

2010 - 2024



POETRY & WRITING

FREE ONLINE MAGAZINE FROM VILLAGE EARTH

JANUARY 2024

The cover artwork is a cosmic scene featuring a large, colorful crescent moon in the center. The moon's interior is a deep blue, while its outer rim shows a gradient of yellow, orange, and red. It is set against a dark, starry background with a vibrant, multi-colored nebula or galaxy in the lower left, displaying shades of blue, green, and orange. A faint, dark, angular shape is visible behind the moon.

DR. SALWA GOUDA
*The Image of Gaza
in Arabic Literature*

COVER ARTWORK TITLED 'ECLIPSE' BY IRISH ARTIST EMMA BARONE



©Mark Ulyseas

Photograph by Mark Ulyseas.



SUPPORT LIVE ENCOUNTERS. DONATE NOW AND KEEP THE MAGAZINE LIVE IN 2024

Live Encounters is a not-for-profit free online magazine that was founded in 2009 in Bali, Indonesia. It showcases some of the best writing from around the world. Poets, writers, academics, civil & human/animal rights activists, academics, environmentalists, social workers, photographers and more have contributed their time and knowledge for the benefit of the readers of:

Live Encounters Magazine (2010), *Live Encounters Poetry & Writing* (2016), *Live Encounters Young Poets & Writers* (2019) and now, *Live Encounters Books* (August 2020).

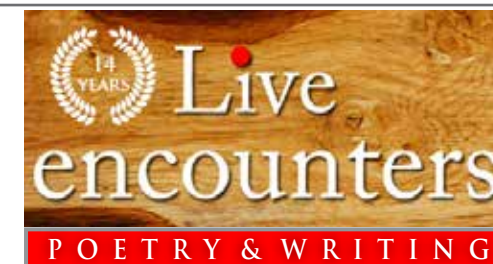
We are appealing for donations to pay for the administrative and technical aspects of the publication. **Please help by donating any amount for this just cause as events are threatening the very future of Live Encounters.**

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

Mark Ulyseas
Publisher/Editor

[Donate](#)

All articles and photographs are the copyright of www.liveencounters.net and its contributors. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the explicit written permission of www.liveencounters.net. Offenders will be criminally prosecuted to the full extent of the law prevailing in their home country and/or elsewhere.



JANUARY 2024

CONTRIBUTORS

DR SALWA GOUDA – GUEST EDITORIAL
AHMAD AL-SHAHAWY
ABDEL WAHAB AL-MELAWEH
AHMED NABAWI
AICHA BASSERY
ALI AL SHALAH
AL-MOTHANNA ALCHEIKH ATIAH
AZIZ AZRHI
AZMI ABDEL WAHAB
CHAWKI BAZIH
FATHI ABDEL SAMEE
GAMAL AL-QASSAS
MAHMOUD DARWISH
MOHAMED HOSNI ELIWA
MOHAMMED AL-KAFRAWY
MU'IN TAWFIQ BSEISO
SALEH LABRINI
SHERIF KANDIL
TARIQ HASHEM
ZÊREVAN OSÊ
ZUHAIR ABU SHAYEB

Salwa Gouda is an Egyptian literary translator, critic, and academic at the English Language and Literature Department at Ain-Shams University. She holds a PhD in English literature and criticism. She received her education at Ain-Shams University and California State University in San Bernardino. She has published several academic books, including "Lectures in English Poetry, and "Introduction to Modern Literary Criticism" and others. She has also contributed to the translation of "The Arab Encyclopedia for Pioneers," which includes poets and their poetry, philosophers, historians, and men of letters, under the supervision of UNESCO. Additionally, her poetry translations have been published in various international magazines.

DR SALWA GOUDA THE IMAGE OF GAZA IN ARAB CONSCIENCE

When I started writing this editorial, I asked myself, "What more can I say about Gaza than has not already been said?" It is the subject of innumerable books, articles, poems, and dissertations written in all the languages of the world. For the Arabs, Gaza has a great importance. It is one of their most beloved cities. The name 'Gaza' comes from the word ghazwa in Arabic, which carries the meaning of strength. Gaza has had several other names given to it throughout history, including "hazani." It is a Canaanite word of Canaanite origin, "Gaza Hashem," and it refers to the people of Hashim bin Abd Manaf, the grandfather of the Prophet Muhammad. The Hebrews called it "Gaza," the ancient Egyptians called it "Ghazatu and Ghadtu," and the Persians called it "Hazanot," which means treasure. But it is in the hearts of everyone in the Arab and Islamic world, 'Gaza,' the Palestinian Arab.

Gaza is a coastal city located south of the eastern coast in the Mediterranean Sea, and it is the largest Palestinian sector with a population of about two million people, according to its last census in 2023. The city was founded by the Canaanites in the fifteenth century BC. Due to its high economic status, it was occupied by many invaders, including the Romans, Byzantines, and the English. Muslims entered the city in the year 635 AD. In addition to its antiquity because it is among the oldest cities in the world, it has something that distinguishes it from the rest of the cities of Palestine, it is where the grave of Hashim bin Abd Manaf, the second grandfather of the Prophet Muhammad bin Abdullah, is located. This is why it was called "Gaza Hashim." It is also the birthplace of Imam Al-Shafei's 767 AD who is a prominent figure for Muslims.



Dr Salwa Gouda

The Gaza Strip, a siege area with an area of 365 square kilometers, whose people suffer from life in poor conditions of violence and restrictions imposed whether on land, air or sea. It suffers from multiple crises, and all its rights have been violated by the occupation since 1948. The civilian population of the Gaza Strip has been subject to sanctions and forced displacement from their homes for decades.

Moreover, Gaza is not only a symbol of resistance, diaspora, and exile but also a source of inspiration for Arab poets and thinkers who devoted much of their lives and careers calling for its freedom from occupation. There is a huge tradition of Arabic literary texts written about Palestine.

Edward Said was considered one of the Palestinian intellectuals who presented the Palestinian issue on a large scale in the West, and although his proposals were understood within a comprehensive framework in terms such as imperialism, colonialism, post-colonialism, and Orientalism, he was in the end one of those who led the world to a new understanding of the issue. He said in his summary of the self, the truth, and the time that he lived between homeland and exile, *"I am Palestinian, but I was expelled from it since childhood, and I lived in Egypt without becoming Egyptian. I am Arab, but not Muslim, and I am Christian, but Protestant, and my first name is "Edward," even though my surname is Said which means happy in Arabic."*

Mahmoud Darwish also propagated for the freedom of Palestine all over the world through poetry. He had no other weapon except his talent with words. In 1984, he wrote: "The earth is narrowing us down, cramming us into the last aisle," and he continued:

*And we saw the faces of those who
Would throw our children away
From the windows of this final space
There are mirrors that our star will polish
Where do we go after the final frontier?
Where do birds fly
After the last sky?*

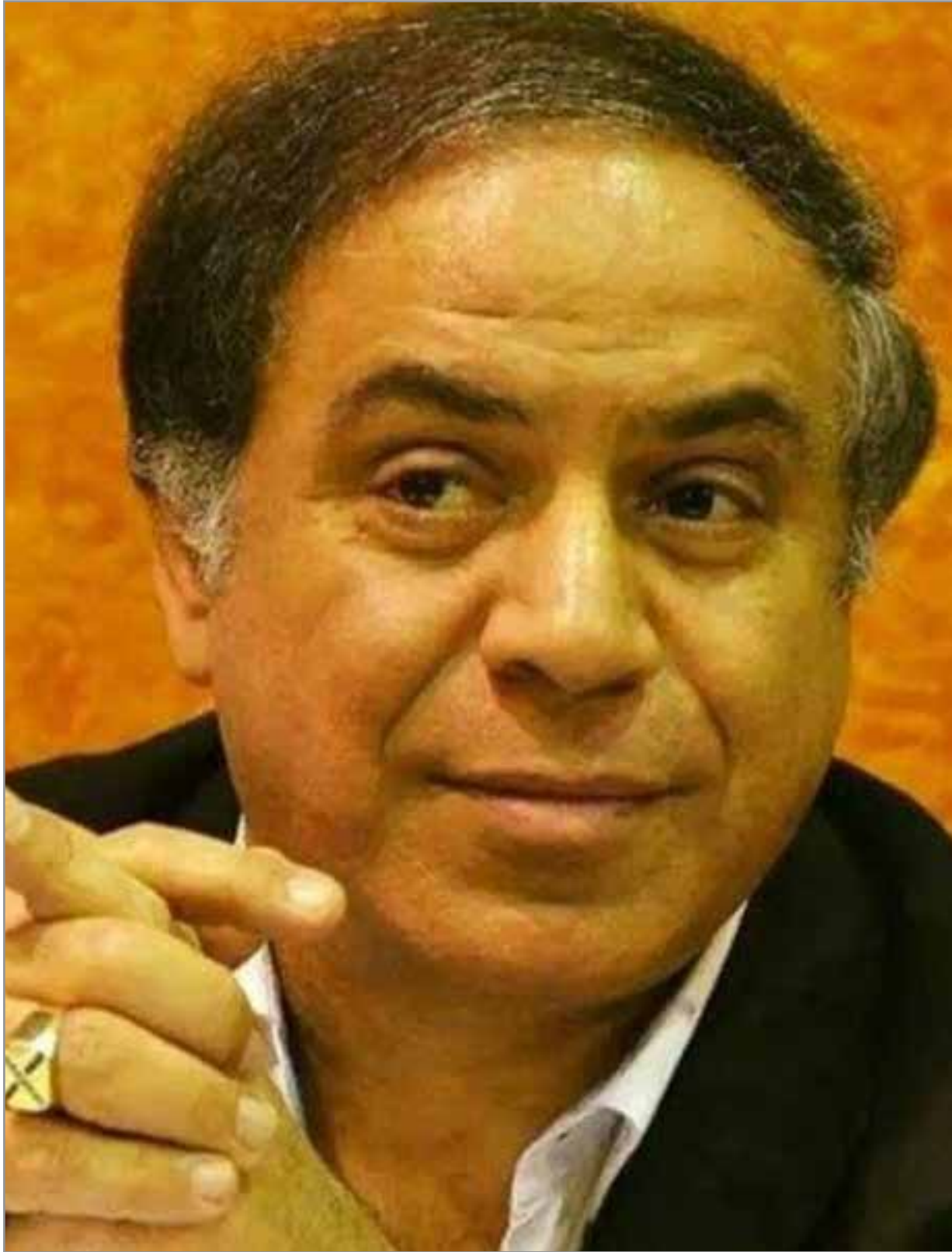
Why this issue, which contains the poems of twenty Arab poets about Gaza?

