. Evidence of this is this definition of wisdom: "Wisdom (Ḥochmah) in Proverbs is not merely intellectual acuity but a moral and divine skill- the capacity to align one's actions with the cosmic order established by God. It is 'fear of the Lord' (Prov. 1: 7) actualized in prudent living" (Fox, 2000: 6).

This understanding of the term wisdom extended into later Jewish intellectual and theological stages as well, and in general it represents a religious and ethical understanding that is in line with the Torah's teachings and Talmudic interpretations. "Ancient wisdom traditions-from Stoicism to Rabbinic Judaism-understood wisdom (*sophia* in Greek, *Hochmah* in Hebrew) as a transformative discipline. It demands daily exercise (*askēsis*) to cultivate virtues and confront human fragility" (Hadot, 1995: 83).

Wisdom is contingent upon several fundamental components that are indispensable for its sound and convincing formulation. Among these pressing components are: extensive and in-depth knowledge, a focused and penetrating gaze into matters, self-awareness and the ability to discern, logical reasoning, individual and collective balance, and the capacity to harmonize reason and emotion ('Akkūsh & Bū 'Alī, 2011: 8-9).

The concept of wisdom (*Hikmah*) appears in numerous prophetic traditions, among the most renowned of which is the *Ḥadīth* in which the Prophet states: "Eloquence holds a measure of magic, and indeed, some poetry contains wisdom" (Ibn Ḥanbal, 1969: 2: 591). Thus, in light of this, wisdom stands as one of the recognized literary themes in classical Arabic poetry-a genre that calls for the rectification of the self and conduct through the path of wisdom and sound knowledge.

Wisdom in poetry is characterized by several distinctive features; some related to structure and others to meaning. Those related to meaning involve the employment of figurative language and various types of metaphors, as well as the utilization of prevalent traditional sayings, proverbs, and well-known poetry. Structural features include conciseness, brevity, rhyme, and the use of musical and rhythmic elements, facilitating its dissemination and memorization by the general public and specialists alike. Additionally, wisdom, particularly among

the Arabs, both ancient and modern, is characterized by the straightforwardness of ideas, the accuracy of meanings, and its connection to lessons, proverbs, admonitions, and speeches (ʿAkkūsh & Bū ʿAlī, 2011: 80).

The technical concept of wisdom is not entirely separate from its aforementioned linguistic meaning. Wisdom, first and foremost, is a spoken or written verbal text that takes shape in a linguistic Mold with a linguistic connotation that expresses experience, knowledge, and expertise- the semantic fields emphasized by the linguistic meaning of wisdom in the Arabic language. In its technical meaning, wisdom signifies precise knowledge and experience. In his book *al-Taʿrīfāt* (Definitions), Al-Jurjānī defines it as: "Everything that conforms to the truth is wisdom, and it has been said that wisdom is rational speech that is free from verbosity" (Al- Jurjānī, 1938: 81). From this definition, it can be understood that wisdom is a truthful statement derived from reality and is rational, characterized by brevity in expression and precision in meaning. It is well-known that wisdom has held a significant position since ancient times among various peoples. It has often been the result of contemplation, thought, and interpretation of phenomena surrounding individuals and groups. Its purpose is to benefit from past experiences, expressed in concise and precise language, for the purpose of guidance, correction, or rectification within the realm of practical life. In essence, wisdom is the culmination of human experiences and trials, and in its general form, it is a useful, concise, and inherited phrase. It is a well-constructed sentence or a commonly used expression among various social classes. Wisdom summarizes a past struggle and a passing experience that a community has undergone, and it has gained complete trust among people because it guides in solving a current problem using acquired experience, culminating in unforgettable lessons expressed in a concise sentence that obviates the need to recount the entire story (ʿAkkūsh & Bū ʿAlī, 2011: 7). In determining the meaning of wisdom, it is one of the most challenging tasks, similar to general

abstract terms like freedom, beauty, and justice. Some have defined it in an approximate manner, stating that "it is a deep, practical, and direct perspective on the meanings and purposes of things, emanating from a sharp, penetrating, and observant intellect that derives it from life experiences and practical interactions with daily life. A person with such perspectives is called a wise person, and the word containing this perspective is called wisdom. Hence, it is said that there is wisdom in poetry, and it is said that wisdom is the small change of the believer. Sometimes, it is observed in the wise person that they add to these sound perspectives by acting in accordance with them. Luqman was called wise because he spoke wisdom and acted upon it" (Amīn, 2012: 219).

