

The Role of Masjid Al-Aqsa in The Narratives of Palestinian Literature

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Abstract

For Palestinians, the Al-Aqsa Mosque—which is situated in the center of Jerusalem's Old City—has great cultural and historical significance. It is a potent emblem in Palestinian literature, signifying the people's rich history as well as their continuous fight for independence. A brief synopsis of Masjid Al-Aqsa's place in Palestinian literary narratives is given in this summary. Palestinian literature regularly uses Masjid Al-Aqsa as a main motif. It serves as both a source of inspiration and a symbol of Palestinian national identity for writers. The mosque's prominence in the Palestinian narrative is further highlighted by its historical significance as the third holiest shrine in Islam. Masjid Al-Aqsa is frequently portrayed in Palestinian literature as a place of melancholy and longing. The strong emotional bond that Palestinians, particularly those who have been uprooted from their country, have with the mosque is captured by writers. Poetry, novels, and essays all frequently touch on this sentimental tie, which captures the collective memory of the Palestinian people. Another place of resistance that is portrayed is the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Palestinian authors draw attention to the mosque's resilience in the face of political difficulties like strife and occupation. It represents the Palestinian people's tenacity and will to preserve their religious and cultural heritage. Apart from its symbolic meaning, Palestinian literature often discusses Masjid Al-Aqsa's architectural splendor. Through their descriptions of its elaborate architecture, tranquil courtyards, and historical significance, authors manage to convey the spirit of the mosque. Furthermore, the political and social conflicts around Masjid Al-Aqsa are

frequently discussed in Palestinian literature. Authors criticize the barriers that prevent Palestinians from entering the mosque and the numerous threats that it suffers. This emphasizes the larger Palestinian struggle for rights, justice, and self-determination. Finally, it should be noted that Masjid Al-Aqsa is a major emblem of identity, resistance, and cultural legacy in Palestinian literature. Palestinian authors use this hallowed location to illustrate the breadth of their emotional bond, the difficulties they encounter, and their continuous quest for justice. Masjid Al-Aqsa remains a source of inspiration for Palestinian writers and a significant character in their collective narrative through literature.

Keywords: Masjid Al-Aqsa, Palestinian literature, Identity, Resistance, Cultural heritage

INTRODUCTION

Tucked down in the center of Jerusalem's Old City, Masjid Al-Aqsa is a special place with a deep significance in Palestinian literary legends. One of the most recognizable sites in the area, the holy mosque has symbolic significance that goes beyond its religious significance. Rather, it represents the Palestinian people's collective memory, identity, and struggle. Masjid Al-Aqsa appears as a major subject in the rich fabric of Palestinian writing, interlacing themes of resistance, longing, and regret. Using a variety of academic sources, this introduction gives a broad overview of Masjid Al-Aqsa's place in Palestinian literary tales while highlighting its complex significance. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of Masjid Al-Aqsa in Palestinian literary heritage. For Palestinian writers, this mosque—the third-holiest place in Islam—has long served as an inspiration. The strong emotional connection that Palestinians have to their homeland and its rich cultural and historical legacy is reflected in their works, which are infused with a deep emotional affinity to this holy site. Because of this, the stories written by Palestinian authors heavily reference the symbolism of Masjid Al-Aqsa.

In Palestinian literature, themes of longing and nostalgia are reflected in this complex and nuanced symbolism. In its literary expressions, the Palestinian experience of displacement and the fight for self-determination are recurrent themes. Masjid Al-Aqsa is a place of longing and remembrance for people who were taken against their will from their ancestral homes. It represents a desire to go back in time, a sense of kinship, and a yearning to return. Through their poetry and prose, Palestinian writers skillfully conjure these feelings, encapsulating the core of their people's collective memory. In Palestinian literature, Masjid Al-Aqsa is portrayed not only symbolically but also as a potent symbol of resistance. Palestinian resilience is demonstrated by the mosque's continued existence in the face of political difficulties including occupation and strife. Masjid Al-Aqsa is portrayed in literary works as a representation of resolute determination and resistance against injustice. It becomes a wellspring of motivation for opposition to the forces endangering Palestinian identity and cultural legacy.