I felt that I should do something with the only talent for communication that I have: translation. The voice of poetry should be heard. It is not only the responsibility of politicians and armies; the soft power of art also paves the way for peace. I would like to ensure that the issue of Gaza is not an Arab or Middle Eastern dilemma, but it questions the essence of our humanity. Our humanity is at risk as we all belong to one human civilization, and we are all responsible.

This editorial is written with uncontrolled tears. What should I write more about Gaza? The fearful sounds of bombing innocent people echo in my heart. What should I write? The screams of the children deafen the ears of the universe. No sound will prevail above the symphony of the murdered citizens of Gaza. But I should write not as an Arab belonging to this area but as a human being and scholar who should have a role to play in eradicating this turmoil of violence, hatred, and deaths.

We are born for life, not for death and bombs; born for taking our turn in the construction of life, not for demolishing it. People in Gaza need to see their kids grow up in front of their eyes, like all parents in the world, not to bury them in a war that they have not decided and are not responsible for. They are born for new possibilities, music, poetry, dreams, and love.

Ahmad Al-Shahawy is an Egyptian poet and author of more than 20 books and poetry collections. His poems have been translated into many languages including French, Italian, English, Turkish and Spanish. He participated in many international poetry festivals organized in many countries of the world. Al-Shahawy was also the recipient of UNESCO literature award in 1995, and Cavafy Poetry award in 1998. Four of his literary works are nominated in the long list of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award in the branch of literature including his novel *The Magician's Hijab* 2022. Also recently, Lavender Ink / Diálogos published Al-Shahawy's poetry anthology entitled *Alone by the Nile*, 2023



I AM CALLED WITH THE THIRD PERSON

I did not write my biography
On the walls.
I did not write in the pamphlets
Where I live.

I do not know my residence
I no longer have any kind
Of pens in my pocket
As if time stole it from me.

I lived ignorant of numbers And letters
I waged a war against oblivion
The mirage deceived me on the road
And I see no water on the horizon
As if the dove left me.

The margin has become mine After I was the boss of absurd
And crawling on the belly
In dreams
Drawing empty faces.

I do not compete with
The air in its suffocation
I am in the bottom, looking for Faces that left me.

I have no luck, no life

I will live like this
Not knowing who I am
Nor those who are inhabiting me.

continued overleaf...

Ahmad Al-Shahawy

I will not blame death if
It comes early
I will not blame the missed
Opportunities
I will live what is left in the Abyss of nothingness
I will keep my coffins close to home.

I left the world in black That did not ride with me
Or revealed secrets it has kept for me.

I hesitate in erasing and writing And in painting music black
And I am afraid that my name will
Be put under words I do not know.

I am called by the third person
And I lost myself in a war that
I did not enter
I was fighting it alone
But the street forfeited me.

I have started sewing fire
With unseen needles
For a fibreless cloth

I lost the key
And I do not control myself now.

I am trapped in the hand of the world
The night did not help me
And only music had mercy on me (The world mocks at it)
I was a companion to its scales
In the street.

I am sewing words that could not be Interpreted.
And there is no point to explain
Its purpose at night.

Screams running through my head
And no pity from those in it.

Black hallucination
And an auction set up forever
But nothing is sold
And an incomplete history that I carry
On my back
My escape is in muzzling silence
And in sheltering my mind from their curtains.

People like me will not cut off his hand
Will not drink poison
Will not prevent an eye from Drinking water
Will not carry weapons

Will not die under the sun like
A mad poet
Will not lock the door of
The house on him
Will not allow a woman to
Charm him at night
Will not enter a cage unless he willed
And will not burn what he writes
For the sake of an unsolvable equation.

Abdel Wahab Al-Melaweh (1961) is a Tunisian poet, translator, and novelist who has published more than ten poetry collections, two novels, and several critical studies.



SOUTH OF SPEECH

That path knows us well
 The distance between the jump and the bottom of the gutter
 The distance between the ink and what the white Objects imagine
 The similarity between the aid shed of the Arab and The last supper
 The tear of the jugular vein to hang the wash of the Mirage
 Fragments of the soul traps illusion
 The matter is not related to loss
 It is not related to our sorrows either
 Funerals will pass through our blood and fires will also pass.

It does not matter
 There is a cactus growing in the house
 Boys are celebrating the metaphysics of death
 It is okay and there's nothing wrong
 It is the habit of strangers to check the pulse of the sidewalk
 with the glow of wine's sighs
 Leave death to grow beautifully among us and pass Near the river
 and the water will give you
 The secret of its prophecy
 Leave your worries or concerns to him
 Let him spoil the walk of the air

Prepare feasts for us at a crossroads in the country In the name of the soil
 Due to the chaos of leaving for a homeland
 That is the first crossroads
 Stop worrying about us
 You have our patience;
 And
 We have the salt of our ordeal!
 We are going
 The darkness of the air illuminates the remaining paths for us

continued overleaf...

Abdel Wahab Al-Melaweh

Time has spoiled
 We have nothing to do with words
 Our sadness will occupy us on the road
 The wind will disturb us
 We would not arrive now or in two days
 Access does not matter
 It does not matter if our brothers unite against us
 We have other concerns
 And we have no other reason to stay
 What remains push us outside the spirit
 Outside our bodies

Outside the traitorous cities
 We are going out into a state of melancholy Drunkard with longing
 To a country that ends as a flower in the morning
 And grows as freedom in the evening

We will pass the absence of silence
 Preceded by the dream of the martyr's dawn
 And the chaos of climbing the mountain of desires
 And laughter precedes us
 And our children's feasts
 And cypress battalions overlook eternity
 We pass through the night, a wound that glows from Our nakedness
 They all left us here at death's crossroads
 We know that going to war means giving up ink Love, and sea
 What about us and love
 What did the poem's question add to the blood
 Yesterday
 The wave took off his coat and walked with us
 We did not say we were going
 We have two enemies in the country that Complement us
 One possesses our conduct with the stick of custom
 Another takes away our pride

And our glow with the hand of fear
 We did not go
 But we are incapable of dreaming

We follow a shadow without hope
 We have a future in the maze
 The river knows its springs in us
 Despite the walls of fire around us
 And the blindness of truth
 The storms are here
 - in the south -
 It is the compass
 Out of time behind stillness
 Description of neutrality/
 The road to neighing is long
 And we need to arrive early in the morning so that The dew is with us
 Before the sun extinguished the glow of his cheers
 The wandering birds can now go beyond the Distance of this sky
 With the wings of pain so that the color of the air Can be freed
 From ready-made boxes
 And from the traitorous cities

Out of fear
 Through the last passage into a cloud
 The heart imprisoned the light of her hands
 For fear of killing its worn out rhythm by the night
 What's the matter with us and love
 We have nothing to do with battles made by emotion
 We are going to the end of the road
 The afterlife of the impossible
 To a direction in the distance between the threads of rain and the lightnings of stone
 Come out of the sobbing of the Spirit within us
 We have left to you your Lord and His teachings
 Your Lord is not my Lord
 War has nothing to do with the unseen.

Ahmed Nabawi is an Egyptian poet and academic. He deals with humanitarian themes in his poetry. His poetic career began early in the nineties. He has five collections of poetry: (Testimony of Love," "Wounds Have Tributaries," "Flames of Questions," "Scenes from the Refugee Camp" (The Flourishment of Colors), and two collections in print entitled (An Ant Said - The Doors). In addition, he has a collection of critical books, including The Poet's Culture and the Production of Significance - The Poetics of Small Details - The Contemplative Tendency in Andalusian Poetry - The Heritage Tributaries in Andalusian Poetry.



A LONELY CHILD IN THE CAMP

In the first day
Between the groans of the roads
He remained - panicked -
He shouts
He flounders around in weeping legs
He cries
Words come from his mouth
And he loses consciousness for a while
And he wakes up
To return to his first life

In the next day
He sat sad, contemplating
- Drink
He does not drink
- Eat
He does not eat

On the third day
Sadness did not flow on the roads
The earth did not rise
And the heavens did not cry
When a hoarse voice rose
He announces
That the screaming child
Died

Ahmed Nabawi

THE UNAVENGED BLIND WOMAN

I will not blame death if
 She sat
 On the hill of ashes
 She sat
 On the ruins of her village
 that
 The likes of it have not been mentioned
 - before -
 In the countries

She - in her village -
 Was living without noise or moaning
 Among good people
 Her hand is their hand
 Her step is their step
 And the brightness of her eyes that she lost
 was got
 From the light of their hearts

Time passed by
 And she did not feel it
 And trees of years grew on the horizon of her forehead
 In a village
 That fell in love with the hands of the farmers
 They lived in it
 They only know planting and harvesting
 They heard news of wars
 And their minds could not imagine - one day -
 That war will trample them

In a night
 They were preparing nostalgia
 And light up time
 Longing for ears
 It blew them away
 The wind of cannons and bombs
 And the screaming got louder
 Bodies flew
 And was crushed
 - Above those in it - the houses

And she woke up - terrified -
 The blind grandmother
 She called: ...
 No one heard
 She called: ...
 She often cried
 She extended her hands - in the space - in front of her
 And she considered her steps
 And she stumbled
 In her daughter's corpse
 That
 The smell of blood sprang from it
 She called: Hoda
 She called: ...
 The range answered her
 She screamed:
 She heard nothing but the echoing wail
 Then she remembered - immediately - her eyes
 And she held back the crying

And she walked
 She sat on the ruins
 of her village
 That
 The likes of it have not
 been mentioned - before -
 In the countries
 She sat
 On
 The hill of ashes.