Wisdom in Universal Literature: Cross-Cultural Analogues

The concept of wisdom, denoted across linguistic and cultural contexts by terms such as *Hikmah*, *Ṣophia*, *Sapientia*, and *Prajñā*, transcends linguistic and cultural boundaries, manifesting as diverse yet interconnected constructs within global literary traditions. This notion has served as a cornerstone of humanistic thought across civilizations, exhibiting varied but interrelated instantiations. Within the Hebrew Bible, wisdom emerges both as pragmatic guidance ("The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom"- Proverbs 9: 10) and existential reflection ("Vanity of vanities, all is vanity"- Ecclesiastes 1: 2), integrating divine reverence with ethical conduct (Fox, 2000: 12). Concurrently, ancient Egyptian traditions, exemplified by *The Instruction of Ptahhotep*, conceptualize wisdom as alignment with *ma'at* (cosmic order), offering pragmatic social counsel that parallels biblical proverbs (Assmann, 2003: 211). Greco-Roman philosophy reconceptualized wisdom dialectically: Socrates equated it with self-knowledge ("I know that I know nothing" - Plato, *Apology* 21d), while Stoics such as Seneca redefined it as resilience (*ataraxia*) and consonance with nature (Hadot, 1995: 91).

In Asian traditions, Hindu-Buddhist scriptures like the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Dhammapada* present wisdom as liberating discernment (*prajñā*), whereas Confucius's *Analects* correlate it with moral cultivation (*ren*), and Laozi's *Dao De Jing* advocates for non-assertive wisdom (*wu wei*). Medieval syntheses, as embodied in the poetry of Rumi and Dante's *Divine Comedy*, fused wisdom with mystical devotion, while modern literature-ranging from Tolstoy's exploration of wisdom through spiritual crisis in *War and Peace* to Camus's articulation of wisdom as lucidity amidst absurdity in *The Myth of Sisyphus*-reflects its enduring yet fragmented relevance. Across temporal frameworks, wisdom persists as a nexus between human and transcendent domains, adapting in its formal expression (aphorisms, dialogues, paradoxes) while addressing fundamental inquiries concerning meaning and virtue (Perdue, 2007).

Wisdom in Arabic Literature

Wisdom stands as one of the richest branches of culture. In most cases, wisdom embodied in literature and human heritage represents the product of a long human experience culminating in a lesson and insight. It establishes, based on experience, advice and guidance toward specific virtuous conduct. A collection of proverbs, often disparate, constitutes the features of a cultural thought with specific characteristics and standards. Thus, it is an essential part of a people's features, traits, lifestyle, beliefs, and moral standards. Arabic literature is abundantly rich in wisdom. While Western literatures may excel in storytelling, Arabic literature excels in wisdom, both in its prose and poetry throughout the ages. In prose, orators would deliver speeches filled with interconnected wisdom. In pre-Islamic times, many excelled in this, such as Aktham ibn Ṣafī, Zuhair ibn Janāb, and Quss ibn Sā'idah al-ʿIyādī. This flow continued in Islam, with examples such as the wisdom of al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays and the sayings attributed to ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib. Books of literature like *ʿUyūn al-Akhhbār*, *al-ʿIqd al-Farīd*,

and *al-Mustatraf*, and books of proverbs, are filled with wisdom. Its aspects varied according to the diversity of life, including wisdom related to ethics, religion, economics, politics, society, and art. Unfortunately, it has not been deeply studied in Arabic literature in a manner commensurate with its importance. The forms of its expression also varied; sometimes it was in the form of concise, weighty, and beautiful sentences, other times in short stories, and sometimes in witty dialogue, among other forms. Arabic poetry is also replete with great wisdom, from the era of Labīd ibn Rabī'ah and Zuhayr ibn Abī Sulmā. Abū al-'Atāhiyah excelled in it, to the extent that he had a long poem consisting of hundreds of verses, all containing wisdom. The same is true for the powerful and wonderful wisdom of al-Mutanabbī and the ascetic, pungent, and sorrowful wisdom of Abū al-'Alā' al-Ma'arrī. Most Arab poets would complete a long or short section in their poetry and then conclude with a piece of wisdom, something unparalleled in Western literature (Amīn, 2012: 219-220). This indicates the deep influence of wisdom, its topics, and its contents on Arabic taste. Wisdom was known as a genre of ancient literary texts, both poetic and prose. Verses of wisdom are scattered throughout most Arabic diwans, from the pre-Islamic era to Islamic periods and even the contemporary period. This also applies to prose material. Most material related to sermons, speeches, and proverbs is full of various types of wisdom. There is a constellation of orators who became famous for this, including Imam 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (Ḥusīn, 1970: 20). The book *al-Ḥamāsah* by the poet Abū Tammām contains numerous poetic texts that embody various types of wisdom. This book preserved for ancient Arabic literature much of the stories of the wise men whose wisdom was famous among the Arabs of the pre-Islamic era and early Islam (Abū Tammām, 1980).

