

Transformations of the Algerian Revolution in Arabic Poetry: From Documenting Collective Memory to Constructing the Poetic Icon

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Abstract:

This study aims to explore the impact of the Algerian Revolution (1954-1962) on Arabic poetry, focusing on how Arab poets embodied this historical event as a literary symbol reflecting the themes of resistance and liberation. By analyzing the literary and symbolic tools used to express the revolution, the study allows for a deeper understanding of the intricate relationship between literature and resistance. The research issue also sheds light on the poetic representations that encapsulate the struggle and how poetry contributed to portraying the revolution as a human act transcending geographical boundaries and forming part of the Arab collective consciousness. The significance of this study lies in understanding the role of poetry in constructing revolutionary memory and shaping cultural identity, by transforming historical events into enduring literary symbols. The study will employ a critical-analytical approach to the poetic texts, with a focus on the symbolism and rhetorical images that contributed to the formation of this revolutionary memory, enhancing the understanding of how the Algerian Revolution influenced poets' perceptions of the world around them.

Keywords: Algerian Revolution; Arabic Poetry; Resistance; Liberation; Symbolism; Cultural Identity; Revolutionary Memory; Literary Representation.

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1. Introduction:

The Algerian Revolution (1954-1962) had a profound reflection in Arabic literature, particularly in poetry, where Arab poets addressed its events and meanings with a revolutionary spirit that blended historical reality with literary imagination. The Algerian Revolution was not merely a political or military event in Arab consciousness; it evolved into a powerful literary symbol from which poets drew renewed images of resistance and liberation. In this context, the Algerian Revolution provided Arabic poetry with rich themes that transcended Algeria's borders to touch on the broader issues of the entire Arab nation. The core issue of this article is to reveal how Arabic poetry embodied the Algerian Revolution as a historical event, analyzing the literary and symbolic tools used by Arab poets to embed this revolution in collective memory. Several questions arise here regarding the nature of the poetic representations that conveyed the meanings of struggle, and how poetry contributed to portraying the revolution as a human and revolutionary act that transcended geographical boundaries to become part of the general Arab consciousness. The significance of this study lies in understanding the close relationship between literature and resistance, and the role of poetry in constructing revolutionary memory and shaping the cultural identity of the nation. Through a critical study of the representations of the Algerian Revolution in Arabic poetry, this research will attempt to understand how poems transformed historical events into enduring literary symbols, and how poets infused this great event with a humanistic and artistic dimension.

This study will adopt a critical-analytical approach to the poetic texts that addressed the Algerian Revolution, with a focus on the poetic symbolism and rhetorical imagery that contributed to constructing this revolutionary memory.

2. The Revolution between Historical Concept and Cultural Analysis:

The revolution is one of the complex social phenomena deserving study from multiple perspectives. While some view it merely as a historical event aimed at overthrowing an existing regime, it can also be understood as a cultural process where symbols, identities, and values intersect, representing a significant turning point in the history of nations and reflecting people's aspirations and hopes for change and liberation.

It is worth noting at the outset that there is no precise definition of the term "revolution," as its concepts encompass ideological and referential differences that influence how it is defined by various thinkers, reflecting its complexities and indicating the absence of a clear and unified understanding.

Most contemporary thinkers use the term revolution to refer to "a sudden and radical change in social and political conditions, where an existing regime is overthrown, and the accompanying social and legal system is changed, sometimes violently, and sometimes through other sudden means (Al-Kayyali, 1979, p. 870)." This definition suggests that revolutions involve radical and sudden changes in the social and political system, which can occur violently or unexpectedly without violence.

Based on this concept, for the average person, revolution represents "a reactionary process and an attempt to reclaim stolen rights, whether material or moral, and is one of the tools of historical development in human societies, a tool among other radical mechanisms in the structure of society (Mehran, 2014, p. 126)." Here, the revolution is reflected as a tool for reclaiming stolen rights, whether material or moral, and is considered a means of historical progress in societies, highlighting its role as a fundamental instrument in changing the structure of society.

Revolution is also defined as: "the sum of actions and events that lead to radical changes in the political, social, and economic reality of a people or a human group in a comprehensive and deep manner over the long term, resulting in a shift in the social thinking of the revolutionary people and in the redistribution of wealth and political power (Haseeb, 2011, p. 128)." The previous definition broadens the concept of revolution to include actions and events that bring about profound and comprehensive changes in various fields, reflecting the deep impact of revolution on the structure of social thought and the redistribution of wealth and power, which indicates the long-lasting effects of revolutions on societies.

Mohamed Dadda views the concept of revolution as defined by "three levels, beginning with determining the goals and objectives as an initial point agreed upon by the revolution's leaders. These goals then serve as a reference point in times of disagreement, followed by identifying the possible means to achieve the objectives, and finally, the creation of ways to protect the revolution's gains and preserve its entity, identity, and fate (Dadda, 2011, pp. 39-52)." Mohamed Dadda offers a detailed analysis of the stages of revolution, from defining its objectives and goals, to determining the necessary means to achieve them, and finally, ensuring the protection of the revolution's achievements and its continued impact.