Aicha Bassry is a Moroccan poet, novelist and storyteller. She published many novels and poetry collections. She won the International Prize for the Novel, Kateb Yassin (Algeria 2016) for the novel (Greta Garbo's Granddaughters), the Simone Landry Prize for Women's Poetry (Paris 2017) for her Diwan (The Bathers in Thirst), and the Prize for Best Arabic Novel for the year 2018 (Sharjah Exhibition - United Arab Emirates). Her books have been translated into English, French, Spanish, Italian and Turkish. She, also, participated in many Arab and international cultural events (book fairs, festivals, and conferences.)



LOVE IN TIMES OF WAR

She called him:

- Let me see you.

He replied:

- A lump of blood in my throat

I am not shaved

Nor is it worthy of your eyes

Perhaps, in the evening we will meet

She said:

The sky is iron, and bullets are jumping out of the windows

Where did you get this certainty in the evening?

Let me see you now

The sky may depart

And there will be no evening.

Aicha Bassry

THE WAY BACK IS ZERO DISTANCE

Where are you going now
And your feet have been torn by roads of no return?
To whom will you raise your head in supplication
As the sky is fragmented into mirrors that do not reflect anyone's soul?
To whom do you extend your drowned hand?
The sea took its ships and migrated
To die, there
Lonely
On the other side of the world
And the river left the city without permission
Who are you waving to?
The farewell napkins are heavy with the blood of the martyrs
Blood that draws a map that is not yet complete
And Joseph is still in the pit
Waiting for the caravan of strange Bedouins to cross
And you are still standing here like a palm tree
Carrying the rock of Sisyphus
Disturbing the graves of enemies
Ashaming their stinky souls
Just as they were alive guarding your bag with its seven exiles
Watching your hasty steps toward return
And planting pointed stones in your path
I am still here
Because their grudges have turned you into a statue made of diamond words
That haunt their collective grave
It reminds them of their lost wars
And that they are not and will never be anything else but
[Crossers in passing words].



©Mark Ulyseas

Photograph by Mark Ulyseas.

Ali Al-Shalah (1965) born in Babylon, Iraq. He obtained a BA in Literature from the College of Arts, University of Baghdad, 1987 and an MA in Modern Literature, Yarmouk University, Jordan, 1996. He also obtained a PhD in Philosophy and History, University of Bern, Switzerland, 2007. Furthermore, he published five poetry collections and five books on criticism. He was the Founder and President of many cultural institutions, events and festivals, including the following: The founder and president of the Swiss Arab Cultural Center in 1995 and Al-Mutanabbi International Cultural Festival in Switzerland in 2000, President of Babel House for Cultures, Arts and Media, with two branches in Baghdad and Babylon, 2003; the founder and President of the Babylon Festival for International Cultures and Arts 2010, Chairman of the Culture and Media Committee in the Iraqi Parliament in 2010; and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and President of the Iraqi Media Network 2014-2018.

HASHEM DRAWS LOVE IN GAZA

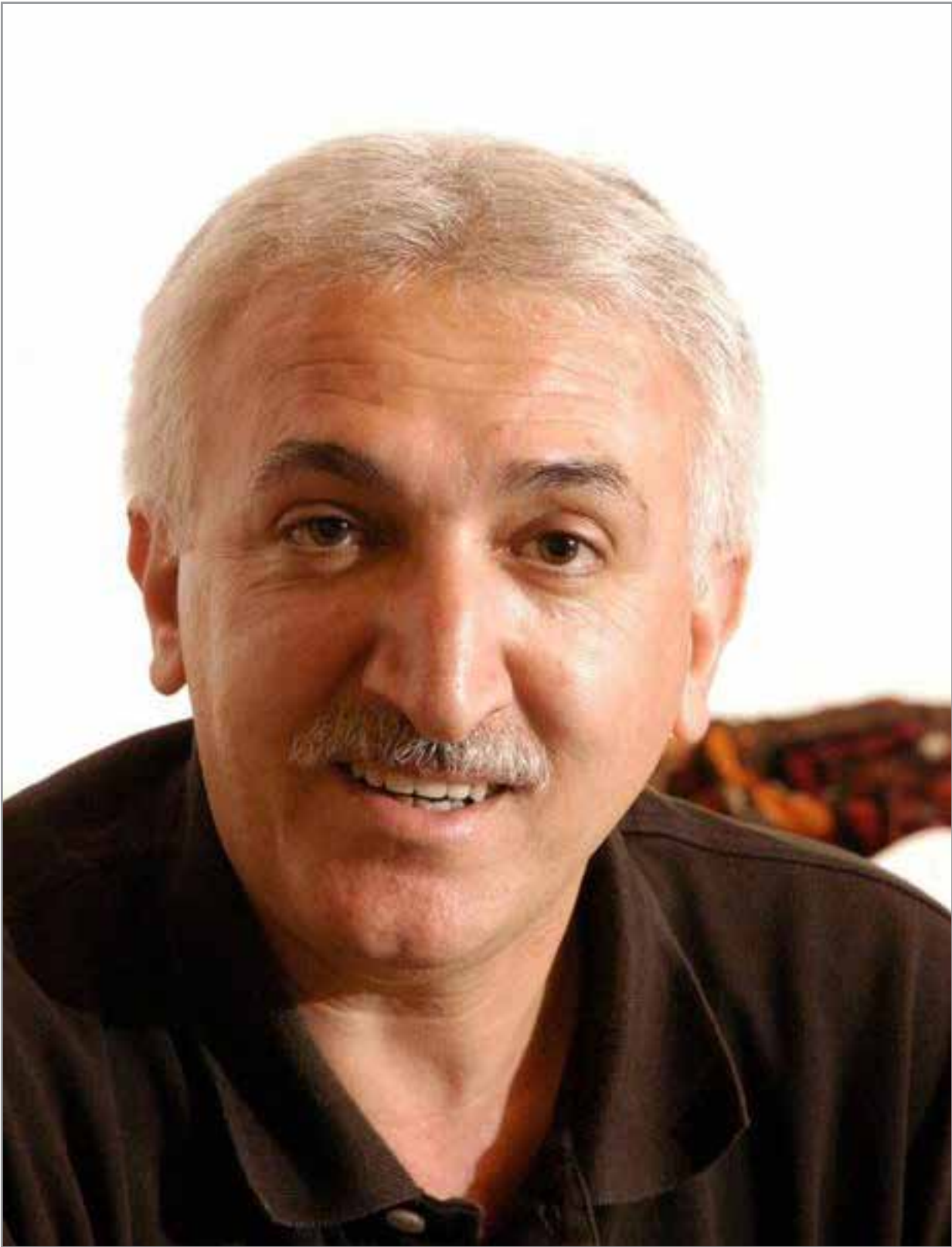
Hashem* closes his shrine and collects tears at its doors
And the legend of Judas sends its pirate of lies
He kills in the sketchbook the laughs of childhood
Hashem starts singing songs
He collects the shadow of masculinity in the Arab keffiyeh
Hashem is on the roads of desolation, singing and Sending his finger to the clouds
Peace be upon the seagulls of Gaza
A beach of tears
And a candle for the Jesus prayer
A thousand mothers come to help Gaza
And Gaza is asleep in the cloud of hymns, reciting Surat Maryam from the holy Quran
in the name of its return
Then rise
And the ravens of Jehu are transformed into locusts And terrifies them with songs
Hashem loves his Gaza and puts the pillow back under her tired ribs
Hashem writes Gaza as an icon for the last prayer
Peace be upon the doves of Gaza
Peace of men who come with the dawn, carried by the Ringtone of pride
Peace for the morning of youth, who rises from his death and
reads the books of Gaza
Hashem will not return to his resting place before the young people of Gaza’s homes
sleep



Ali Al-Shalah

**The shrine of Hashim bin Abd Manaf
(grandfather of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him) in Gaza.*

Al-Mothanna Alcheikh Atiah, a Syrian poet and novelist, was born in Deir ez-Zor - Syria in 1953. He graduated from the College of Agriculture in Damascus in 1980. He published a poetry collection for Dar Al-Haqiqat in Beirut under the title “Yes, there is More” in 1979, and a collection of poetry under the title “Mouth of The Rose” in 1989, and a novel under the title “Lady of the Kingdom” in 2006, from the Arab Foundation for Studies and Publishing in Beirut. In addition, he published a critical book under the title “The Poetic Rhythm of the Intifada” in 1990 from Dar Al-Aswar in Akka. He worked in journalism as managing editor for cultural affairs in Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper in 1984 and managing editor of the new Shahrazad magazine in Cyprus in 1990.