Scholars have divided the characteristics and features of wisdom into those related to meaning and those related to structure. In terms of meaning, wisdom is rich in metaphors and figurative expressions for some ethical truths. It is

supported by the mention of proverbs and famous poems. Within this framework, it deals with well-trodden and non-innovative themes, stemming from humanity's eternal heritage. It forms the essence of a practical philosophy and a noble way of life. As for structure, its characteristic features are brevity, conciseness, and the use of antithesis, rhythm, and rhyme. This makes the language easy to understand, eloquent enough to capture hearts, and quick to settle in the memory. Abstract arguments, on the other hand, freeze minds and are quickly forgotten. Arab wisdom, from its beginnings, has been characterized by accuracy of meaning, soundness of thought, keen observation, and critical insight. It serves as a wellspring from which lessons, morals, admonitions, and guidance can be drawn in all times and places (‘Akkūsh & Bū ‘Alī, 2011: 8).

Wisdom in Arabic literature is distinguished by its reformatory perspective. Through the wisdom material in his text, the poet points to what improves the condition of people in their environment. Thus, wisdom becomes a means, not an end. It arises from the realities of life and also pours into lived reality. Wisdom is distinguished by eloquence and rhetorical beauty because it expresses high values that should be adhered to and embodied. The expression of these values becomes superior and lofty to the degree that wisdom is lofty and refined. It is wisdom that expresses rational maturity and subjective experience entrusted with addressing objective experiences of others. Therefore, you find that poets have employed the means of rhetoric and linguistic and verbal embellishments in the context of what they have woven from wisdom poetry. It is mostly free from complexity and ambiguity, so that it is easy for the recipient to understand and act according to its dictates (Al-Jabūrī, 1986: 416).

Types of Wisdom

There are two types of wisdom: theoretical and practical. Each is characterized by a specific quality. Theoretical wisdom stems from delving into the essence of things and understanding the connection between causes and effects, both in creation and command, destiny and law. Practical wisdom, on the other hand, is about acting justly and correctly, placing things in their proper place. Theoretical wisdom is rooted in knowledge and understanding, while practical wisdom is rooted in righteous action that embodies justice and accuracy. Wisdom can transcend these two meanings, as human perfection lies in two things: knowing the truth for its own sake and acting upon it. This beneficial knowledge and righteous action (‘Akkūsh & Bū ‘Alī, 2011: 9).

Wisdom varies according to its purposes and contents. Some examples include:

1. **Wisdom of mortality and life:** Despite the apparent contradiction between the concepts of life and death, and despite humans' natural inclination to survive and fear death, the wise have emphasized in much of Arabic wisdom the necessity of reconciling the two. There is no life without death, and no human, young or old, can escape this equation and rule that unites all people in every time and place (see: Abū Tammām, 1980: 287). The wisdom in the above verses emphasizes that death awaits every human being, no matter how long they live. They are on a short journey, enjoying life until their destined time arrives, just like every other human.
2. **Fate and its afflictions:** People experience many hardships and misfortunes in their lives, as well as joyful events. Both can influence their behavior and nature. Both joy and sorrow play a role in their lives in terms of their impact on people's behavior. When a person experiences a misfortune, they attribute it to fate and its fickleness. People fear its treachery, as fate does not remain in one state. It does not remain in a state of prosperity or misery,

and there is no security in it. Neither happiness nor sadness lasts. Joy and sorrow have a significant and tangible impact on people's behavior. When a person is sad, worried, and dissatisfied with their life, they will find their surroundings sad and dark. They look at life through a dark lens, seeing their near and far surroundings through it. They cannot see the other side, the side of goodness, pleasure, and optimism. The word "fate" has come to be used by people and poets with a predominantly negative connotation. Poets have begun to criticize fate, its fickleness, treachery, and insecurity. Since the pre-Islamic era, poets have expressed this view in their poetry, as have orators in their prose. The well-known pre-Islamic poet, known for his pessimism, referred to the concept of fate in a piece of wisdom found in some of his poetry (see: Abū Tammām, 1980: 36). The intended meaning in the previous wisdom text is that if a person does not seek guidance and does not implement a solution to improve their situation, they will lose control and fail to manage it. However, the wise and experienced person is the one who prepares for matters and manages them before misfortune strikes. They are described as "acquainted with fate", meaning they are wise and experienced in life. The wisdom is that the person who is experienced in life is the only one who can prepare for matters and misfortunes before they occur and address them in an objective, decisive, and sound manner.