Great thinkers and philosophers often link revolution with freedom, as is the case with Condorcet, who says: "The word revolution applies only to those revolutions whose goal is freedom (Haseeb, 2011, p. 128)." In the same vein, Al-Janidi Khalifa states: "Revolution is a rejection of foreign existence and the prevailing conditions because if the people or any group were satisfied with the situation, the revolution would not have occurred... (Nour, p. 25)"

These various interpretations of revolution indicate that it is not merely a tool for change, but also an interactive process involving a set of actions and events aimed at achieving a comprehensive transformation in the structure of society through the redistribution of wealth and power and the reshaping of social thought. Revolution plays a pivotal role in renewing and advancing societies. At its core, revolution remains a manifestation of the desire for change and renewal and a crucial step toward achieving justice and freedom. It is an expression of the people's aspirations to build more just and suitable systems.

Despite all these terminological definitions with a historical dimension, the cultural aspect of the revolution cannot be overlooked, as cultural analysis plays a fundamental role in shaping collective identities and guiding social behavior, making it a pivotal factor in the context of revolutionary change. Therefore, the intersection between the historical concept and the cultural analysis of the term "revolution" reflects how each dimension influences the other. Revolutions

are not merely isolated historical events but are complex processes linked to culture, emotions, and memory. Culture itself is affected by historical changes, making it essential to study revolutions from both perspectives.

One of the most prominent aspects of the cultural dimension is the use of symbols and icons to embody the powerful meanings of the revolution, where martyrs and historical events are viewed as symbols of struggle. Moreover, culture influences how societies respond to revolutions. Thus, the cultural dimension of the revolution reflects the interaction of social and political factors with culture, forming a complex fabric of values and practices that reinforce revolutionary memory. While some revolutions are rooted in cultural and religious traditions, others use cultural elements as a means to challenge existing regimes. Through this understanding, we can appreciate the depth of change brought about by revolutions, not only on the political level but also on the cultural and human levels.

In this context, it can be said that comprehending the term "revolution" requires a holistic vision that considers both the historical concept and cultural analysis. Revolution is not merely an event in time but a complex process that expresses the hopes and aspirations of peoples. By integrating these perspectives, a deeper understanding of the causes and consequences driving social and political change can be achieved. This comprehensive vision makes the study of revolution an academic and cultural necessity, contributing to enhancing awareness of collective identities and memories.

3. Manifestations of Revolutionary Memory in Poetry: Between History and Creativity

Literature and revolution have been closely linked throughout history, as literature serves as a powerful means of expressing social and political concerns and the struggle for change. It often mirrors the aspirations of peoples and their demands for freedom and social justice. Political revolution, in the end, is "merely a response to the revolution of minds, hearts, and souls initiated by literature, alongside other revolutions sparked by literature... I do not know of any political revolution, in either the modern or ancient sense of the word, that was not preceded by an intellectual literary revolution that inspired people... making them unable to bear what they hate or delay in pursuing what they desire (Bougassa, 2018, p. 20)."

The manifestations of revolutionary memory in poetry are among the rich topics where historical and creative elements interact deeply, as poetry uniquely reflects the interplay between historical documentation and artistic expression. Literature, especially poetry, plays a significant role in conveying the spirit of resistance and motivating individuals to actively participate in change. The Algerian Revolution, for example, witnessed the use of literature as a powerful tool to inspire Algerians to resist French colonialism and as a means of intellectual and revolutionary guidance.

The relationship between revolution and poetry is manifested in a continuous interaction that stretches into the depths of human history. Both share a profound desire for radical change. Revolution, by its nature, seeks to overturn systems and transform social and political realities, while poetry captures these transformations and expresses them in the most profound and

sincere ways. Poetry serves as the medium that keeps the revolution alive in the collective consciousness of the people, stirring the spirit and igniting passion through words that convey feelings of anger, hope, and aspirations.

Thus, poetry has been and remains a revolutionary tool and an effective medium, drawing its radiance from its connection to the people's causes (Essad, 1986, pp. 13-14). Through their poems, poets help shape the course of the revolution, not only by expressing collective emotions but also by observing and embodying societal transformations before, during, and after revolutions in various expressive forms—whether through calling for change, directly depicting revolutionary movements, or even offering deep critiques of the new reality after the revolution. These transformations, experienced by collective thought, resonate in the evolution of poetic language itself, shifting from symbolism to boldness and directness as revolutionary momentum intensifies.

Moreover, poetry's role extends beyond the immediate moment of revolution, becoming a collective memory that preserves and immortalizes events. Poets often invoke revolutionary memory, creating a link between generations. Through their poems, they document the experiences of peoples in their struggles by using poetic imagery and symbols to capture pivotal moments in history, contributing to the creation of a collective narrative that strengthens cultural awareness and enables new generations to understand and engage with their history. In this context, poems that glorify revolutions and their heroes become part of the cultural heritage passed down through generations, serving as a key element in sustaining revolutionary consciousness and preserving its values.

Additionally, revolutionary memory often intertwines with poets' personal experiences, as they reinterpret events from an artistic perspective that reveals their ability to offer new narratives of historical events. This intersection between individual experience and collective history adds depth to poetic texts. When poets speak of martyrs or critical moments, they do not merely record historical events but also convey individual and collective emotions that reflect cultural memory.