NO AVAIL

I am looking for the blind God who
Does not distinguish between the kind of flesh
At his dinner table
For the ancestors of his brother’s killer
For the neutral pimps on the sidewalks of the right and left
In tired cities
And for the foolish criminals of this war
To give them my special thanks
For arming me with the immunity to resist being killed by excessive emotions
From seeing children piling up dead every day
With faces disfigured with blood and stained with rubble dust
With crushed bodies and missing limbs
With limbs searching for bodies, they had imagined
That the names engraved on them, identify them
Children crowding
At my dinner table
In front of a television screen that keeps counting
Two, three, four, tens, hundreds
One thousand five thousand ten thousand
With massacres, massacres buried in the blossoms of oblivion
Children ascending in droves
From every deep hole dug by shells
They fall in pieces from the sky
Pieces, pieces, pieces, pieces, pieces, pieces
It provides me with the immunity of killing me
By the effect of their sharing
My cup of wine

Al-Mothanna Alcheikh Atiah

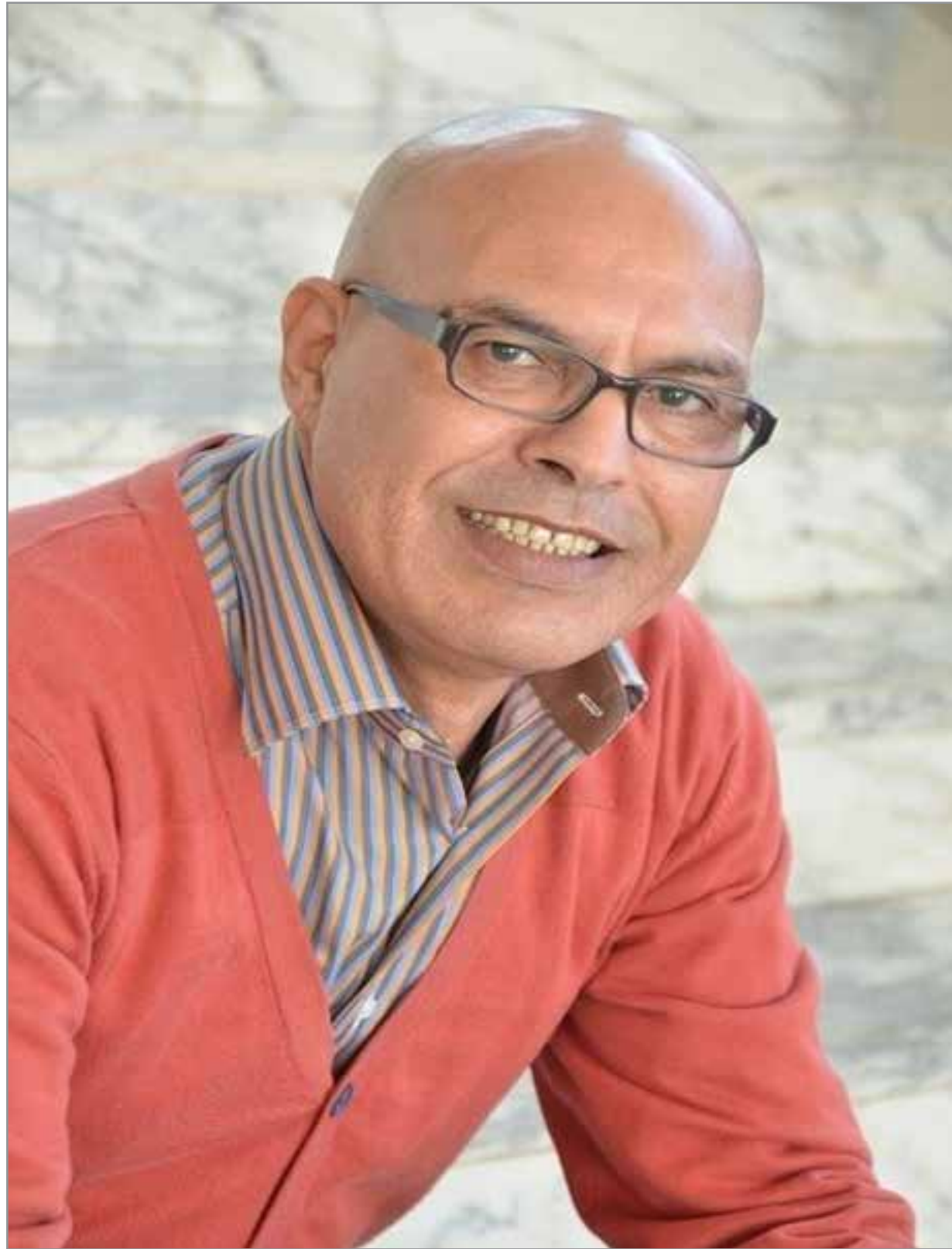
continued overleaf..

By their health from the error of safety
By their safety, which is no longer on the bids of murder
By thanking them for this effective vaccine
And their pollution of my tongue with the impudence of the question
Hey kids!
If you are
Likewise, like me, you were armed
With the affect of shells by your vision of me
I eat my dinner on the rhythm of aircraft bombing
They scatter
Your bodies
With your names
On my table



Photograph by Mark Ulyseas.

Aziz Azrhai (1965) is a Moroccan poet and visual artist. He published eight poetry collections. He, also, held several art exhibitions inside Morocco and outside. In addition, he is a member of the House of Poetry in Morocco and a former official in its executive office.



FUNERAL MARCH

"No one comes back from the war."

Just words flying in the air
With no causes
Its echo falls in the ear
Like a mine from a blacksmith
Like the hum of a machine
Kissing the goodness of marble.

And then since when was death -in batches-a
Joyful tournament?!!

Just a consolation that needs the feelings of a hyena
And to a heart torn from the concussion
Of mysterious moments.

The herd goes out towards the unknown
Loaded with fear and intentions
Each helmet is covered by a mountain of illusions
And a few words
The echo heals it.

Who's going to the picnic
Not like going to chills
And not the one who dresses with bullets
Like someone who distributes perfume
On those who rejoice with the smell.

Every throw of the dice
Is a fragile desperation in estimating coincidences.

continued overleaf...

Aziz Azrhai

This is how fortune unfolds
In the form of fatal surprise.

A little while ago I remembered the discs
The biographies of historians who are confident of the whiteness of inks
The legendary dead in books
and the medals
I remembered who left a fireplace
That flirts with its orphan wood
And who stood waiting for a giggle
Gloating over wrong corrections
And whoever is late for the embrace of defenseless people
Treated by the winds of the fifth
Then I remembered the mourners
And the handshakes that
The language metaphors lack.

It was a toxic exercise on endless follies.

In such sadness
Anchors become mere jungles
No one is safe from it:
Birds, raptors, reptiles
And jackals
They are just preys that dogs of the sniper disrupt its salvation.

Then what about the infiltrators into the despair of turmoil?
And what benefits those who retreat
On witches' amulets
At such a jingle?

There is a hand that draws for the footsteps its bitter disgrace
And joy is not possible
Other than what was planned for it
In the boards of the woodcutters.

In such weather
Remember that "no one comes back from war."
And you have nothing to do
Just avoid bliss with an open heart
And do not forget to sleep early
In the lap of bad colors.

You are now faced with an arsenal of the impossible
You treat problems with music
And forget the choir of those going
Towards the childhood of the storm.

Azmi Abdel Wahab is an Egyptian poet and journalist. He published eight collections of poetry, and his poems were issued in most Egyptian and Arab periodicals and newspapers. Moreover, his poetry is translated into more than one language, including English, French, and Persian. He, also, participated in many poetry conferences in the Arab world and won several awards from Egyptian cultural institutions.



THE KILLERS

Oh, my God
They look just like us!
Their hands move in the air as they walk
Their feet commit the same sins
Their eyes see what we see
There must be blood running through their veins
I am sure

They look just like us
They have wives whose clothes smell of cooking
And young children hiding juice boxes in their bags
Before going to school
And they say good morning to the neighbors
While crossing the street quickly
On the way to work
They must be happy and angry
For trivial reasons
exactly like us

One of them for sure
Flirts his co-worker
And he feels remorse
When he caresses his wife at night
I saw them a lot on screen
The words were coming out of their lips
Very normal
And if one of them is unable to express
He turns away with both hands
Sometimes violently
And more quietly

continued overleaf...

Azmi Abdel Wahab

They look just like us
They suffer from insomnia in the morning
And they fear the unknown
Whenever nightmares visit them
They do not sleep until morning
They wait for messages to arrive from far away people
To relieve them of the harshness of summer
In the lowlands
And wipe the noon stickiness from their foreheads

They look just like us
But they are hiding in shelters
When the sirens call them
While their relatives stuff planes with bombs
Bombs that do not mourn the crying of a child
Or an old man
Who mourns in silence
Their children write on rockets
Evening greetings to our children
Our children who the relief soldiers are looking now
For their remains under the beds
And the broken walls
Someone must be preparing dinner
With the same appetite
With which he burned houses
In a city where he did not sit in its cafes
I am sure
That fear eats his soul
When he tells his wife
About his anxious insomnia for two weeks of bombing
while watching on screen

Ghosts of his enemies
Pictures of a tired city
So she slept under the dark
For children talking about wars
Hiding behind their windows like spiders
So do not believe
The dust covering the faces of those soldiers
And the blood that flows from their fingers
And if you see on the screen their feet
Just believe
That they look like us
In defeat that eats the soul
You must know
That the hand that kills life there
Is the hand that raises the slogan here
That a small hand reached out from under the rubble
We give her a salty tear
To become our enemies?
Who look exactly like us!

Chawki Bazih (1951) is a contemporary Lebanese poet. He has dozens of books on poetry and prose, as well as critical, literary, cultural, and intellectual articles. He won the Okaz Poet Award in 2010 and the Al Owais Cultural Award in 2015. In addition, he received the Jumblatt Medal in 2010, the Palestine Medal in 2017, and the Special Honor Award at the Mahmoud Darwish Award for Culture and Creativity in March 2020.



PALESTINE

I would not talk about it
 To interpret what the clouds of suspicion leaked from the ambiguity of its terrain
 Or to lift metaphors from their sterility
 As it is broader than a nickname for a country
 And beyond what suspicions say
 And it is a buried alive land
 That reincarnates at the moment of revelation
 What it wants to be
 So I do not say its name
 To make up for its deficiency in incarnation
 With its straight yearning for completion
 Rather, to bandage his limbs with burns
 Those who entrusted her with the treasure of their dreams
 And let the teats of waterwheels write it by the burning of the gravel
 And those who have lost their speech with rattles
 And mothers write it with the light of their eyes
 As Palestine is farther away than the maps indicate
 Far beyond its glow in legends
 An opening to enter a world whose innocence has not been touched,
 And the turning of a people of refugees to their sanctuary, kneeling,
 And it is the concealment of hidden absence
 Beyond fields of sorrow
 And a place for small mountains to grow
 And the grass and the people
 Side by side
 And so that we can return to it if time comes
 So that we may protect with tears the jewels of its pains
 And float, even if by drowning, on the water of its lakes
 And heal the wounded forehead of the broken dust
 And plow it dead
 Even with the eyelids
 There are no countries that yearn at its Genesis

continued overleaf...