Wisdom in Folk Poetry

Folk poetry is an essential component of a people's living heritage-shared, adapted, and performed. It thrives "within the pulse of the nation, untainted by artifice or pretexts, affirming humanity's bond to its homeland and testifying to the people's authenticity. It chronicles the collective journey, documents pivotal events, and bridges the gap between vernacular and classical verse as a unifying force" (ya'āqbiḥ, 2007: 1: 48). Folk poetry is in no way inferior to classical

poetry in artistic merit, for both share the same standards of excellence in composition and the rigorous demands of impactful verse. The folk poem possesses the same capacity as its classical counterpart to stir intellect, emotion, and conscience. Those who diminish its vital role do so out of prejudice, for it achieves a distinctive level of aesthetic harmony and completeness. Nevertheless, classical poetry retains a broader reach, as folk poetry often circulates within narrower regional bounds-though some exceptional works have transcended local confines to resonate across diverse territories (11).

Wisdom appears in folk poetry, as it does in formal classical poetry, in various forms due to the diversity of folk poetry systems. It may be an independent piece, or it may be part of a longer text that addresses multiple themes, including wisdom. Wisdom poetry is embodied in poems, verses, and lines in which poets deposit the essence of their life experiences. It is an educational and didactic message, a collection of moral and educational guidance. Wisdom poetry and didactic poetry intersect in terms of means and objectives; however, wisdom poetry, in its various forms- whether as independent poems or scattered verses- is artistically superior to lyrical poetry, regardless of its educational purposes. This is because the idea associated with wisdom is more capable of accommodating artistic and aesthetic ideas than the educational idea. The wisdom poet employs rhetorical devices, figurative and aesthetic imagery, in addition to using mythological stories and other familiar techniques of poetic suggestion (Nāṣif, 1999: 8). Folk poets have always been known in their communities for their sound judgment, original thought, and foresight. They have occupied a high position, and people have transmitted their wisdom in recognition of their merit, appreciation for their status and dominance, and acceptance of folk wisdom, which they viewed with reverence and considered worthy of preservation for its expressive power, impact, and benefit. Wisdom, as a social value, does not exist outside the framework of psychological and

social stimuli. Wisdom, at its core, is the result of an interaction between stimuli and responses, leading to the production of facts and linguistic responses that have artistic and literary value. As a type of rational and emotional judgment prevalent in society, wisdom has psychological and social roots and branches represented by the goals it seeks to achieve. It also has a psychological aspect, aiming to control, reform, and correct the self and, consequently, to reform the beliefs and common standards of society. There is no doubt that wisdom has psychological motivations that branch out as the human psyche branches out, with all its complexity and intricacy. This is confirmed by the science of psychology itself, especially since we live in a world full of contradictions and conflicts, where the only constant is change. If we want to know the reasons behind wisdom, we must analyze the psychology of its speaker, as well as study the social dimensions that influence their psychology. Thus, the psyche and society are two sides of the same coin. Personality is formed by several factors, some innate, specific to nature and inclinations, and others acquired, specific to cultural, scientific, spiritual, and environmental formation. The poet becomes subject to psychological analysis or preoccupied with studying social conditions. Therefore, wisdom in folk poetry is one aspect of the psychological influence of society. Its themes varied with the diversity of societal issues, and they were generally themes imposed by the leadership role of the folk poet within their society, which dictated the need for them to intervene in everything they saw as necessary. Personal experience is not a prerequisite for wisdom (‘Akkūsh & Bū ‘Alī, 2011: 27-28).

Palestinian folk poetry has taken Center stage in the contemporary poetic landscape. It has spread widely among Palestinians, both in their homeland and in the diaspora, and has become a popular and ubiquitous form of expression at joyous occasions and beyond. Traditional Palestinian weddings, in particular, serve as platforms for folk poets, with various forms of Palestinian folk poetry

being performed in every village and neighbourhood. The political situation and the repercussions of the Palestinian cause have significantly influenced folk poetry, enriching it with many wisdom-related ideas. Most folk poets in Palestine, most notably the renowned poet Mūsā Ḥāfīz, have focused on addressing the issues that concern the Palestinian people, who are suffering due to the overall political situation. They have placed great emphasis on the need to preserve community, uphold the collective spirit, promote reconciliation, reform, and behavioral education, and foster consensus among different age groups and social segments within Palestinian society. They have been particularly keen on entertaining audiences at events with wise poetry that highlights certain societal shortcomings, inviting them to critique the current reality and seek potential solutions to negative phenomena that pose challenges to local communities. Mūsā Ḥāfīz, as one of the most prominent folk poets in contemporary Palestinian musical heritage, has excelled in the genre of wisdom poetry. His oral poetic repertoire, widely circulated on social media platforms and videos, attests to this fact. Furthermore, his poems collected in his published diwan, *The Pain of Years* provide additional evidence.