From the above, it is clear that poetry serves as a vessel for revolutionary memory by merging history with creativity. Revolution and poetry are interconnected in a dialectical relationship that reflects humanity's desire for freedom and change. This relationship makes poetry a guardian of revolution, a preserver of its memory, and a lasting symbol of the values for which revolutions strive. It opens new horizons for understanding and reflection, making poetry a powerful tool for change and communication across generations.

4. Icons of the Algerian Revolution in Arabic Poetry: A Study of Utilization and Interpretation through Selected Models

Arabic poetry has served as one of the most significant mediums for documenting the Algerian Revolution, yet it went beyond mere direct and documentary expression of events. Instead, it constructed symbolic icons with profound meanings that reflected the collective will for liberation and freedom from colonialism. This section aims to explore the multiple

interpretations of these icons by studying the symbols and poetic imagery used in selected models, as well as their impact on the audience.

The focus will also be on the temporal dimension of this issue, observing how these icons have continued to inspire new generations of poets, demonstrating the ongoing revolutionary spirit in the poetic imagination. This underscores the role of poetry in strengthening collective memory and reshaping cultural identity. Among these icons:

4.1 The Aurès Mountains: Echoes of Struggle in Arabic Poetry

The Aurès Mountains hold a powerful symbolic value in Arabic poetry as an icon of the Algerian Revolution, reflecting the significance of this mountain range in the hearts of both revolutionaries and poets. Poetry has celebrated the "symbolism of Aurès," and its association with the revolution has become a metaphor for heroism, sacrifice, devotion, jihad, martyrdom, grandeur, pride, and resilience. Through the Aurès symbol, poets sought to achieve in their poetic imagination what they could not in reality, drawing inspiration from the contours of the Aurès (Al-Wakal, 2020, p. 02).

In Arabic literature, the Aurès Mountains represent multiple symbols of revolutionary spirit, defiance, and perseverance. These mountains, known for their rugged and difficult terrain, were a refuge for fighters and activists during the French colonial period, serving as a strategic turning point in Algeria's battle for independence.

In poetic texts, the Aurès Mountains are portrayed as a symbol of resilience and defiance. They are not just natural features; they embody the strength and willpower of the revolutionaries. The mountains are seen as a sacred site and a sanctuary for the revolution's heroes, closely tied to the struggle and the blood shed in the quest for freedom and independence.

The symbolism of the Aurès Mountains extends to cultural and historical connotations as well, representing the deep roots of the Algerian people and their connection to their land and history. In this sense, the mountains become a symbol of patriotism and the cultural heritage that preserves the Algerian identity, enhancing the spirit of pride and belonging.

The Moroccan poet Ibrahim Al-Swalmi says (Al-Jarari, p. 91):

My brother in Algeria,
I have sacrificed for you, O eye upon the mountain slope,
You who planted seeds of hope in my land,
And prolonged life.
You know well that Aurès takes pride in you with glory.
The summit of dignity is Aurès,
A rock that overflowed with enthusiasm for the world.

The Aurès Mountain in this poetic excerpt emerges as a powerful and influential symbol of the Algerian Revolution. It is portrayed as a key icon representing heroism and resilience in the collective memory, reflecting the majestic presence of the Aurès Mountain, not merely as a

natural landmark but as an inspiring symbol of revolutionary struggle and the aspirations of the Algerian people. The mountain thus acquires meanings that transcend its geographical context to become an icon embodying defiance and dignity.

The poet personifies the Aurès Mountains as a land carrying stories of courage and sacrifice. By mentioning the "mountain slope," the poet alludes to a source of hope and a center of resistance. The mountain, with its solidity and steadfastness, transforms into a true embodiment of the values of bravery and perseverance that characterized the Algerian nation during the revolution.

Additionally, describing the mountain as the "summit of dignity" highlights how this geographical feature has become a symbol of pride and national identity. The poet expresses the Algerian people's pride in their cultural and historical heritage, reinforcing in the collective memory the image of Aurès as a stronghold of freedom. The Aurès is also depicted as an "eye upon the mountain slope," imbuing it with a sacred and honorable quality, enhancing its value as a vital symbol in the struggle against colonialism. The phrase "You know well that Aurès takes pride in you with glory" points to the deep connection between the mountain and the revolutionaries, reinforcing the symbolic image of Aurès as a symbol of honor, pride, and perseverance.

In this way, this icon redefines the collective memory and preserves its meanings and values, reflecting the poet's ability to give voice to the mountain and transform it into a symbol of national identity. The Aurès becomes an eternal icon, its echo resonating in the hearts of future generations.

The victories of the Aurès Mountain have traveled to "Palestine," where they are immortalized in the verses of the poet Raja Al-Sabeen, who celebrated the Aurès, saying ([Al-Jarari, p. 230](#)):

Oh Aurès, I am a poet,
Wolves of men have seized my rights,
My people were displaced by gangs
That came to my land from across the seas.
Yet I see no victory, although
It appeared on the horizon, bright and beautiful.

The poet begins his verses by addressing the Aurès Mountains, highlighting its status as a symbol of resilience and defiance. By saying, "Oh Aurès, I am a poet," he affirms his role as a link between historical memory and artistic expression, using poetry as a medium to document collective experiences and events.