Palestinian literature also mentions Masjid Al-Aqsa's magnificent architecture. Authors explain this holy site's historical significance, peaceful courtyards, and elaborate design. They give readers a sense of the mosque's beauty and spiritual significance by taking them there through evocative descriptions. Furthermore, Palestinian literature discusses the social and political conflicts surrounding Masjid Al-Aqsa. Authors criticize the limitations imposed on Palestinians' ability to visit the mosque and the ongoing dangers it faces from outside forces

and political changes. This feature highlights the larger Palestinian struggle for rights, justice, and the basic freedom to self-determination. In order to fully understand Masjid Al-Aqsa's significance in Palestinian literature, we must interact with the academic discourse that has shed light on this topic. Studies examining the relationship among sacred sites, identity, and literature provide important new perspectives on the complex significance of Masjid Al-Aqsa in the Palestinian context. The symbolism and cultural significance of Masjid Al-Aqsa have been studied by academics like Ibtisam Ibrahim (Ibrahim, 2009) and Hala Kamal (Kamal, 2012), who have shed light on the building's significance as a potent emblem of Palestinian identity. Their writing demonstrates the strong cultural and emotional bonds that Palestinians have with this holy location, highlighting its significant literary effect.

Marshall J. Breger (Breger, 2010) explores the intricacies of sacred spaces in his book "Sacred Space in Israel and Palestine," focusing on the ways that political and identity are intertwined with religious and historical locations like Masjid Al-Aqsa. Breger's approach offers a more comprehensive viewpoint on the relevance of sacred sites in literary narratives and their role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Furthermore, the writings of well-known Palestinian historian and anthropologist Salim Tamari (Tamari, 2007) provide a priceless viewpoint on how history and memory are entwined in the Palestinian setting. His studies on Jerusalem in particular highlight the importance of Masjid Al-Aqsa as a fundamental component of Palestinian identity and cultural memory. In summary, Masjid Al-Aqsa plays a variety of roles in Palestinian writing, addressing issues of cultural legacy, identity, longing, and resistance. Palestinian writers use this hallowed site's emotional resonances and historical significance in their literary works to communicate their shared memory, their ongoing battles, and their will to preserve their legacy. We have a greater grasp of the significant influence that this famous mosque has on the literary narratives of a people with a rich and complicated history as we investigate the interactions between Masjid Al-Aqsa and Palestinian literature.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To Examine Masjid Al-Aqsa's Symbolism in Palestinian Literature: This goal entails a thorough analysis of the ways in which Palestinian authors employ the Masjid Al-Aqsa as a symbol to express themes of resistance, identity, and longing in their writing. Its goal is to investigate the various ways that the symbolism of the mosque is used in various genres of Palestinian literature and how this influences the development of the Palestinian narrative.
- To Examine Masjid Al-Aqsa's Socio-Political Setting in Palestinian Literature: This goal is to comprehend how Palestinian literary narratives portray the socio-political problems and difficulties around Masjid Al-Aqsa. It entails a thorough examination of how authors handle topics like occupation, access limitations, and outside threats to the mosque, as well as how these elements relate to the larger Palestinian struggle for justice and autonomy.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How does the symbolism of Masjid Al-Aqsa help Palestinian writer's express themes of resistance, identity, and longing in their writing, and how does this help shape the Palestinian narrative?
 - How do Palestinian literary works depict the larger Palestinian struggle for justice
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and self-determination, and how do they handle the socio-political obstacles surrounding Masjid Al-Aqsa, such as concerns like occupation, access restrictions, and external threats?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholarly investigations of the function of Masjid Al-Aqsa in Palestinian literature have illuminated the complex significance of this location in Palestinian narratives. This review draws on a variety of scholarly publications to highlight important results and ideas from the body of literature already written on the subject.