Wisdom in *Ta'ab a(l) -Sinīn- The Pain of Years*

Through this applied chapter, we will examine selected examples from Mūsā Ḥāfīz's printed diwan, *The Pain of Years*, and analyze the folk poetic material related to wisdom, clarifying the issues addressed in the poet's wisdom poetry. One of the most popular folk poetry texts rich in wisdom in *The Pain of Years* is a long poem widely circulated among people, titled "*The Advice of Ibn Ḥāfīz*", It contains the following verses:

"Don't mention what doesn't concern you,
And don't rely on the lament of the wailing.
Live with dignity and choose to love nobility and the noble.
Die with dignity for the sake of generosity,
And don't sit in the company of the miser.
Love whoever teaches you the path of honor and respect.
Don't accuse before understanding,
And give people evidence from yourself.
Don't initiate the path of war,
But always initiate the path of peace.
Seek a loyal friend and appreciate the loyalty of a noble man.
There are people who, when you befriend them,
Befriend you like pigeons. Love courage and praise,
And sit with the noble man.
Think about people's rights towards you Before you close your eyes to
sleep.
No one remains perpetually happy, Sleeping in the cool shade.
The sun brings the morning, And the night brings darkness.
Never forget a person Who has done you even a small kindness.
Never exchange your lawful for the pleasures of the forbidden.
The honor of the brother is the honor of the sister,
The honor of the friend is the honor of the companion.
And appreciate every elderly person Who is worthy and has a high status.
This life is a journey, from which departure is inevitable.
The world is thus ordered, And God has created all systems..." (Ḥāfīz,
2010: 11-17).

The preceding poem, the first in Mūsā Ḥāfīz's diwan *The Pain of Years*, bears an inclusive title that holds significant weight. The title, as a semantic signpost

preceding the text and serving as a threshold, outlines a path for interpretation and prepares the reader for a set of expectations that, in turn, determine the threads of the overall reading of the text. As the threshold of the text, the title serves as the initial point of entry and understanding. Critical studies consider the title a framed entry point for engaging with the text, a gateway that allows the reader to enter the world of the text. Studies indicate that the title has direct, impressionistic effects on the reader, placing the text within specific intellectual and cultural contexts, orienting and influencing the reader, and providing them with a prior perceptual conception before engaging with the text (Yaqīn, 1989: 98). This is precisely what Genette intended in his reading of the text in his *Paratexts* (Genette, 2008: 19-20). Roland Barthes emphasizes the importance of the title, stating that it is "a semiotic system of signs that carries moral, social, and ideological values" (Barth, 1993: 25). Our poet, Mūsā Ḥāfīz, chose the title "*The Advice of Ibn Ḥāfīz*" as a reference to his position regarding the wisdom contained within the text.

The poet begins the relatively long poem with the style of negation, a suitable style for advice, which generally relies on the principle of "do" or "do not." The poem is based on the binary equation of command and prohibition, a clear juxtaposition evident throughout many of the poem's verses. This became a method followed by the poet throughout the text and the extension of the wisdom contained therein, which was formulated in the form of advice. The beginning of this wisdom, which the poet clothed in the garb of advice, was his admonition against remembering those who do not deserve to be remembered. He means by this not to be drawn into or concerned with those who do not deserve it. Then he forbade the food of the weepers, meaning those who are miserly and find it difficult to feed others, to the extent that they weep for fear of doing so. The poet calls for several values that he considers necessary for a person to live with dignity and personal and public glory. These include preserving one's dignity

and defending it at all costs, not compromising personal dignity under any circumstances, and being generous and magnanimous, even if it costs a person poverty. He warns against approaching the miserly and associating with them for fear of being influenced by them and their negative values. Instead, he urges one to associate with the honourable who can teach them respect and honor. The poet calls for more advice that reveals wisdom through values that he advises preserving. He believes that accusation before understanding and clarification is a flaw, and wisdom, in his view, is for a person to base their judgments on solid and conclusive evidence. Thus, he adheres to wisdom that means being cautious in judgment and not rushing to conclusions before examining matters and ensuring their accuracy. Our poet sees peace as a suitable path to a dignified life, and he warns against following the paths of violence, war, and aggression. He advises people to initiate peace with others. Therefore, he directs people to choose friends and companions who possess both loyalty and authenticity. This type of friendship is what prepares a person for a life built on concepts of peace and security. However, the poet warns people against cowardice and weakness in matters of rights, and he calls on them to embody courage and associate with courageous nobles. He warns them against neglecting people's rights and asks them not to sleep before fulfilling people's needs and rights. In the text, the poet emphasizes a wisdom that has become a common saying among others, namely that life does not remain in one state, but rather its nature is to change and transform from one state to another. Thus, a person should never rely on it. Among the poet's wisdom in the poem is not forgetting kindness and remembering those who have done good, and not denying what they have given in the past. His best advice is that a person should not exchange the lawful for the unlawful. He calls in his poem for kindness to brothers, sisters, friends, and companions, and calls for respecting the elderly and giving them their due place in society. Thus, he reminds us of the necessity of looking at the elderly with