The phrase "Wolves of men have seized my rights" points to the injustice inflicted by the enemy, depicted as "wolves," which caused the displacement and exile of the people. This powerful imagery reflects feelings of weakness and displacement, further reinforcing the collective memory of the suffering endured by the people.

These images convey the harsh reality faced by the poet and his people, emphasizing the challenges and hardships they encounter. Despite this suffering, the poet still clings to hope in Aurès, as expressed in the line "Yet I see no victory, although it appeared on the horizon, bright and beautiful." This line captures his profound optimism and belief in the eventual achievement of victory, even though it may seem distant. The Aurès thus becomes a symbol of hope, aspirations for liberation, and ultimate triumph, continuing to inspire courage in the face of difficult circumstances.

Through these verses, the Aurès transforms from a mere mountain into a poetic icon that embodies struggle and resistance. It evolves from a painful memory into a living symbolic structure that inspires future generations. This dynamic shows how poetry can play a pivotal role in shaping national consciousness and preserving historical memory.

4.2 Freedom in Arabic Poetry: A Journey to the Heart of the Algerian Revolution

Freedom has long been one of the most critical issues occupying human thought, regarded as a supreme value that reflects humanity's awareness that "freedom forms the essence of dignity and existence, as well as the essence of humanity in all times and places (Qamihah, 1981, p. 193)." Freedom has always been intertwined with sacrifice and struggle, as poets viewed it as a manifestation of the sacrifices made by heroes who gave their lives to achieve independence. Freedom also serves as a motivational element in poetry, encouraging the masses to continue resisting occupation and achieving the revolution's goals. Poets use the notion of freedom to emphasize that the hope for liberty can be a powerful force driving people to sustained struggle, inspiring them to work for change.

Freedom became one of the central icons in Arabic poetry about the Algerian Revolution, symbolizing continuous struggle and national aspirations. It stands out as a key symbol of the revolution and a profound human value in Arabic literature. An example of this can be found in a poem by Egyptian poet Hassan Fathy El-Bab, titled "The World and Freedom - A Song to Algeria," where he writes (Fath Al-Bab, 2005, pp. 38-39):

Oh, what joy embraces the universe,
Breaths panting,
A history ablaze.
Yet, the lovers of freedom
Still tread through darkness,
For freedom
Remains a dream.

In this text, freedom is portrayed as a profound and influential symbol within the context of the Algerian Revolution, reflecting the tension between hope and the ongoing challenges. Freedom emerges as a joyful icon that embraces the universe, bringing with it the radiant winds of history, symbolizing moments of victory and progress. However, the lovers of freedom continue to face significant challenges, remaining in the darkness that obstructs the realization of their aspirations.

This contrast between the anticipated joy and the reality filled with challenges reflects the emotional tension felt by those struggling to achieve their goals in the face of great difficulties. It emphasizes that freedom is not merely a dream, but also an ongoing battle. The ambition to achieve it persists despite the obstacles, and this duality between the joy of seeing hope and the frustrating reality highlights the significance of freedom as a lasting symbol for revolutionaries, calling for continued struggle and determination to achieve the hope of a better life.

Iraqi poet Ahmed Matloub says (Al-Saadi, 2014, p. 66):

O people who have shaken the mountains,
Your victory is no longer a dream or fantasy.
Your free voice has risen and soared,
Filling the world with struggle and defiance.

In these verses, Ahmed Matloub embodies freedom as a central icon of the Algerian Revolution, expressing its strength and profound impact on the people. The people are depicted as the force that "shook the mountains," indicating that their struggle is not just a dream or fantasy but a tangible reality that has achieved concrete victories.

Freedom, as depicted in these lines, shows that the voice of freedom was neither silent nor marginalized; rather, it was a powerful and influential voice, rising to face challenges. This freedom, represented by the people's struggle and courage, embodies hope and the determination to achieve victory and change.

The affirmation that "your victory is no longer a dream or fantasy" signifies the transition from hope to accomplishment, where freedom has become a tangible reality and not just an idea. This strong link between freedom and struggle reinforces the status of freedom as a central symbol of the Algerian Revolution and highlights its role in motivating the people and achieving their goals. Thus, freedom appears in these lines as a symbol of the revolutionaries' realized dream and project, reflecting the power and influence of this symbol in shaping the course of the revolution and confirming the people's ability to fulfill their dreams and aspirations.

In conclusion, discussing freedom as an icon of the Algerian Revolution in Arabic poetry reveals that it embodies the spirit of struggle and hope that permeated the revolution and influenced the hearts of poets. Through poetry, freedom emerges as a powerful symbol of change and human aspirations, transcending the boundaries of hope to become a tangible reality, thereby enhancing its capacity to shape the course of the revolution and deepen the meaning of victory. This symbolism remains alive in literature, affirming that freedom is not merely a dream, but a noble goal achieved through the sacrifices and dreams of the revolutionaries.

5. Women and Revolution: Arabic Poems Narrating the History of Algeria

Throughout the history of revolutions, symbolism is not confined to military and political forces alone but extends to cultural and human symbols that embody the meanings of struggle and

change. Among these symbols, women emerge as a powerful and steadfast icon representing resistance and defiance, reflecting the nation's struggle and sacrifices as well as its aspirations for freedom and equality.