Masjid Al-Aqsa's Symbolism in Palestinian Literature: The theme of Masjid Al-Aqsa, a symbol of religious and cultural significance, is essential to Palestinian literature. Palestinian writers have expressed many facets of their collective identity, longing, and struggle through the symbolism of the mosque. The mosque's significance as a symbol of Palestinian identity and legacy is highlighted by Ibtisam Ibrahim's research on the cultural relevance of Masjid Al-Aqsa in Palestinian literature [Ibrahim, 2009]. It is a potent trope that writers frequently employ to provide readers—even those who have been uprooted from their native country—a sense of connection and cultural rootedness.

Themes of Memories and Yearning: A common motif in literature is the emotional bond that Palestinians have with Masjid Al-Aqsa. This is particularly meaningful to Palestinians who have been uprooted. The mosque represents a place of yearning, a link to the past, and a desire to go back. In her examination of Masjid Al-Aqsa's place in Palestinian cultural memory, Hala Kamal [Kamal, 2012] demonstrates how writers are able to convey the deep sense of longing for the motherland that is inextricably linked to the mosque. Through literary language, authors eloquently capture the feelings of nostalgia and longing.

The Al-Aqsa Mosque as a Site of Opposition: Masjid Al-Aqsa is also portrayed in Palestinian literature as a symbol of resistance. It is evidence of the Palestinian people's tenacity in the face of political difficulties, such as occupation and conflict. Palestinian writers often depict Palestinians' unwavering defiance and perseverance against tyranny by using the mosque. Masjid Al-Aqsa's lasting influence on literature is a testament to its significance as a source of inspiration for the larger Palestinian fight for justice and autonomy.

A Socio-Political Framework in Palestinian Writing: In Palestinian literature, the socio-political issues surrounding Masjid Al-Aqsa are central. Authors criticize the barriers that prevent Palestinians from entering the mosque and the numerous threats that it suffers. This draws attention to the larger Palestinian struggle for rights and independence. The study of holy sites in Israel and Palestine by Marshall J. Breger [Breger, 2010] highlights the intricate ways in which politics and identity are entwined with Masjid Al-Aqsa. These difficulties are expressed through literature, which also serves to reinforce the mosque's continuing value.

Cultural and Historical Importance: Palestinian literature explores not only resistance and symbolism but also the architectural splendor of Masjid Al-Aqsa. It provides explanations of the mosque's historical significance, peaceful courtyards, and elaborate design. Salim Tamari's work on Jerusalem [Tamari, 2007] demonstrates how literature depicts the mosque's beauty and spiritual significance, emphasizing the importance of Masjid Al-Aqsa as a crucial component of Palestinian cultural memory and identity.

To sum up, Masjid Al-Aqsa has a variety of roles in Palestinian writing. It serves as a source of inspiration, a symbol of identity, and a reminder of the difficulties the Palestinian people

face. Its symbolic meaning, the cultural and emotional connections it represents, and its importance in expressing themes of resistance, longing, and nostalgia have all been studied by academics. In addition, it reflects the sociopolitical environment in which Palestinians live. The mosque's timeless beauty and historical significance are captured in literature, solidifying its role as a key character in Palestinian history.

Literary Interpretations of the Al-Aqsa Mosque: Masjid Al-Aqsa has been portrayed in a variety of literary works by Palestinian authors, such as poems, novels, short tales, and essays. Writers such as the renowned Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish have included the mosque imagery into their pieces. Especially Darwish's poetry reflects the larger themes of identity and resistance that have come to characterize Palestinian writing, frequently alluding to the historical and spiritual significance of Masjid Al-Aqsa [Darwish, 2001].

The Relationship Between Cultural Identity and Masjid Al-Aqsa: One recurrent issue in the literature is the relationship between Palestinian cultural identity and Masjid Al-Aqsa. Scholars such as Hisham Sharabi have explored the notion of cultural identity and its connection to mosques. According to Sharabi's research on Palestinian culture [Sharabi, 1997], Masjid Al-Aqsa serves as a cultural hub for Palestinians in addition to being a place of worship. This deeply ingrained cultural identity and how it manifests itself in Palestinian tales are frequently explored in literature.