respect, honor, and reverence. The poet reminds others that the journey of life is short and that death is inevitable. This is the order of the Creator of the universe. It can be said that the poem "Ibn Ḥāfīz's Advices" contains many wisdoms that summarize the concepts of a decent life and good behaviors in the poet's view, and he sends them through simple and understandable poetic images that are very suitable for the recipient, as he is keen on some important components to build his society in a way that preserves dignity and chivalry for people, and he calls for good morals and chivalry through the wisdom that he wrote in the text as a constitution for those who read or hear it. The last poem represents a resounding cry from the poet to the members of his society, as he calls through it for change that must be rushed through to criticize the society's impurities on the one hand, and insist on returning to the Arab heritage and inherited societal traditions to which the poet belongs and seeks to normalize the members of his society with its behavioral character. This poem, one of the longest texts in the collection, can be considered a testament to the artistic, linguistic and poetic form consisting of phrases and sentences, each of which has connotations and meanings that encapsulate a certain wisdom, which makes the entire poem a comprehensive painting of adjacent details of sermons, commandments and wisdom expressing a philosophical view and a human and social vision that the poet aspires to spread and disseminate among the public in his society in order to change the situation and reality to a reality more closely related to the Palestinian heritage traditions associated with fathers and grandfathers. The poet was keen on the poetic rhyme system and adhered to a calm rhythm parallel to the commandments in a way that made the poem rhythmic and suitable for singing, which makes it spread faster and more expressive of the meanings and connotations contained in its content. This poem represents a typical model of the Palestinian folk poem in recent years, and it is very famous and is appreciated by a wide segment of people. The spoken Arabic language, which is important to the general public,

has contributed to making popular poetry understandable, clear and unambiguous, and this has made Mūsā Ḥāfīz's poems incredibly popular with his audience, which is increasing day by day.

The poem "Waṣāyā of Ibn Hafez" exemplifies a quintessential didactic wisdom poem, rich in direct instructive elements. Notably, it predominantly employs the Palestinian colloquial dialect while maintaining the linguistic purity of its structures, free from non-Arabic lexical intrusions. The poet meticulously selected precise vocabulary, conveying profound social and ethical implications through a style characterized by density and conciseness. The poem effectively utilizes an imperative rhetorical style, incorporating hortatory sentences—both prohibitions and commands—thereby aligning with the poem's intrinsic nature and its moral framework rooted in guidance and behavioural instruction.

The poet skilfully blends figurative language with direct, literal expression. For instance, the portrayal of the world as deceitful and manipulative illustrates the simplicity of the rhetorical metaphors and metonymies that permeate many of the poem's verses, elevating its levels of symbolism and suggestion. The depiction of the world as a bomb metaphorically underscores the imminent dangers awaiting those ensnared by its allure and seductive temptations. Furthermore, the poem's verses maintain a consistent kinetic rhythm, underpinned by a measured cadence rooted in the "Mutadārak" musical meter. The consistent rhyme scheme across the verses, utilizing the quiescent letters *lam* and *mim*, contributes to its musical harmony and fosters an atmosphere of clarity and tranquillity, which is highly congruent with the poem's didactic nature and its embedded admonitions.

It becomes evident that the poem's serene musical rhythm aligns perfectly with its profound meanings and the fluctuating emotions it conveys, encompassing pride, nostalgia, sorrow, social reform, introspection into virtuous and

antithetical human qualities, and moral exhortation. The ethical guidance within this poem strongly resonates with existential philosophical facets directly relevant to the traditional Palestinian environment. The poet's overarching aim is to persuade readers and listeners of the imperative to revert to these elevated values, which are believed to ameliorate societal conditions. The poet's conviction that these values are vital for the optimal construction and shaping of local Palestinian society is manifested through the repeated reiteration of meanings and admonitions across the poem's expanse, laden with noble ethical connotations. These deeply align with the traditional Arab concept of Murū'ah (chivalry/manliness) and remain entirely consistent with the tenets and injunctions of Islamic faith. In our assessment, this poem represents a fitting and holistic model for contemporary Palestinian folk poetry, characterized by its commitment to authenticity, linguistic integrity, intellectual depth, vivid imagery, and direct presentation of ideas, all enhanced by the deployment of an impactful rhythm. These crucial elements have significantly contributed to the poem's widespread popularity and dissemination among the general populace across various Palestinian regions.