One of the female icons who became a shining symbol in the history of the Algerian Revolution is the freedom fighter Jamila Bouhired. Her strength and resilience transformed her into a symbol of hope and liberation, inspiring generations and immortalizing her in the collective memory as an icon of the revolution.

Jamila Bouhired holds a prominent place in Arabic poetry written about the Algerian Revolution. An example of this can be found in the verses of Nizar Qabbani, where he says (Yehiaoui, pp. 07-08):

You exhausted the sun, but you did not tire,
You whipped the executioner's guillotine,
A woman who bewildered the sun,
Wounded the dimensions of dimensions.

In these lines, Jamila Bouhired is portrayed as an icon of revolution and struggle in a radiant and impactful poetic image. The poet describes her as having "exhausted the sun, but you did not tire," symbolizing her courage and determination, which surpasses human strength. The sun, typically a symbol of energy and life, is here compared to Bouhired, signifying that her sacrifices and perseverance exceeded even the power of the sun itself.

In the phrase "you whipped the executioner's guillotine," her resilience and steadfastness in the face of oppression and torture are emphasized. The term "executioner's guillotine" serves as a symbol of the violence and repression she faced, while "whipped" conveys her ability to resist this violence without surrendering.

Overall, Jamila Bouhired stands out in these verses as a pure symbol of the Algerian Revolution, reflecting the willpower and resilience of Algerian women in the face of adversity. Nizar Qabbani's poetic talent immortalized her image as a powerful and enduring icon in both literary and revolutionary memory.

Arab poet Badr Shakir Al-Sayyab also uses the symbol of Jamila Bouhired, representing Algeria, revolution, and resistance, to lament the state of the Arab world—a space marked by enslavement, tyranny, and submission. However, he sees in the Algerian revolution the beginning of a solution to this reality, its encapsulation, and the melting of its ice and frost, as well as the revival of its death (Al-Wakal, 2020, pp. 06-07):

To Jamila Bouhired
Can you not hear it... Our voices
Are disappearing beneath the wind that carries
A door sealed with blood upon us
Who has died? Who mourns them? Who is being killed?
And in the darkness, we long to ask,

Who crucifies the bread we eat?
 We fear that if we bury our dead,
 Our living might be startled by what they see,
 As the cave they dwell in leaps forth.

Through these verses, the poet conveys a poignant call to Bouhired, questioning the extent of the pain and suffering endured by the people under the current oppressive conditions. The phrase "Can you not hear it... our voices disappear beneath the wind that carries" expresses the suffocation of revolutionary voices under the weight of oppressive forces, highlighting the harsh circumstances faced by the people. The closed doors, symbolized by the line "A door sealed upon us with blood," represent the barriers that obstruct the realization of hope and freedom, illustrating the people's inability to break the chains hindering their journey toward liberation.

The subsequent questions, "Who has died? Who weeps for them? Who is killed?" reflect the sorrow and fear of continued repression, while the line "In the darkness, we long to know who bakes the bread we eat?" conveys the daily suffering of the people, including hunger and scarcity of resources.

The verse "We fear that when we bury our dead, the living will be too frightened to see" expresses the fear of losing martyrs and the impact of that loss on the morale of the living, indicating the depression that grips society under the current situation. Similarly, the line "What if the cave they dwell in leaps up?" portrays the isolation and confusion felt by the people under repression.

Through the previous lines, Jamila Bouhired is depicted as a symbol of defiance and courage. Her symbolism lies in her ability to confront oppression and injustice, while continuing to be a beacon of hope and inspiration for revolutionaries. Even in the face of darkness and isolation, as described in the line "What if the cave they dwell in leaps up?", Bouhired remains a symbol of heroism and resilience.

In Saudi poet Saad Al-Buwardi's poem titled "Jamila", he writes ([Shams, p. 266](#)):

"Jamila"
 Who are you in my mind, O East?
 Jamila...
 A world
 Jamila...
 How much you are in the prisoner's mind,
 A world of heroism
 Your blood is a rose
 Your tears are perfume.

In these lines, the deep symbolism of Jamila Bouhired as a figure of heroism and hope in the face of colonial cruelty is highlighted. The poet addresses Bouhired with phrases that express his deep admiration for her, presenting her as a true symbol of dignity and bravery. When the

poet calls out to "Jamila," he speaks to an icon of revolutionary struggle. He asks, "Who are you in my mind, O East?" emphasizing how Bouhired represents an essential part of the collective memory and aspirations of the East, especially in the context of the Algerian Revolution.

The poet refers to her blood as "a rose" and her tears as "perfume," indicating how her suffering has transformed into symbols of purity and beauty. Her blood symbolizes noble sacrifices, while her tears represent resilience and pain, conveyed in a way that reflects beauty and revolution. In this way, the image of Jamila Bouhired transcends her role as a historical figure to become a timeless literary symbol.