The Masjid Al-Aqsa in Present-Day Palestinian Writing: Masjid Al-Aqsa remains a major motif in contemporary Palestinian literature. Writers like Susan Abulhawa utilize the mosque as a representation of resiliency and continuity in her book "Mornings in Jenin" (Abulhawa, 2006). The significance of Masjid Al-Aqsa in modern writing is emphasized in this book as well as others. It continues to be a wellspring of thought and inspiration, influencing the stories written by a fresh round of Palestinian authors.

In summary, Masjid Al-Aqsa represents themes of identity, longing, resistance, and cultural heritage in Palestinian writing, extending beyond its religious significance. Palestinian writers have used the symbolism of the mosque to portray their shared history and the difficulties they confront. This review highlights the diverse significance of Masjid Al-Aqsa in Palestinian narratives by drawing on a range of academic studies.

Palestinian Diaspora Literature in the Context of Masjid Al-Aqsa: The iconography of Masjid Al-Aqsa has also been embraced by Palestinian diaspora literature. The memoir "In Search of Fatima" by Ghada Karmi [Karmi, 2002] is a moving illustration of how stories of longing and exile are entwined with the mosque. Masjid Al-Aqsa's symbolism reinforces its function as a symbol of diaspora identity by resonating with the experiences of Palestinian exiles.

The Political Story and Masjid Al-Aqsa: It is impossible to ignore Masjid Al-Aqsa's political significance in Palestinian writing. Literature frequently provides a forum for political criticism and discussion. Writings that examine the complex interplay between politics and sacred place, such as Raja Shehadeh's "Palestinian Walks: Notes on a Vanishing Landscape" [Shehadeh, 2008], provide a nuanced perspective on the difficulties that Palestinians face.

Masjid Al-Aqsa's Impact on Palestinian Poetry: One important topic of study is how Masjid Al-Aqsa has influenced Palestinian poetry. Poets such as Fadwa Tuqan have made the mosque the focal point of their poems. The poem "A Mountainous Journey" by Tuqan [Tuqan, 1978] illustrates how the mosque has influenced Palestinians' literary expressions while also

reflecting their spiritual and emotional ties to it.

The significance of memory in literature and Masjid Al-Aqsa: The function of the mosque as a storehouse of communal memory appears frequently in Palestinian writing. The story "Sharon and My Mother-in-Law" by Suad Amiry [Amiry, 2004] highlights the importance of Masjid Al-Aqsa as a symbol of historical continuity and identity by weaving together individual and societal memories.

All things considered, Masjid Al-Aqsa has a broad and varied influence on Palestinian literature, appearing in books of poetry, memoirs, and novels, among other genres. It is a reflection of the intricate political and historical background, a source of inspiration, and a symbol of cultural and religious identity. These aspects have been studied by academics and writers, who have illuminated the mosque's lasting and significant role in Palestinian literary narratives.

ANALYSIS

In Palestinian literature, Masjid Al-Aqsa is a potent motif and narrative anchor with great symbolic and cultural significance. Its picture is frequently used by authors to portray historical conflicts, resistance, and the Palestinian people's unwavering devotion to their homeland. The mosque in Jerusalem is a symbol of Palestinian identity and resistance against occupation, in addition to being a place of worship. Masjid Al-Aqsa can be used by writers to examine themes of loss, displacement, and the pursuit of justice in literary analysis. Its depiction may make one nostalgic for a country torn apart by war. Furthermore, the political and historical background of the mosque offers a rich backdrop for delving into the nuances of the Palestinian experience, fusing resistance, culture, and religion. Masjid Al-Aqsa is transformed into a metaphor for the fight for Palestinian identity and self-determination via literary lenses. The stories that surround it help readers gain a deeper comprehension of the Palestinian situation by illuminating the complex nature of the conflict and the human stories at its center. Located in the center of Jerusalem, Masjid al-Aqsa is an essential component of the Palestinian identity and is of great value to Muslims all over the world. With its complex political and historical background, this holy site has gained prominence as a literary motif in Palestinian works. This study illuminates the symbolic, cultural, and political ramifications of Masjid al-Aqsa by examining its complex significance in Palestinian literary narratives.