The following text is the text that bears the title of the collection, which is “*The Pain of Years*”, This text contains aspects of the world of wisdom that the poet revealed through the two previous models, as he presented through the following poem the types of people in life and reality, trying to direct the recipients toward the good pattern and away from the bad pattern. The poem says the following:

“The Pain of Years

I stayed up all night

And your village dozed

And the lamp that followed me went out

I thought about the state of creation and men

In a time when people

Are all fake
Some people are like jewels
In the heart of the sands
They lived and feared saying
The truth
And there are people among people
A source of misguidance
Lies, betrayal, illusion
And injustice and arrogance
And there are people who lived
Rich without money
With their morals among
The noble ones
There are people among people
They don't want what is permissible
They lived on arrogance
Black and decorated
Some people when they are in distress tell you to come
To solve problems
And time is against me
And there are people in days
The relief is the limit of pampering
And in distress from all
The corners disappear
Hope is lost
And time has turned away from the generous
And there is no emotional left in the hearts
Of the beloved

The generous went and got lost
And he didn't know how to ask
And the mean old man became
Without my knowledge
And he became the price of a wolf
is the price of a gazelle
for dogs that have wandered
and lions are satisfied?" (Hāfiz, 2010: 71-73).

The poet begins the text with a poetic image that invites him to contemplate the state of people, as he is the one who stays up all night, when the roosters have slept expressing the stillness that is accompanied by the quiet of the last night and the darkness that illuminates the poet's insight in contemplating and thinking about the state of people, as he is in a time in which fake and unreal types of people have spread. Through the poem, the poet presents his vision of people and men and their life and behavioral doctrines in his environment and living reality, so he begins with the type of people who are afraid to tell the truth even though they are worthy of telling it, but the state of reality and the spread of betrayal and slander in it prevent them from telling the truth. Then he moves on to talk about the negative and rejected type of people whose misguidance, lies and betrayal have spread and who have become accustomed to injustice and arrogance in their behavior. Then he describes his reality and his divided society by comparing the state of some opposing groups, and mentions several important rulings through them, including: that poverty is not the poverty of money, and that wealth is the wealth of souls with good morals, and that what is forbidden is deceptive and does not last for its people, even if their misguidance is impressed by its illusory decoration. Some people do not abandon you in times of hardship, and some deny you in times of hardship, and do not recognize you except for their narrow personal interests, and do not know others except in times of

prosperity. This is the state of the world in which love and sincere generosity stemming from true, un fakeable emotion are scarce. Through the poem, the poet looks at the state of the world and people with a pessimistic view steeped in gloom, expressing the difficulty of changing the state of affairs, as the mean have become the masters of the people, the ignorant have sat on the thrones of sovereignty, and the brave have lost their ability to confront the cowards in a world in which most of those are characterized by a tendency toward falsehood and treachery. In the last poem, the poet uses a poetic image that appears in the form of a story narrated in a narrative manner, which makes his popular poetic text closer to the recipient and reader, as this clever employment contributes to simplifying the text and bringing it closer to the listener and reader more than others. Then, he uses the speaker's pronoun clearly to send a clear message that he is sure of his advice and the wisdom present, which stems from deep self-reflection. This makes the poet's advice more guaranteed and referential. He also uses short sentences in the poem that are balanced in terms of length and rhythm, which gives the text strength and expressive energy that is closer to the recipient's ear.

This poem Text stands as a quintessential exemplar of the poet's wisdom literature, employing a sophisticated taxonomy of human archetypes to advocate for moral discernment between virtuous and corrupt societal paradigms. Beyond its overt didactic function, the text operates across four intricately interconnected artistic strata:

1. Symbolism and Allegorical Framework

- Nocturnal Imagery as Existential Metaphor: The opening lines - "I stayed up all night/ And your village dozed"-transform the nocturnal setting into a liminal space for epistemological awakening. The extinguished lamp ("the lamp that followed me went out") functions as a Kafkaesque motif,

signifying the poet's profound isolation in confronting societal decay amidst collective complacency.

- **Animal Symbolism:** The poem's concluding analogy ("the price of a wolf/ is the price of a gazelle") inverts established natural hierarchies, allegorizing moral entropy through the lens of ecological disruption. The "lions" (representing nobility) and "dogs" (embodying base instincts) serve as powerful metaphors for a Darwinian struggle within the Palestinian socio-ethical landscape.

2. Figurative Language and Metaphoric Density

- **Tactile Metaphors:** Moral bankruptcy is rendered with striking physicality through the phrase "Black and decorated"-a synesthetic fusion of color (corruption) and artifice (hypocrisy).
- **Economic Lexicon:** The poet subverts conventional notions of material wealth by employing a spiritual accounting framework: "Rich without money / With their morals" redefines intrinsic value through ethical capital, thereby offering a poignant critique of neoliberal alienation.
- **Kinetic Imagery:** Time is personified as an antagonistic force ("time is against me"), while societal collapse is dramatized through vivid vanishing acts ("from all / The corners disappear"), evoking a sense of Beckettian absurdity.

