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2025

الجالية

Al Jaliah

Magazine for Arab and Arab-Diasporic Affairs

Issue 0.

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EDITORIAL

After a 100-year hiatus, *Al Jaliah* returns to action. Founded and directed by Sami J. Racy, and edited by Beny J. Racy from 1922 to 1929, *Al Jaliah* was one of the many Arab-founded magazines published on the continent we call “America.” In this revival, we aim to show and not only to speak: what *Al Jaliah* once was, what it can be, and what it may become. We divert from using the term “homage to the ancestors,” considering its problematic use in our current times. However, it is hard to deny that, long ago, wealthy ancestors—false idols—have marginalized the ones who cared: those who observed, thought through situations, and tackled the tasks and challenges of their time. We pay homage to those who came before us and were not remembered. Erased from history, they were left to gather dust on rickety shelves in old fraternities and associations. We strive to build a new collective memory: we remember. Our task is clear.

First and foremost, we extend our gratitude to this issue’s contributors who generously shared their thoughts, analyses and art to support this collaborative and independent project. Alongside these authors, the editors have worked to compile a volume that reflects the principles of what we believe the original *Al Jaliah* stood for, aligned with our vision for its current iteration. This issue brings together diverse works from the Levant that were influenced by the ongoing genocide in Gaza perpetrated by the Israeli Zionist entity, the Israeli aggression on Lebanon, and the collapse of the Syrian regime—has undoubtedly influenced the choice of themes addressed in the submitted works. Seeking to bridge gaps and connect cross-continental audiences, we considered it essential to present all works under this projects in Portuguese, Arabic, and English, with the latter serving as a lingua franca for many. Readers will find that while the three versions are similar, they are not entirely identical. For instance, one version may include an original translation of Mahmoud Darwish by Safa Jubran into Portuguese, while another features an award-winning micro-story about Sudan by Nione, available in Arabic and English.

This issue begins with our *Manifesto*, which we believe needs no further introduction. It then opens with the translation of a chapter from *The Book of Tasks*, written in 1911 by our founder, Sami J. Racy. He discusses his own social role, perceiving it as embodying the duty to promote knowledge transmission, and social edification against the allure of easy success and the spread of harmful ideas. Yet, this does not condemn the pursuit of fame and well-being—an unusually progressive stance for the moralism of the time. Next, following a historical trajectory, Samira Adel Osman challenges the hegemonic Brazilian image of the Arab as a peddler or a self-made man, emphasizing the intellectual contributions of the Arab diaspora in Brazil. Without diminishing their role as merchants—a position imposed on Arabs—Osman demonstrates how the Arab immigrant community has produced far more than wealth, as evidenced by a number of publications, like *Al Jaliah*, that engaged with the pressing issues of their era, creating an international network of ideas.

Moving from the distant past to a more recent history, Luciana García explores the political organization of Palestinians in Brazil during the final years of the Brazilian civil-military regime (1964–1985). Transitioning to the immediate present, Natalia Calfat examines the relationships between Bolsonarism, neo-Pentecostalism and Zionism, investigating the ideological connections that fuel a genocidal machine. Unsurprisingly, Joseph Daher’s article, originally published by Al Jazeera, provides a contextual overview of Western media coverage of the genocide in Gaza. Readers receive not only contextualization but also precise insights into when, where, and how these issues began and continue to persist. Gustavo Racy’s essay, originally published on the *Editora Tabla* blog and now presented in full here, also addresses Palestine. Drawing on Walter Benjamin’s thought, Racy philosophically situates Palestine as a paradigmatic contemporary issue, comparable to but transcending the Holocaust. Finally, Eithar Daher shifts focus slightly northward to Syria, analyzing the literary content of political satire in the Syrian context. Coinciding with the fall of the Assad regime, the article introduces Brazilian readers, in particular, to an unfamiliar context, analyzed through Bakhtinian theory, peppered with jokes that resonate with Brazil’s reality.

In the “Arts and Letters” section, alongside Safa Jubran’s aforementioned translation of Mahmoud Darwish, we present a photography exhibit of Syria by photojournalist, war correspondent and friend of *Al Jaliah*, Yan Boechat. Additionally, we feature illustrations by Sara Qaed, a Bahraini artist based in England, whose sharp wit and incisive imagery offers a biting portrait of contemporary reality. Ali Moraly, a Berlin-based Syrian musician and critic, contributes with a brief musical essay discussing three genres of pro-Palestine songs, providing non-Arab audiences an introduction to Arab musicology through a playlist of three iconic resistance songs. Complementing Moraly’s work is a review of *Palestine, Mon Amour* by Alfredo Bonanno, written by anarchist anthropologist Wander Wilson. Wilson connects the Italian psychiatrist’s ideas to the global resurgence of fascist forms, including in Brazil, shaping a critique that, though allegories, strikes at the root of contemporary political paradigms. Finally, our “Anecdote” section includes a previously unpublished translation of a text by Amin “Affandi” Nasser el-Din about Lebanon. Pieces like Nasser el-Din’s were common in the original *Al Jaliah*, comprising brief oral-story-style texts—sometimes grave and sometimes humorous—that conveyed a kind of knowledge now largely lost. This is the first of many such translations we plan to publish as we revive the publication.

All articles have undergone revisions and when possible, editorial collaboration with the authors. They express well-supported opinions, not with the aim of delivering definitive truths but to open dialogue and foster exchange. These articles aim to disseminate references and ideas rooted in the expertise and experiences of each contributor, extending an invitation to the readers.