Historical and Religious Symbolism: Palestine's rich history is closely linked to the Masjid al-Aqsa, which is regarded as the third-holiest place in Islam. Palestinian literature frequently explores the mosque's theological and historical significance, emphasizing its relationship to the Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey. The spiritual essence of Masjid al-Aqsa is evoked by writers through the use of vivid imagery and poetic language, which highlights the holiness of the building as a symbol of faith and resiliency.

Cultural Identity and Memory: Masjid al-Aqsa is portrayed in literature in a way that is effective in maintaining and promoting Palestinian cultural identity. In order to create stories that highlight the continuous connection between the land, its people, and the holy mosque, authors draw on the collective memory of the Palestinian people. Literature is transformed into a tool of resistance through storytelling, thwarting attempts to alter or eradicate Palestine's cultural heritage.

Occupation and Resistance: A major issue in Palestinian writing is the Israeli occupation of

Jerusalem and how it affects Masjid al-Aqsa. Through their artistic expression, writers explore the psychological and emotional effects of occupation on both individuals and groups, articulating the difficulties encountered by Palestinians. Masjid al-Aqsa becomes a center of resistance, representing the Palestinian people's resilience in the face of hardship.

Jerusalem as a Literary Landscape: Palestinian literature portrays Jerusalem, with Masjid al-Aqsa at its center, as a thriving literary landscape. Writers use the physical and symbolic aspects of the city to set the scene for their stories. The stories are anchored in the complicated reality of Jerusalem by the golden dome of Masjid al-Aqsa, its ancient walls, and its small alleys, which enable readers to fully immerse themselves in the actual experiences of its people.

Political Allegory and National Struggle: In Palestinian writing, Masjid al-Aqsa assumes the role of a political allegory, transcending its religious and historical contexts. The mosque serves as a metaphor used by authors to represent the larger Palestinian struggle for sovereignty and self-determination. The stories intertwine the themes of faith, resistance, and the pursuit of justice, portraying Masjid al-Aqsa as a focal point for the Palestinian people's ambitions as a nation.

Masjid al-Aqsa appears as a complex symbol that embodies political, cultural, and historical components in the fabric of Palestinian literature. Writers express the importance of the mosque in the Palestinian people's communal consciousness through the storytelling technique. Masjid al-Aqsa becomes a lens through which the complexity of Palestinian identity, resistance, and resilience are examined and celebrated through striking visuals and moving stories.

FINDINGS

Historical Significance: In Palestinian literature, Masjid Al-Aqsa is a historical icon that symbolizes the Palestinian people's strong bond with their homeland.

Difficulty and Resistance: Masjid Al-Aqsa is frequently emphasized throughout the story as a center of resistance and battle against occupation, underscoring its importance in the campaign for Palestinian rights.

Cultural Identity: The significance of upholding Palestinian customs and values is seen in the frequent portrayal of Masjid Al-Aqsa as a symbol of cultural identity in Palestinian literature.

Jerusalem as a Center: The mosque's location in Jerusalem makes it a focal point in stories about the city, which helps to present Jerusalem as an important center of both culture and religion.

Unity and Solidarity: Stories that highlight Palestinian unity and promote solidarity in the midst of difficulties and disputes frequently feature Masjid Al-Aqsa.

Sacred Landscape: Palestinian literature frequently places Masjid Al-Aqsa in the context of Palestine's larger sacred landscape, highlighting the land's spiritual and religious significance.

Continuity in History: Literature emphasizes the mosque's historical continuity, highlighting its ongoing significance across several centuries and bolstering the story of Palestinian resistance.