Chawki Bazih

In the book of sacred existence
 Unless it means Palestine
 There are no ruins of Andalusia
 lost in time
 And the brilliance of its beacons continued to penetrate thirsty
 In the depths of blood
 Except that means Palestine
 There is no tenderness of heart that two lovers exchanged
 On the altar of existence
 Except it means Palestine
 Palestine is not only a destination
 For Beauty to create a monument to itself
 From the marble of trouble
 Nor an excuse for dressing up a song with a fabricated screaming weeds
 In the facades of singing
 Nor is it purely geographical in its depth
 Of air, mud, and water
 But it is our longing for a refined ascension
 To the heart of the soul at its purest end
 And our desire to make noise, devoid of every sound
 To the noblest mutterings
 That the throats raised above the coffins
 To reach the ear of heaven
 And it is what revelation uses
 To bring souls back to their senses
 Whenever love decreases on earth
 Or emptied of the splendor of its psalms
 The quiver of the prophets
 And If it had not been, it would have had to be constructed
 From the mirage of wishing
 And from the need of beings for a sign to appear
 And from the need of the crookedness to be straightened

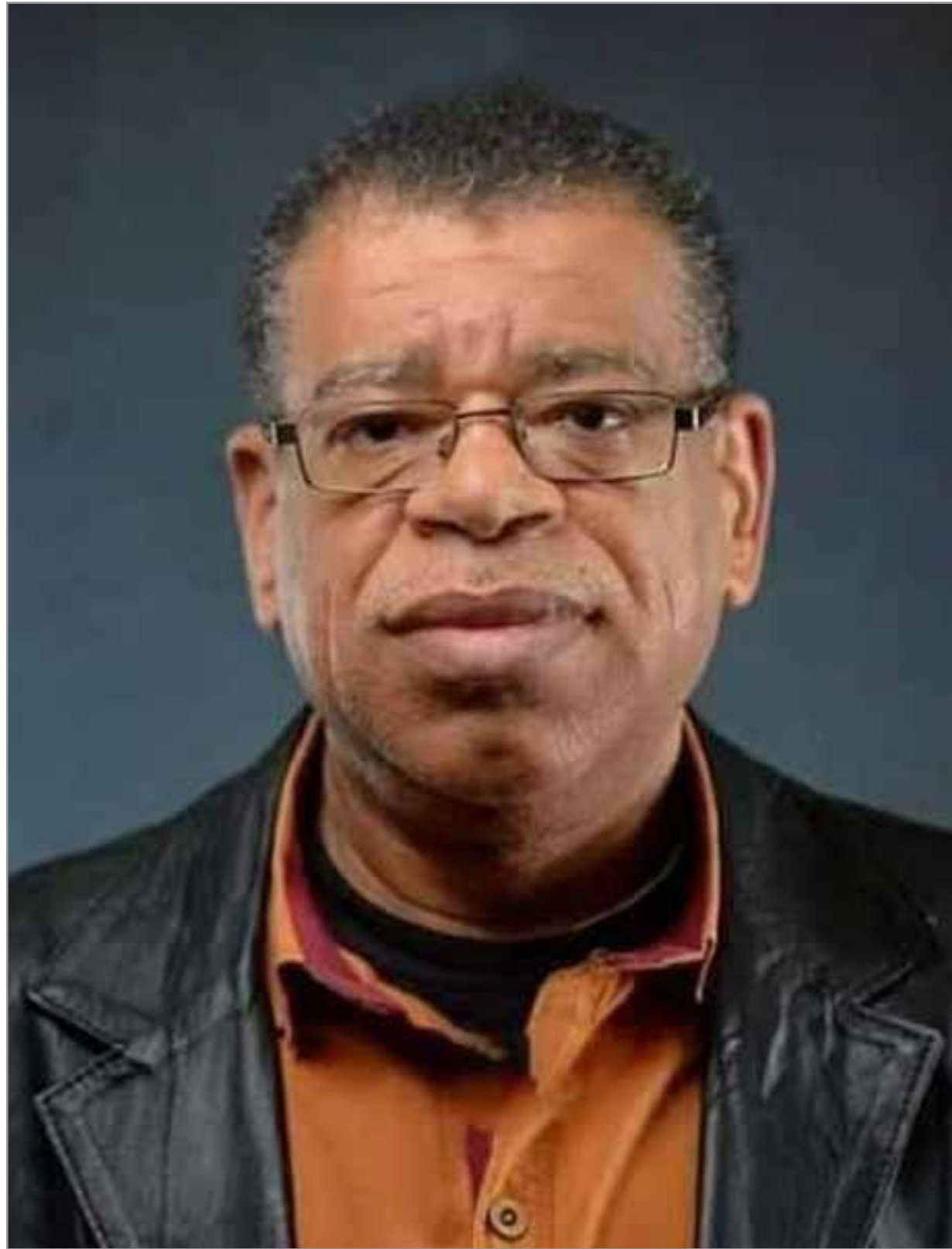
I would not talk about it then
 And I was the one born five drivers
 And twenty massacres away
 From its sweet dirt
 And I am the one who women's tender songs, till tears, took care of
 With the voices of those who continued to dig
 With nails under the dirt
 To reach it
 And those who fell without the rags of its bitter clay
 Generation after generation
 And I am the one whose winters were intertwined with torrents.
 Not a drop of water flowed
 In the slender veins of the south
 Except that it was covered with the most delicious green clouds
 The mountains of Galilee
 This is where the south becomes north
 Of the revenues Palestine has stored from songs
 And north becomes south
 For those who set fire to the hills
 So that the martyrs may be guided by their phoenix
 When it steps into the light
 Rising from the ashes of the ages
 The bones of the victims meet on both sides of the border
 And the backs of the graves support the graves
 Here no eagle spreads its wings
 Above the borrowed "Kafr Bir'am" hills
 From sun visor
 Unless it leaves a shadow for itself

continued overleaf...

In the canyons of the Al-Khayyam plain
 And there is no poem
 Its beginning was the Haifa Sea
 With the wave of intuition
 Except it was completed by the Sea of Tyre
 I would not talk about it then
 However, I will prick with the needle of her pain
 What I waste of my language
 On the deserted sand of its coasts
 Perhaps, I would not kiss those houses
 That their walls hidden behind the wires
 Of Jericho orphaned lightning
 And I will not be able to prune its pomegranates even once
 From the bark of the lipas
 And its olives from the toxins of abandonment
 And I may not join its moons
 On a stream of boiling water
 But, oh dust, we gave it the most noble of our children
 And we were warmed with its breasts as infants
 And with its thorns in youth
 And with its furrows helplessly
 I will braid my voice with the strongest winds
 To ask you now:
 How many Christs do we have to lift his waitings
 From the slopes of resurrection?
 How many sacrificial sunsets
 Should we invent a blush for its henna?

How much should we receive mourning with black?
 And how many stars must be erased
 For the morning to come
 And is there any purgatory to cross over to your mother's cradle
 That our liver have not tested?
 Or basements whose tunnels we did not dig with nails?
 Or a group of anemones
 We did not turn towards it with wounds
 And how many candles will we light?
 How many martyrs will fall?
 How many springs will be killed alive?
 For God to break his silence
 After He breathed the soul into it
 And declared it a qiblah/destination and a place of prayer
 And an icon of visions
 Then He handed it over to the claws of its enemies
 And He rested.

Fathi Abdel Samee (1963) is an Egyptian poet residing in southern Upper Egypt. He has published seven poetry collections, and five other books including a book on his autobiography, and an extensive study on revenge in Upper Egypt, which won the State Encouragement Award in Social Sciences.