6. November 1st: A Symbol of Struggle in Revolutionary Arabic Poetry

November 1st is a day etched into the annals of Algerian history, marking the beginning of the Algerian Revolution against French colonial rule. This pivotal date has been immortalized in Arabic poetry as a powerful symbol of resistance and freedom, becoming a strong emblem of the unbreakable spirit of the Algerian people and their ongoing determination for liberation. Many Arab poets have invoked this date to express their own struggles against oppression, occupation, and social injustice. As such, it has become a source of national pride and a powerful symbol of the nation's fight for independence, inspiring generations across the Arab world to continue the struggle for freedom and self-determination. Tunisian poet Othman Al-Kaak captures this spirit in his poem ([al-Kaak, pp. 106-108](#)):

That day, the first of November,
A day of great impact,
When every free man and woman rose,
To eradicate evil and remove harm,
From one end of the land
To the other.
A day when the chains were broken,
Hopes realized,
And the insistence on independence made clear.
Men and women rose,
Elders and children,
Tired of humiliation...
At midnight in the Aurès,
The first bullet was fired, roaring.
At the same moment, a bullet in beautiful Khenchela,
At the same moment, a bullet in the Kabylie,
In the mountain of Lalla Khadija, steadfast and migrating,
At the same moment, a bullet in the capital,
The first decisive strike.

These verses highlight the significance of November 1st as a symbol of the Algerian Revolution in Arabic poetry. The poem refers to a pivotal historical moment when the revolution erupted from various regions, reflecting the unity and solidarity of the Algerian people in their struggle

against colonialism. The reference to "every free man and woman," "men and women, elders and children" from all age groups and social classes confirms that the uprising's inception was collective, not limited to a particular group, showcasing the strength of national solidarity.

In the same context, the poet emphasizes different regions, such as "Aurès," "Khenchela," "Kabylie," and "the capital," illustrating the geographical diversity of the revolution. Each region played its distinct role, reflecting the comprehensiveness of the national struggle against colonialism.

Phrases like "breaking the chains" and "realizing hopes" allude to liberation from the shackles of colonialism and the achievement of independence. The line "the first decisive strike" underscores that this moment marked the actual and crucial beginning of the revolution, adding a dramatic tone to the events and reinforcing a sense of pride and belonging among the people. Overall, these verses embody the powerful symbolism of November 1st as an icon of the revolution, reflecting the national spirit and solidarity of the Algerian people in their fight for freedom.

7. The Algerian Flag: Echoes of Freedom in Revolutionary Arabic Poetry

The Algerian flag is considered a powerful symbol of the revolution in Arabic poetry, transcending its identity as merely a piece of fabric to become a manifestation of national identity and the struggle for freedom. It symbolizes the hopes and aspirations carried by the Algerian people throughout their long journey toward independence, reflecting a history filled with sacrifices and tragedies.

Often, the flag is used as a visual backdrop in poems that speak of resistance and bravery, serving as a marker of victory and dignity. It acts as a means of motivating and unifying the masses under a single banner, adding an emotional and aesthetic dimension to poetic expression. Through this usage, poets link the past with the present, emphasizing the importance of preserving the values of struggle and freedom. Palestinian poet Tamim Al-Barghouti, in his poem "Algerian Songs," praises the Algerian revolution, writing (Shams, p. 39):

Where can I find joy?
Our green flags are unfurled,
But yesterday, the green flag
Was not raised over the Aurès summit.
The star did not smile, and the crescent did not rejoice
Because it was at the theater,
Because it was in the bath,
Hope was blocked by bloody obstacles...

These lines begin with a rhetorical question expressing a longing for delayed joy. The poet highlights the sorrow and pain that prevailed in Algerian society at the time, before the success of the Algerian Revolution. He expresses his sadness and grief at not seeing the green Algerian

flag raised as a symbol of victory, and there were no signs of joy or celebration during that period.

The poet also points out that the green flag was not raised over Mount Aurès, and the stars and crescent did not reflect happiness because the country was in a state of war and struggle. These lines reflect the suffering and oppression experienced by the Algerian people during the revolution and their yearning for victory and liberation from French colonialism.

8. The Inspirers: The Echo of Algerian Revolutionaries in Arabic Poetry

The image of the revolutionaries in Arabic poetry serves as a vivid embodiment of the Algerian Revolution's manifestations, with many Arab poets seeking to express the heroism and sacrifices made by these revolutionaries in their fight against colonialism. Often, revolutionaries are depicted as figures who embody the highest values of freedom and justice, representing the collective spirit of sacrifice, defiance, and determination to confront oppression. Poets have captured their experiences and struggles in their verses to create a sense of empathy and devotion to the national cause.

Poets also aimed to inspire new generations by recalling the bravery of the revolutionaries, emphasizing the importance of remembering and learning from the history of resistance. This connection between generations transforms revolutionaries into living symbols, reflecting the national spirit and the necessity of defending rights. An example of this can be found in the words of Libyan poet Hassan Ghaleb ([Al-Jarari, p. 73](#)):

The people of Algeria, truly enraged,
Have risen to reclaim their stolen rights.
The people of Algeria are noble and brave,
Facing hardships to achieve their goals.
They do not yield without fulfilling their dreams,
Even if it means drinking cups of death and calamity.
France, you will surely return to reason,
And if not, we will show you wonders.
We will turn you into fuel for hellfire,
For we are the fire, and you are the wood.