Colonial Impact: Stories could examine how colonial forces affected Masjid Al-Aqsa, illuminating the difficulties brought on by foreign influence and occupancy.

Jerusalem's Cultural fabric: In Palestinian literature, Masjid Al-Aqsa is presented as an essential component of Jerusalem's rich cultural fabric, adding to the city's complex identity.

Hope and Aspiration: In Palestinian literature, the mosque takes on symbolic meaning as a sign of hope and aspiration, representing the desire for freedom, justice, and a day when Masjid Al-Aqsa will stand as a witness to the tenacity of the Palestinian people.

CONCLUSION

The story of Palestinian literature revolves on Masjid Al-Aqsa, which acts as a literal and metaphorical anchor. This holy site serves as a metaphorical center of resistance, resilience, and identity in addition to being a physical location across the vast array of literary works by Palestinian authors. The stories frequently center on Masjid Al-Aqsa's historical and spiritual significance, portraying it as a constant amidst the constantly shifting Palestinian experience. Masjid Al-Aqsa is transformed into a moving symbol of resistance to political unrest, forced migration, and the difficulties the Palestinian people confront in literature. Writers often use detailed descriptions of the mosque and its environs to convey a feeling of perseverance and community. The persistent bond between the Palestinian people and their homeland is highlighted by this literary representation, especially in the midst of hardship.

Moreover, the importance of Masjid Al-Aqsa in Palestinian literature adds to the collective memory of the Palestinian story. It turns becomes a storehouse of past wrongs, an eyewitness to the people's hardships, and a monument to their unwavering will. Throughout the literature, the mosque is frequently portrayed as a link between the past and the present, encouraging a sense of resiliency and continuity. The stories also explore the intricacies of Masjid Al-Aqsa as a disputed location, mirroring Palestine's larger geopolitical struggles. The many facets of the Palestinian struggle are expressed via literature, which also weaves together individual and group tales surrounding this holy site. Themes of occupation, uprooting, and the pursuit of justice are explored by the writers, who anchor these concerns in the symbolic center of Masjid Al-Aqsa.

Finally, Masjid Al-Aqsa becomes a potent motif in Palestinian writing, capturing the spirit of resistance and identity in Palestine. Literature becomes a means of conserving history, encouraging resiliency, and elevating the voices of a people fighting for justice and acknowledgment through the complex narratives that are woven around this sacred location. In Palestinian literature, Masjid Al-Aqsa plays a transforming role that goes beyond simple description, influencing discourse and guaranteeing that the Palestinian story lives on in the hearts and minds of future generations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

➤ Susan Abulhawa's "Mornings in Jenin": This book offers a moving, cross-generational account that delves into Palestinian history and the effects of violence on people and families. It provides a complex picture of the Palestinian experience by fusing together individual narratives with a backdrop of larger political developments.

➤ Mourid Barghouti's "I Saw Ramallah": The memoir by Barghouti is a poetic analysis of exile, return, and the feeling of being uprooted. In poetic prose, the author offers a very personal and introspective depiction of the intricacies of Palestinian identity as he describes his experiences of returning to Ramallah after years of exile.

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- Joe Sacco's graphic novel "Palestine" offers a striking and distinct viewpoint on the Palestinian situation. Sacco depicts the hardships that Palestinians in the occupied areas suffer on a daily basis with meticulous illustrations and firsthand recollections. It provides an emotional and visual awareness of the conflict's human side.
 - Ghada Karmi's "In Search of Fatima: A Palestinian Story": In her memoir, Karmi explores identity, loss, and displacement in a moving way. It offers a firsthand account of the effects of Israel's founding on Palestinian lives, viewed through the prism of the author's own family history and historical backdrop.
 - Mahmoud Darwish's "The Butterfly's Burden": Darwish, who is frequently regarded as Palestine's national poet, offers a selection of his poems that explore themes of love, grief, and the Palestinian cause. This anthology explores the emotional terrain of the Palestinian experience and is a literary gem because to the author's powerful language and profound insights.

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