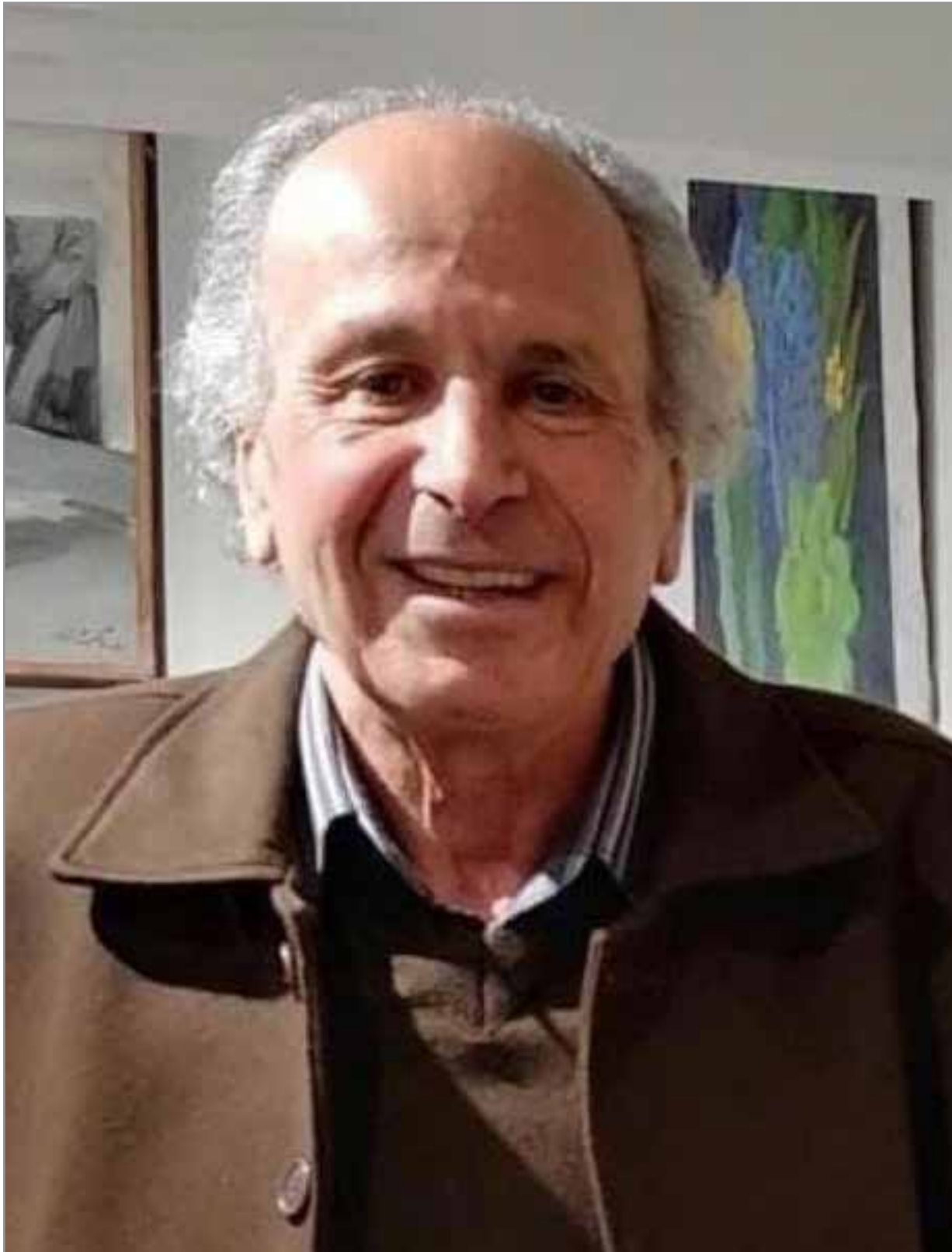
Fathi Abdel Samee

MEN'S TRAIN

My body is awake
 But it is cold and heavy
 My mouth is filled with a bite of the earth that
 I fell on
 And my eyes are empty
 From the battle in which I was born with
 I am the martyr they buried secretly
 No one raises my picture
 And delivers an enthusiastic sermon
 That curses my killers
 I was not shrouded in my country's anthem
 And my coffin is not
 Decorated with flowers and medals
 No cheer or a tear to bide me farewell
 They did not put a stone on my grave
 I am the martyr they buried secretly

I prayed two rak'ahs reciting Surah Yasin from the Holy Quran
 I felt my books
 And my papers that are full of cannons, planes
 And a sketch of a homeland
 I looked at my brothers
 And I am thinking of the gifts I can
 return with
 My mother is sleeping among them
 I am afraid she will wake up
 And feels pain that she failed to bake something for me
 I closed the door behind me quietly
 But I heard her tears hit the ground
 When she is trying to stop my brothers from whispering
 So that I do not miss the men's train
 My weapon was primitive
 But it works
 And my heart was bigger than a battalion
 But they convinced my mother that I was a devil
 And she must ululate
 When they get me.

Gamal Al-Qassas (1950) is an Egyptian poet and journalist. He has published fourteen poetry collections, the most recent of which is "There was Music here" published in 2023. Selections of his poems have been translated into English, Arabic, and Greek. He also won the Cavafy International Prize in Poetry in 1998. He is considered one of the most important founders of the "Illumination 77" poetry group in the 1970s.



I WILL CALL YOU MOM

This devastating war
Would not block the road
It will always be born of your thirst
From your hunger
From your siege
This trembling scream in your mouth
Will not die
It will build a nest for the rain
His burning heart will awaken
On a new morning
Filling the souls with your warmth
This hand that claps for the killers
The hand that addicted to its shame
Will be defeated by your dreams
Will be folded by the scream
When It cleans your wound from the dirt of the world

A home of love for you
Dew kisses to you
O woman of light and fire
O necklace of Jasmine
Oh Gaza
I will not call you the sun
Or the sea
Or time
I will call you mom.

Gamal Al-Qassas

LIGHT A CANDLE HERE

They continue the bombing
They fear that life will be born again
For rain to grow
For the sky to bury its wounds
To be freed from the weight of sleeping on the knee of the shores.

The shadow of the moon is far away
Nothing cleanses the soul
No equation for death
No truce for a bird
For a flower
For a tree
For a breeze
For a baby girl
For a drop of water, her veins dried up

For a long time, they have been singing about hope
They resist until their last breath
They guard dreams
They teach them how to live
In the mouth of air
In exhalations of pain.

Light a candle here
There is a blindfolded scratch
Looking for a sunshine
In the fragments of bodies.

Light a candle
Ignite
The bombing will not end
Memory is a perforated box
And madness has no limits
In vain does cover nothingness up with scrolls of ruin
It peels the night under your skin
It builds nests for him
You claim you're still just over the edge
No edge
No nests
No night
It is your thirsty soul
Contemplate her
Hug her
When she is going up
From the incinerator of colors
From the darkness of the vessel
From the cry of the shroud.

Mahmoud Darwish (1941 –2008) was a famous Palestinian poet and author who was regarded as Palestine’s national poet. He won numerous awards for his works. Darwish used Palestine as a metaphor for the loss of Eden, birth and resurrection, and the anguish of dispossession and exile. He has been described as incarnating and reflecting the man of action whose action is poetry. He also served as an editor for several literary magazines in Palestine. In addition, he is the author of over 30 books of poetry and eight books of prose, and earned the Lannan Cultural Freedom Prize from the Lannan Foundation, the Lenin Peace Prize, and the Knight of Arts and Belles Lettres Medal from France.



GAZA

Gaza is not the most beautiful city
Not the richest
Not the finest
It is not the largest
But it is equivalent to the history of the nation
Because it is uglier in the eyes of enemies, poorer, more Miserable, and more ferocious
Because it is the most capable of disturbing the enemy’s mood And comfort
Because it’s his nightmare
Because they are mined oranges
And children without a childhood
And old people without aging
And women without desires
Because of all this, it is the most beautiful, the purest, richest,
And most deserving of love among us
And the one most worthy of love.

Gaza has no horses, no planes, no magic wands, and no offices In capitals
It is true that Gaza has special circumstances and its special Revolutionary traditions
But its secret is not a mystery
Its resistance is popular and cohesive and knows what it wants
(it wants to expel the enemy from its clothes)
The relationship between the resistance and the masses is the
Relationship between skin and bone
It is not the teacher’s relationship with the students
Resistance in Gaza did not turn into a job
The resistance in Gaza did not turn into an institution

Mahmoud Darwish. Photo courtesy - <https://www.dailysabah.com/arts>

continued overleaf...

It did not accept anyone's guardianship and did not leave its fate
 Hinging on anyone's signature or fingerprint
 It does not matter much to her that we know her name, image, or eloquence
 It could not believe it was media material
 Did not prepare for photograph
 It did not put smile paste on its face
 Neither does it want that... nor we
 Hence, Gaza is a losing business for brokers
 Hence, it is an inestimable moral and ethical treasure for all Arabs

The beauty of Gaza is that nothing occupies it
 Nothing turns its fist from the enemy's face
 The enemies may triumph over Gaza
 They might break its bones
 They may plant tanks in the stomachs of her children and Women
 They may throw it into the sea, sand, or blood, but it
 Will not repeat the lies and say to the invaders: Yes
 And it will continue to explode
 It is neither death nor suicide
 But it is Gaza's way of declaring its worthiness to live
 And it will continue to explode.



Photograph by Mark Ulyseas.

Mohamed Hosni Eliwa (1977) is an Egyptian poet and writer. He published three poetry collections. In addition, he is a member of the Cairo Writers Association and a member of the Arab League for Literature and Culture.



Mohamed Hosni Eliwa

IT WAS WAR AND NOTHING BEFORE IT

*[To the dead who were left behind
Without guidance:
their seats
Their sweets hidden in the bent-backed bags
Raw apricot fruits
In sketchbooks
And they entered the war from a tank or closer.]*

While they are making tunnels
For headless corpses
To go to the cemetery...
They broadcast to us the resurrection of war.
"It was war and nothing before it."

In the newspapers they declared war
In the children's sheets they waged a war
In wool mattresses and sofas
In the prayer of old women with stories
In the bird's cherries on groves
On weaning evenings
And the chain rose
In her thorny crown.

*

"It was war and nothing before it."

On top of the Mount of Olives
The rain rises with its lowered head
He drags behind him the distance between two times
They both crawl like puppies / slaughtered
[The sickle does not make mistakes in harvesting ears of corn.]

continued overleaf...

“It was war and nothing before it.”
 How many walls
 Rest his back on the ground
 How much water does it
 Go up stealthily
 From the groans of a waterwheel
 And a lame river!

As soon as the skull bleeds its poem
 As soon as the phone picks up the war cry:
 -Come on, put on helmets
 Once the pig reaches its pen
 As soon as they announce death to traitors
 Until they brought the galaxy back
 To states of death and war
 To armed robbery centers
 And war factories
 To charred kisses on war beds
 And dust covers shirts and noble coats
 The refugees can then...
 Find a diaspora suitable for their shoes
 Or a tent to classify them
 For a sentence of heads of livestock
 And a group of lumberjacks of meager opportunities.

On the doorstep of Gaza
 The game store is
 About to open its doors
 Its rusty lock trembles
 Under the impact of missiles
 And there are no children
 Passing in the background of the painted scene
 At the height of silence
 The shell made puppets
 Small testicle bags
 The soldiers lost on the shelves of memory.

War has no significant benefit!
 What will the children learn
 From the number of corpses in history books?
 What do people gain from the smell of death everywhere?