The verses begin by affirming the anger of the Algerian people and their uprising to reclaim their stolen rights. The use of the word "anger" conveys a sense of provocation and rejection of injustice, emphasizing the collective sentiment that propelled the revolutionaries to fight. In this context, the poet portrays the people as a unified force of courage and resolve, armed with noble values in their pursuit of fulfilling their ambitions. The depiction of the people as "noble and brave" reflects their strength and willingness to sacrifice. The poet highlights the courage of the revolutionaries as they face challenging battles "to achieve their goals," illustrating their determination to succeed despite the difficulties.

The third verse reflects the people's persistence in refusing to surrender, showing their commitment to perseverance in the pursuit of their dreams, even if the outcome is painful. This is evident in the phrase "cups of death and calamity," which underscores the suffering faced by the revolutionaries while simultaneously affirming their resolve to continue.

In the fourth verse, the poet invokes the image of "France" as a symbol of colonialism, demanding its return to reason, expressing a clear challenge. He implies that failure to heed this call will lead to dire consequences. The phrase "for we are the fire, and you are the wood" serves as a striking embodiment of power and control, transforming the conflict into a state of direct confrontation. The poet depicts the revolutionaries as the force that will inflict harm on colonialism. This image reflects the ability to transform suffering into strength, reinforcing their symbolism as icons of struggle. Thus, the elements of strength, courage, and defiance in these lines make the revolutionaries a living symbol of the Algerian Revolution, reflecting their collective spirit and unwavering will in the face of injustice.

In other verses, Lebanese poet Ibrahim Haoui says in his poem "Land of Heroes: ([Shams, p. 39](#))"

Blessed are you, O free land of Algeria,
Arab in words and deeds.
Blessed are you, O land of Algeria, soil
That nurtures heroes and generations.
Land of the brave, no storm has touched you
From the intertwined bounty of your downpour.
A land that, like a son without brothers,
Is the miracle of the world, without dispute.

These verses express pride and belonging to the land of Algeria and highlight the revolutionaries as prominent icons in the history of resistance. The poet begins by saluting the land of Algeria, praising its freedom and Arab identity, reflecting the national pride embodied in the image of the revolutionaries who defended it.

The phrase "Blessed are you, O free land of Algeria" emphasizes the value of freedom as a fundamental element of national identity. The poem evokes the soil, symbolizing life and fertility, which is reflected in the line "nurtures heroes and generations," pointing to the role of the land as a source that produces revolutionaries. This adds a sacred dimension to the land and enhances the symbolism of the revolution.

In the third verse, the poet refers to "the land of the brave," highlighting qualities of courage and pride, portraying the revolutionaries as heroes who confront challenges. The phrase "no storm has touched you from the intertwined bounty of your downpour" indicates that Algeria is not just a land of resources and wealth but a place where the people's struggle is realized, suggesting that these blessings arise from sacrifice and determination. The final verse speaks of Algeria's ability to achieve miracles, saying, "It is the miracle of the world, without dispute." This depiction praises the people's capacity to resist and succeed

despite challenges, underscoring that revolutionary achievements are not coincidental but the result of the sacrifices made by the heroes who fought for their homeland's freedom. These verses reinforce the image of the revolutionaries as true symbols of heroism and bravery, highlighting their role as an integral part of Algerian identity, making them icons that reflect the spirit of struggle in Arabic poetry.

9. Poems of Arabism: The Arab Nation at the Core of the Algerian Struggle

Arab poets used symbols of the Algerian Revolution as a means to highlight larger national issues related to dignity, freedom, and sovereignty. For them, Algeria embodied the broader struggle between East and West, between colonized peoples and colonial powers. They depicted Algeria as an inseparable part of the Arab nation and linked its struggle with that of other Arab peoples fighting colonialism. This sense of national unity reinforced the idea of Arab solidarity, where Algeria became a mirror reflecting the aspirations of all Arabs for independence and liberation. The revolution thus transcended being a local event, becoming a symbol of widespread Arab liberation, giving it a dimension that surpassed the geographical scope of Algeria.

Furthermore, the Algerian Revolution in Arabic poetry was portrayed as a revival of Arab identity, with poets emphasizing the cultural and historical bonds among Arab nations. Their poems often used symbolic imagery, such as "land," "people," and "martyrs," to strengthen the sense of national belonging.

In his poem *"The Precious Blood,"* Iraqi poet Muheiddin Al-Fuad writes about Algeria and its revolution (Shams, p. 38):

The day of Algeria... will be inscribed for eternity,
With blood...
Spilled, and countless traces sought,
With the blood of Arabism...

The Arab nation emerges as a central icon embodying the revolutionary spirit in poetry linked to the Algerian Revolution. This icon expresses the unity and collective identity of the Arab nation, where the Algerian Revolution transcends being a mere local uprising to become part of a broader Arab nationalist project.

The use of "the blood of Arabism" in the verses reflects the identification of Algeria's struggle with that of the entire Arab world. The blood spilled is not only the blood of Algerians but the blood of all Arabs, reinforcing the concept of Arab solidarity in the face of colonialism. In this way, the Arab nation is depicted as a single body, united by shared suffering and common hopes for freedom and independence. The blood "spilled" suggests that the Arab nation is willing to make great sacrifices to preserve its dignity.