3. Emotional Architecture

- **Affective Duality:** The textual narrative oscillates dynamically between communal lament (e.g., "Hope is lost") and expressions of righteous indignation (e.g., "injustice and arrogance"), mirroring the complex psychological state of the Palestinian collective under occupation.
- **Nostalgia as Resistance:** The elegiac tone adopted for "the generous" who "went and got lost" enacts a form of mnemonic activism—a deliberate act of mourning eroded values with the intent to resurrect them.

- Purposeful Pessimism: The prevailing gloom ("no emotional left in the hearts") is not nihilistic but rather diagnostic, exposing societal illness as a prerequisite for prescribing ethical revival.

4. Vernacular Modernism

- Proverbial Rhythm: The poem's short, balanced lines ("Some people are like jewels / In the heart of the sands") emulate the cadences of oral storytelling while achieving remarkable lyric condensation.
- Pronominal Authority: The strategic shift from first-person contemplation ("I thought about the state of creation") to a broader collective indictment ("people are all fake") effectively merges testimonial and prophetic voices.
- Narrative Hybridity: The poem is underlying storytelling veneer (e.g., the wolf/gazelle parable) bridges folkloric accessibility with elements of modernist fragmentation.

The intermedial quality of "The Pain of Years" seamlessly blending elements of parable, lament, and manifesto-positions it firmly within the discourse of postcolonial counter- narratives. Its intricate metaphors of light/darkness, wealth/poverty, and predator/prey construct a robust semiotic system for critiquing both internal moral decay and external oppressive forces. The poem's profound emotional trajectory- evolving from solitary reflection to communal catharsis- echoes Adorno's paradox concerning the creation of poetry in the aftermath of trauma, thereby establishing it as a liminal text situated between states of despair and enduring resilience.

Conclusion

This research, through both theoretical and practical analysis, has explored the theme of wisdom and its application in folk poetry, using the diwan "*The Pain of Years*" by the renowned Palestinian poet Mūsā Ḥāfīz as a case study. It became evident that wisdom holds a prominent place in both classical and folk Arabic literature. Poets and orators have consistently shown a keen interest in wisdom, integrating it into their poetic and prose works. Folk poets, in particular, have employed wisdom to address various themes, delivering their messages to a populace appreciative of oral art during diverse occasions. Poets like Mūsā Ḥāfīz have capitalized on these platforms to impart wisdom and advice to their audiences, making wisdom a central and sought-after theme in local folk poetry. In his diwan "*The Weariness of Years*," Mūsā Ḥāfīz employs the techniques of prohibition, command, and comparative analysis to convey wisdom and moral teachings. These techniques simplify the content for the audience while emphasizing the profound meanings and implications of the wisdom being imparted. An examination of "*The Pain of Years*" reveals that Mūsā Ḥāfīz utilizes wisdom to address a wide range of ethical issues and behavioural problems prevalent in society. By doing so, he employs wisdom as a tool for social reform, aiming to transform his society. This research has confirmed that the theme of wisdom is central to the diwan "*The Pain of Years*" and that Ḥāfīz effectively employs it to address contemporary issues. Through his poetic abilities, he exposes societal, moral, and cultural shortcomings, striving to bring about positive change. Ḥāfīz, in his diwan "*The Pain of Years*" and numerous other poems, extensively employs wisdom and repeatedly emphasizes ideas related to his perspective on life, society, and reality. Consequently, readers of this diwan have ample opportunities to discover numerous pieces of wisdom that offer social, intellectual, and moral guidance.

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الملخص

يتميز التراث الشعبي الفلسطيني بأصالته وأهميته البالغة، إذ يعبر في كثير من الأحيان عن قضايا الشعب الفلسطيني وهمومه الرئيسة، وقد حافظ الشعر الشعبي الفلسطيني على العديد من مكونات التراث رغم التغيرات الملحوظة التي طرأت على المجتمع الفلسطيني في ظل التطور الرقعي العصري والحدثة في السنوات الأخيرة. يعد الشعر الشعبي الفلسطيني عنصراً هاماً بدليل انتشاره بين شريحة واسعة من الفئات الاجتماعية المختلفة في المجتمع الفلسطيني المعاصر، ويُعد الشاعر الشعبي الفلسطيني موسى حافظ من مدينة جنين، من أبرز هؤلاء الشعراء المؤثرين في مجال الشعر الشعبي الفلسطيني الحديث، إذ يزخر ديوانه الشعري "وجع السنين" بقصائد تعالج موضوعات وقضايا حياتية متنوعة، تعكس معاناة الناس في واقعهم المعيش. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التوقف عند موضوع الحكمة في نماذج منتقاة من ديوان موسى حافظ؛ من أجل وصفها وتحليل القيم الاجتماعية التي يدعو الشعر الشعبي الفلسطيني للحفاظ عليها وتأصيلها في ظل واقع سريع التغير.

كلمات مفتاحية: التراث، الشعر الشعبي الفلسطيني، موسى حافظ، ديوان وجع السنين.