My grandmother, who gave life 70 years
 From her bright laugh says
 And left my grandfather there with one leg
 That does not wear shoes:
 “Let us live in peace as we love,
 Peace is not born in the trenches
 Peace is not born in sewers
 That opens its mouth to receive bombs
 So, curse the war whenever you pray
 Whenever you sit down to write poetry
 Whenever you stop to greet a child
 Who dies crucified on his feet!”

Mohammed Al-Kafrawy is An Egyptian poet, born in 1978. He has been writing about cultural journalism and literary criticism since 1998. He has four collections of poetry: “A Pink Dream that Raises the Head” (2006), “Shortly After the Dead” (2018), “A Suspicious Place” (2020), and a fourth collection entitled “Scraping Nothingness with his Nails and Giggling,” which is under print at the Egyptian General Book Authority.



Mohammed Al-Kafrawy

COLD CORPSE

1

I kiss your cold forehead and cry
I imagine your transparent form and smile
In fact, I look at your closed eyes and cry
Invisible fingers tickle my neck and pull my beard
As you always do.. so I laugh
I look at the destroyed walls of your room and cry
I imagine your new home on the highest and I am overcome with joy.

I cry and laugh
I feel sad and happy
I light and fade

I will remain like this, daughter of my blood and flesh
And I will never leave your body

2

And they ask me to bury her with my own hands
What an ungrateful heart would accept this!
How do I justify her absence
What should I say to her favorite doll
To her woolen sweater
To her garden dress
To her school supplies stained with blood?
The bullet that penetrated her stomach did not hit her alone
The seeping blood mixed with the remains of milk in her womb
Left a message for you..
You, the one with a stony heart
O you who opened your eyes wide
And you saw this pure mass of innocence
And you pulled the trigger.

continued overleaf..

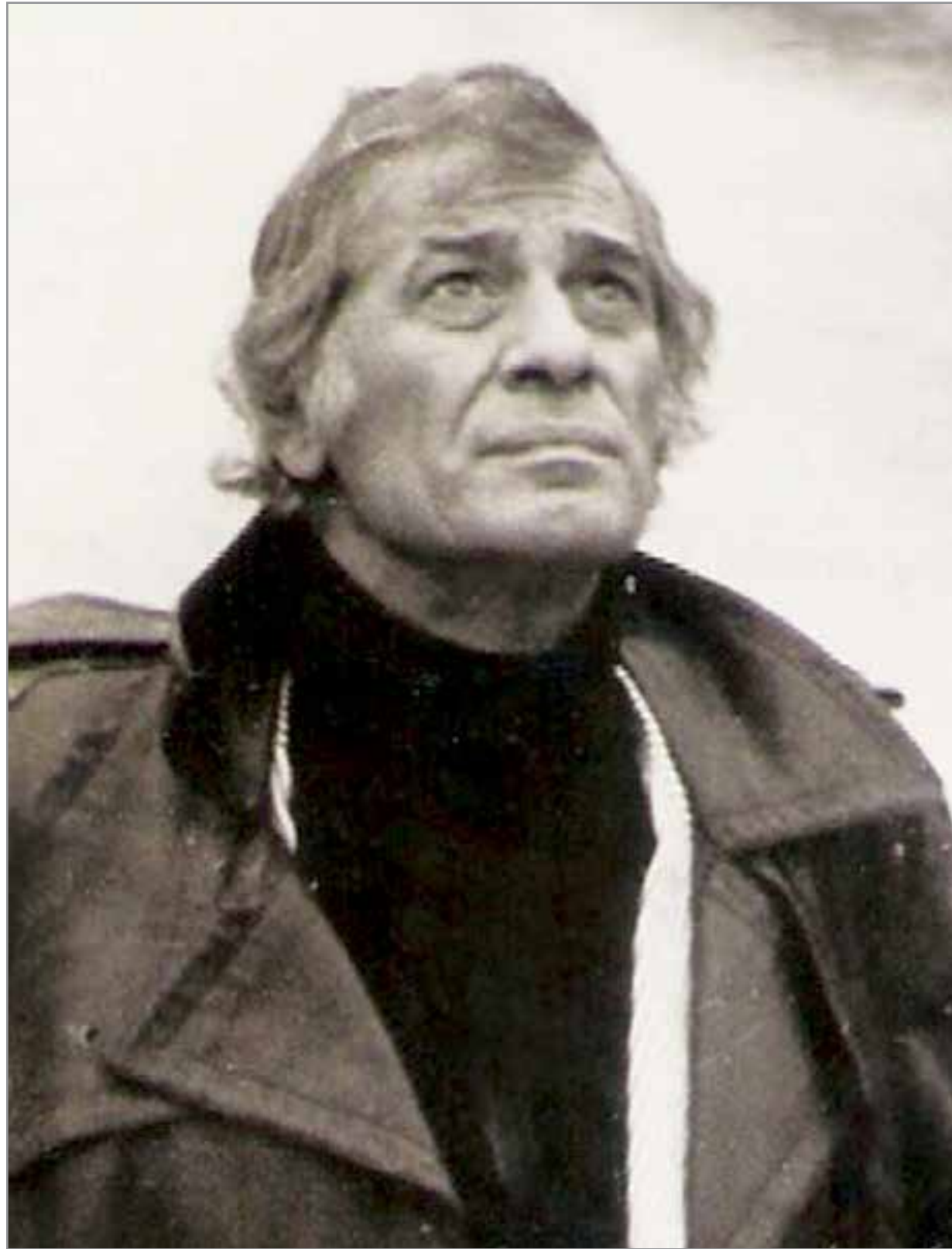
3

I know you all
I see you one by one
From this terrible height
I look at you and smile
Despite my lukewarm appearance and pale-yellow face
And the flies that have fun licking my blood in front of the screens
I forgive you and pity you
And I know that one day
You will leave all this noise behind
And wings will grow for you...
exactly like me.



Photograph by Mark Ulyseas.

Mu'in Tawfiq Bseiso (1926 – January 23, 1984)) was a Palestinian poet who lived in Egypt. He finished his primary and secondary education in Gaza in 1948. On January 27, 1952, he published his first work titled *Al-Ma'raka* (translated: The Battle). He published several other volumes of poetry: *Palestine in the Heart*, (1964), *Trees Die Standing* (1966). He was imprisoned in jails in Gaza twice: 1955 to 1957 and 1959 to 1963. He died due to heart failure in London in 1984. His works have been translated into English, French, German, Russian, Azeri, Uzbek, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Persian. Mu'in Bseiso was awarded the Afro-Asian Lotus Prize for Literature and was the vice Editor in Chief of the Lotus magazine issued by the Afro-Asian Writers' Association. Additionally, he was the recipient of the Palestinian Revolution Shield.)



WE WILL NOT DIE

We will eradicate death from our land
 There... there... far away
 The soldiers will carry me, my comrades
 They will throw me into terrible darkness
 They will throw me into the hell of restrictions
 Yes, we will not die, but...
 We will uproot death from our land
 They searched my room, brother
 They found nothing but some books
 And piles of bones that are my brothers
 They groan between a mother and a father
 They woke them up with their kicks
 They ignited anger in the eyes
 Yes, we will not die, but...
 We will uproot death from our land
 I am now among the soldiers of tyrants

I am now being dragged into detention
 My father's face is still there
 In front of me
 Arming me with hope
 And my mother moans
 A long moan
 And around her, my brothers were screaming
 And around them, some of our neighbors
 And each of them has a child in prison
 Yes, we will not die, but...

continued overleaf..

Mu'in Tawfiq Bseiso. Photo courtesy - <https://arabamericannews.com>

We will uproot death from our land
 But despite the brutality of the soldiers
 I raised a hand weighed down by chains
 And I shouted to them: I am coming back
 With the army of comrades
 With the army of thunder
 Yes, we will not die, but...
 We will uproot death from our land
 There I see a worker on the road
 I see the victorious leader of the revolution
 He waves an iron hand at me
 And another had sparks flying from it
 Yes, we will not die, but...
 We will uproot death from our land
 I am now among hundreds of comrades
 I tighten their fists with my fist
 I now feel strong
 And I will defeat my cell
 Yes, we will not die, but...
 We will uproot death from our land
 Yes we will not die, yes we will live
 Even if the shackle ate from our bones
 And even if the whips of tyrants tear us apart
 Even if they set fire to our bodies
 Yes, we will not die, but we will
 Eradicate death from our land.



Photograph by Mark Ulyseas.

Saleh Labrini (1970) is a Moroccan poet and critic, born in the village of Abzou. He has published five collections of poetry. In addition, he began publishing in Arab newspapers and magazines in the 1990s.



O REMORSEFUL STONE

1

O remorseful stone, speak
No rain will come
And the sky takes its last breath
And sink into the nebula
So be the support
Break the wall of silence
Shake off the sunset madness
And be freed from your isolation
And go as you wish
A fire consuming the family's firewood
A light that listens to confused homes
Talk
Destruction twists the neck of time
The dead fly
They land on balconies, defeated by waiting
And no one is coming
Emptiness after emptiness
Nothingness falsifies its existence
No trees singing in sight
No desert satisfies the heart of sand
Only martyrs arranging tables for the choir of eternity.

Saleh Labrini

continued overleaf...

2

O remorseful stone
The silence of the range in its isolation
Winds blow away rubble dust
A flower that confuses the comfort of the sand
And an anthem that brings the river back to its beginning
There is nothing wrong with the evening
I am the glimmer emerging from the dust of time
I seed paths with the available lightning bolts
And thunder
And my plains raise neighing springs
And listen to a land where the day comes filled with the alertness of pebbles
To the bewilderment of the breaths going to the paths of isolation
To wait for doors that are raided by the despair of emptiness
And rust creeps on the walls of the tribe
From here passed soldiers bereaved of their Dreams
Dragging their bleeding
Slaughtered to the Wailing Wall
Spreading myths
And dancing on an illusion
That would lead them to the grooves
Of the abyss
On the tracks of disappointment

They destroy the land
And drown in the mire of the wind
All the storms sing at the corner of the coming
Laden with the fruits of the winds
And a day filled with joy
And a night that sheds the last of its darkness
And dissolves in the olive glow
And sleeps on the wing of victory
From the trenches of pride, rose flowers and winds
Palm trees and the thorn of dawn spread fire, light and light
In the steppes, erupt ambushes of wolves and blood worshipers
And run in humble land...