In other verses, the poet Hassan Abdullah Al-Qurashi, in his poem *"Sacred Struggle,"* says (Al-Qurashi, 1964, p. 215):

Tariq has returned, and so has Al-Samh for conquest,
 The mountains and slopes echoed with song,
 And good tidings rejoiced, along with ambitious hope,
 For on the Atlantic, our dawn is rising.

In these lines, the poet evokes great historical Arab figures such as Tariq ibn Ziyad and Al-Samh ibn Malik Al-Khawlani, embodying the idea of the Arab nation as an icon of revolution and struggle. These historical figures represent symbols of pride and victory, and their invocation in the context of the revolution enhances the heroic dimension of contemporary struggles, such as the Algerian Revolution (Al-Saadi, 2014, p. 14).

Sudanese poet Omar Al-Siddiq says:

You illuminate the Arabs' path in the dark night,
 Revealing the secrets of their troubled ancestors,
 And you call the people to rise in the battle,
 As their long slumber in the sleepless night continues.

In these verses, the poet depicts the Arab nation as a revolutionary and inspiring force, seeking to awaken the Arabs from their long slumber and guide them toward the restoration of their former glory. The nation is portrayed as a beacon that lights the way for the Arabs during times of darkness, revealing to them the secrets of their glorious past to draw strength and inspiration in facing contemporary challenges.

Poet Suleiman Al-Issa says (Shams, p. 50):

It is my nation, spreading its wings,
 The face of history is the dawn of revolution.
 The generation's event is the return of the knight,
 Who has entered the field after a long absence.
 Do not ask me about him; just look, and you will see
 The stars like jewels on the wings of the eagle.
 Do not ask me...my vanguard fills the horizon,
 As if the sky were just part of the expanse.
 Do not ask me...my Algeria has perfumed
 History with the scent of a handful of its soil.
 It is my nation returning to the shore,
 A prophet...a verse from the Book.

In these verses, the Arab nation is depicted as a living force, regaining its greatness after a long absence. The phrase "spreading its wings" signifies the nation's readiness to soar once again, to break free and move toward a bright future. Here, the nation is not merely a static historical idea but a living entity capable of movement and liberation from the shackles that have bound it for centuries.

The phrase "the face of history is the dawn of revolution" places the nation at the center of historical events. The poet views the contemporary Arab renaissance, including the Algerian Revolution, as a moment of radical change and transformation in the nation's trajectory, turning the revolution into a pivotal historical point. The revolution elevates the nation from merely being a witness to history to becoming a maker of history.

The phrase "the return of the knight" symbolizes the restoration of the power and dignity that the nation lost over time. The knight represents the leaders and heroic figures who guide the nation toward glory, while his absence symbolizes the periods of defeat and weakness the nation has experienced. His return signifies the revival of the Arab spirit. The line "the stars like jewels on the wings of the eagle" evokes grandeur and sovereignty, with the eagle representing strength and dominance, while the stars signify the lofty ambitions and great hopes accompanying the nation's rise. The poet thus connects the earth and sky, elevating the nation to a transcendent level, making it a symbol that transcends reality and reaches the realm of myth, becoming a revolutionary and spiritual message to the world. These verses combine a revival of the glorious past with a vision for a bright future. The Arab nation emerges as a living symbol of revolution, drawing strength from its history and offering the world a new message of hope and freedom.

10. Conclusion:

In conclusion, the following results can be noted:

- The revolution is a multidimensional phenomenon that goes beyond being a historical event, combining political, social, and cultural transformations. Revolutions reflect the people's desire for change and freedom, making them effective tools for reclaiming rights and reshaping identities. Understanding this phenomenon requires a comprehensive perspective that integrates both historical and cultural factors.
- The deep connection between revolution and poetry lies in their shared reflection of the people's aspirations for freedom and change. Through this relationship, poetry becomes the guardian of the revolution's memory, going beyond mere documentation to shape collective consciousness and immortalize the values of struggle by portraying human experiences and contributing to the sustainability of values like freedom and justice.
- The icons of the Algerian Revolution in Arabic poetry strengthen the sense of national unity, linking Algeria's struggle with that of other Arab nations, thereby reflecting Arab solidarity against colonialism.
- Historical and revolutionary symbols play a central role in shaping collective identity. Poets evoke revolutionary figures to enhance the spirit of resistance and national pride.
- November 1st stands as a symbol of rebirth and hope, used to express aspirations for freedom and dignity, motivating determination and driving resistance.

- The use of revolutionary symbols demonstrates the ability of Arab poets to convey emotions of anger and hope, making poetry an effective tool for expressing social and political transformations in the Arab world.
- The depiction of Algerian revolutionary icons in Arabic poetry reflects the continuity of struggle, portraying them as models to be emulated in the broader Arab pursuit of liberation, thereby contributing to shaping a forward-looking vision for change.
- The Arab nation emerges as a central icon in revolutionary poetry, where poetic texts transform it from a mere geographical concept to a living embodiment of collective identity, transcending local boundaries to become a symbol of shared struggle and a tool for shaping collective awareness around concepts of freedom and dignity.

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