Sherif Kandil (1960) is an Egyptian journalist and member of the British and Egyptian Journalists Syndicate. He won the Arab Journalism Award for the best journalistic interviews. In addition, he has published several books: "On the Chairs of Tyrants" - "Evidence of Beauty in the Travel Notebook" - "A Letter to My Grandson Zain" - "Shadow, Departure, and the Nile" - The Story of a Boy in the Gardens of Letters.



WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF AN APOLOGY?

The generations of Palestine certainly reject charity from the unscrupulous! A hundred years or more have passed since the Balfour Declaration and you are hiding from sin and transgression. A hundred years ago witnessed dozens of conspiracies, devastating agreements, and treaties.

Sorry!
 No matter how many arsenals of weapons you have
 Amassed
 And no matter how much you secretly or publicly
 Call for turning Palestinian homes into shrines
 No matter how much blood you ask
 You will feel helpless if the stone speaks
 No matter how much you plunder and eat
 you will swallow the gall
 Their settlements will be rendered mute
 And Palestine's children will increase
 And you will become infertile
 No matter how much the voice of truth is bridle
 And no matter how every human rights advocate
 Stutters in describing Palestine
 No matter how silent, mute, or paralyzing
 The Security Council
 No matter what was planned against Palestine
 And no matter the extent of what
 Was accomplished and concluded!

continued overleaf...

Sherif Kandil

Pay attention!
The voice of Gaza will pass through the wind
No matter the sores
She will not let her life be swallowed
No matter how big the wounds are
She will not let her glory be sacrificed
The laws of the universe say:
No matter how much deception from its enemy
No matter how many mosques, churches
And houses were demolished
And no matter how great the silence was
The whole world now knows that
She is wearing a dress that is not
Covered by a mulberry leaf.

Hush! Gaza thanks!
For every groan that came out
For every tear that was shed
For every word that was spoken
And for every poem!
For every chant in a demonstration
And for every supplication in a sermon
Session, or conference
Gaza tells you that I will continue
Because it was never just an adventure
Or a gamble!
Gaza is the one that condoles you
It condoles every honorable person
Every chivalrous person in chivalry
And every chaste person!
Gaza advises you!
Pay attention to each other
To your land
To your honor

And do not be deceived by the world
The world itself is fleeting!
O you who fear for the “acquis and infrastructure.”
And the capabilities of the “proud” Arab peoples:
Gaza, which was destroyed,
Is the one that stood firm, rose
Resisted, and built!
You who are slow in donations
And control the entry of aid:
Extend your hands
And strengthen your arms
Not to receive supplies... ever
But because you need huge amounts of blood.

Conclusion

I was reading a beautiful poem from Africa written by the Angolan poet “Feria Todi Pauline,” reassuring and believing in the return of Palestine with the weapon of faith, saying: Before we entered the gates of Luanda, we were neighing like wild horses in the distant provinces, and the torrents of blood were dragging with them all our achievements... we were always starting again. This is how we felt. Time was stubborn and fierce. And the proud cities handed over their keys to the invaders! My Palestinian friend! The day will come when we tell you! Here you are now, arriving in all the cities and raising your flags over them with a weapon that no one had ever thought of—in fact, no one had thought of!

Before I woke up from the trance of the African poem coming from Angola, I found myself entering the garden of another poem coming or passing from Asia, by a poet from Vietnam, Huo Wan, who says to the children of Palestine, “ There is nothing between us but time...and nothing but Asia...and nothing but the heart that the rivers carry into a room in the sea... Written on it in all languages: Palestine!”

Tariq Hashem is an Egyptian poet and a researcher in the history of songs. He has published seven poetry collections. In addition, he won many prizes from different cultural Egyptian institutions.



Tariq Hashem

WAR IS THE END OF THE WORLD

With a rare effect
He said it five times
In the first time, he did not just cry
So he got up
To be heard by the audience
War is the end of the world
Those present did not pay attention
They slept in the big hall

In the second time
He tried to wake them up
Then his voice rose
A frame fell from the wall
It contained a picture of Nietzsche
In a state similar to a hug
War is the end of the world

The third time did not work
With what he wished for
So he started screaming
Those present here are like miserable stones
Oh war
How do you not know Jack?
Yes, he is
I saw him in a small theater
Those who gathered around him were aroused by his movements
He was jumping in successive jumps
With his thick hands, he slaps the wall
Nietzsche did not fall
He is still hanging on the edges of the frame
And Jack is still in the reincarnation circle

continued overleaf..

In the fourth case
 I realize that there is nothing there
 Those present here heard it for the first time
 War is the end of the world
 They kept whispering
 Yes he is
 This is Jack
 It is his confusing simplicity itself
 He had gone down into the audience
 To scream at them again
 It is war
 War is the end of the world

When he went up to the stage again
 His features stared at me again
 It is him
 Yes, it is Jacques Prévert
 With his living and breathing
 And his excessive humanity
 Yes, this is the color of his tears
 This is his length
 His sharp eyes in their gaze
 He also lost his lover in the morning
 She had run away with her obese friend

I swear to God that you listen to him
 To contemplate the movement of his tired hands
 His shoulders turning towards the cheerleaders
 As an old pro
 A tear must have strayed from his eyes
 And one of the audience was injured
 So the theater exploded with excitement

Everyone here realized it was him
 The funeral tears flowed from the chaos of his tears
 Many here could not imagine
 That life is so extravagant
 To give them that special moment
 The movement itself
 The sound in its degrees
 The horrifying sensitivity
 How many times did he turn his back to the audiences?
 So that they do not see his tears
 This is how every time he remembers Barbra, his old lover
 When the audience approached the stage
 He was gone forever
 Evaporating like a ray of sun at sunset
 The administrators here know him well
 The old theatrical lighting worker
 Separated people with his harsh voice
 This is not Jacques Prévert
 He is one of the extras
 In a band of old wanderers
 And the role was assigned to him
 When the hero had a car accident
 And he had lost his memory
 They found no one else
 They found none other than fake Jack
 He is not Jack
 not him
 not

Zêrevan Osê (1986) is a poet and writer from the Kurdistan region of Iraq. He published two poetry collections and a critical book. In addition, he holds a master’s degree in Arabic literature. His texts were translated into (Turkish, French, and Kurdish). His poems were, also, published in various Arab magazines and newspapers.



A LAND FADES INTO THE VEIN

Image of the massacre
The sound of carnage
Children lose their way into the desert.

1

I did not know her, oh, mole
What does the lonely do about language?
Move, strip, play
I did not know her, starting from her wilderness
In the soul that she sees
Manifested in a tree, in a string
Oh, the mole plant
Do you hear the river groaning?
When it aspires to the dry land
O terror, that steps like soldiers raping the land
Do you hear a dead voice?
Approaching from awakening
It becomes the trumpet of
The gods of war.

Zêrevan Osê

continued overleaf..

2

The devastation of the world requires a long listening instead of writing
that only resides in sleep

Listen, listen
Take the boat of the night as a journey, O toiler of formation!
A journey towards lamentations of the borders
Listen, listen
With a covenant of love for his family
With sculpted faces and their stillness
With a polite fork
Or a wasteland that aspires to be a universe
Listen, listen
To a river in a body
To a body until it becomes a river.

3

Now it is less noisy, the alternative to madness, the noise that breeds
the death of non-death
Maintenance of death
Love dims the short winter day
To be a corpse stretched out in the streets.
What is the new rag in the earth's clothing?
I think it is war. The heat takes up a huge area of vegetation, reaching isolation
in its turbulent hearth. I think it is hatred running through the veins of the world
from the beginning

Who will absorb the lake of anxiety from my eyes?
I am a miserable tree
Whenever the wind blows from one side, I dance with it
In the singer's voice there is a war going on
In stillness
A hell that strips things of their colors.

Zuhair Abu Shayeb (1958) is a Palestinian poet and writer. He obtained a BA in Arabic Language and Literature from Yarmouk University in 1982. He was a member of the administrative board of the Association of Jordanian writers for several sessions, and a member of the Association and the General Union of Arab Writers. In 2012, he received Mahmoud Darwish Award for Creativity. Among his poetry collections: The Geography of Winds and Questions 1986, The Book of Statues and Maqamat 1987, The Biography of the Grass 1997. In addition to a play entitled: Blind White (1987)



THE NIGHT OF GAZA

As he is
Sitting and watching from morning until night
He could not sleep
He could not die like the children of Gaza
There is no martyr
That will come to take him with him on the path to eternity
As martyrs come in every battle
To visit life and its children
And they say to them:
We never died. We are here in life
And if people close their eyes
They would have seen us.

As he is
He does not do anything but that all the time
He looks towards the small sky
But he does not see...
He does nothing but
Whenever the planes howled, he cracked like a house
And collapsed
And his soul stuck to the ground
He does nothing but remain silent
Fearing that his groan would awaken the martyrs from their sleep

He does not do anything
Except he does not do anything
As the martyrs crossed light and shining in the Gaza night
Heaven returns to earth again
And life returns to her home
Like a widow whose husband died decades ago
And he continued to die of silence every day
And he completes his deficit

Zuhair Abu Shayeb

2010 - 2024



POETRY & WRITING

FREE ONLINE MAGAZINE FROM VILLAGE EARTH
JANUARY 2024



COVER ARTWORK TITLED 'ECLIPSE' BY IRISH ARTIST EMMA BARONE