Finally, we must briefly acknowledge the challenges encountered along this journey. As an independent and unfunded project, *Al Jaliah*’s realization has primarily rested on the shoulders of two individuals juggling various tasks: translation, editing, design, website creation, social media, and countless meetings. In a world that rarely affords the privilege of full dedication to cultural and intellectual work, balancing economic survival with political engagement is a formidable challenge. At times, this effort has led to lapses and shortcomings, but it has ultimately materialized into this collection of articles and ideas that we dedicate to our founders. May they accompany us on this journey, and may we honor them.

MANIFESTO

[...] those who destroyed peoples or exterminated tribes were not crueller to humanity, nor more harmful to the decay of cities, than the authors of vulgar books or the editors of low opinions.


Sami Joaquim Racy, 1911

São Paulo,
2024

In the early 20th century, São Paulo was a city in full economic and cultural expansion. An international metropolis full of contradictions and violence, São Paulo was a mix of languages and communities. Among the working-class neighborhoods, urban marrons, and shacks, Arabs from the Levant filled the surroundings of the city center with imported fabrics or roamed the peripheral streets selling everyday products. But Arab immigration was not built solely by peddlers. Beyond the myth of the self-made man, intellectuals who saw business as a necessity of the times were also producing thought.

Arabic-language periodicals flourished in São Paulo, and in Belle Époque Brazil and the Americas. Among various political currents, the colony was divided between intellectuals and demagogues: some trained in the most liberal traditions of the time, others fixed on the emerging nationalist discourse. Today, this memory is largely unknown, if not deliberately ignored. And if it weren't for those—many of them non-Arabs—who seek traces of past intellectual existence, we might not have the opportunity today to revive a tradition that, with small steps, is beginning to counter-attack hegemonic narratives that too often do us a disservice.

Among the numerous publications from the early 20th century, Al Jaliah left a modest legacy: not many know it, but those who do, hold it in high esteem. Currently, part of its copies can be found in the Jafet Library of the American University of Beirut. In some way, Al Jaliah seemed different. It wasn't just a magazine of news and novelties, but rather, a reflective, humorous, and combative publication. Figures like Daoud and Taufic Kurban, Mustafa Lutfi al-Manfaluti, and others contributed to Al Jaliah.



Founded in 1922 by Sami J. Racy, born in 1880 in Saida, Al Jaliah lasted 8 years, ending a year after the death of its founder. In the context of the time, educated at the Syrian College, later the American University of Beirut, Sami and his brothers carried the weight of an elite education, engaging in and being part of the most contemporary debates and references of the time. Likely due to the experiences of Sami and his brothers, marrying outside the community, relinquishing the cultural and communal pressures for marriage and for maintaining certain Arab particularities, the magazine problematized the present issues of the time: the advent of a new society, the relationship and duties of Levantine Arabs from a shared frame of reference, and the demand for a new conception of culture from a diasporic perspective. Between anecdotes about Ruy Barbosa's near miss by Anis Racy or Sami Racy's sarcasm directed at Antoun Saade, Al Jaliah positioned itself critically and undoubtedly gathered opponents.

The confrontational spirit of Sami and his brothers is the starting point of this new Al Jaliah. Through it, we will not seek to explain. In today's connected world, sources and access to a wide variety of information abound. We have something to say to those who wish to read, see, and listen to us. We do not want to reinforce stereotypes, justify particularities, or excuse problems. We want, instead, to expose, whatever it may be, that provides everyone with the potential to approach pressing issues of the contemporary world from a region that, for unfortunate reasons, has become an endless chessboard of international politics. It is clear that the challenge is great. The task alone is not enough; we will fulfill it through complementary perspectives that are often silenced, here or there: the local and the diasporic. By revisiting the foundations of Brazilian-Arab periodicals, we will build Al Jaliah by weaving connections between Arab life and reality, both from the countries that make up the Arab world and from those who, in living memory, have inherited the stories of this world.

We are here to expand references, create connections and networks, and raise questions.

Thus, we assume our commitment, Arabs and Arab-diasporic alike, in the same way and with the same intensity as many of our ancestors. We invite everyone to walk this path with us, along roads we are only just beginning to open. To all, we express our sincere manifesto. Understand it however you wish, but do not say we didn't warn you:

1

Al Jaliah is an independent initiative aimed at all those who see art and thought as critical forms of expression that position us in the world in a reflective, responsible, and combative manner.

2

Nothing—absolutely nothing—justifies authoritarianism, let alone the desire for it. While sociohistorical processes can be understood, they do not require us to excuse the use of coercive power as a necessary evil. We embrace difference, yet we recognize that the complexities of social dynamics must not be naturalized or relativized to the extent that we overlook the real, lived suffering of flesh-and-blood individuals at the hands of the powerful.

3

We will fight Orientalism as an expression equivalent to any form of discrimination and racism. Exotic representations of Arab peoples will not only be rejected but denounced if their authors do not take the chance to retract.

4

We do not align with groups that vie for representative protagonism, stepping over others to ensure their prominence, whether in academia, the cultural milieu, or any other institutional space.

We understand the Arab world as a region created over the long duration through the diffusion of the language and expressions stemming from the Arabian Peninsula via the conquest of the regions now known as the Middle East and North Africa. This includes the contradictions and problems arising from ethnic, sociocultural, and historical relations that allow the use of the notion of the "Arab world" as a category of thought, which, however, cannot summarize the complexity and meaning of the multiple realities of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, racialization, religion, language, and class in the region.

5

Al Jaliah will serve the development and dissemination of knowledge about Arab reality(ies) in three languages, creating networks and aiming for the sufficiency of resources for the continuity and expansion of its production.

6

Al Jaliah is open to incorporating individuals ready to assist with editorial tasks, always through open negotiation and according to the material possibilities of the project.

7

Finally, Al Jaliah calls on all those, whether Arabs, descendants, members of the diaspora, or none of these categories, who feel ignored, underrepresented, silenced, or exploited, to get in touch and share their experiences, work, and thoughts

8

HISTORY

POLITICS

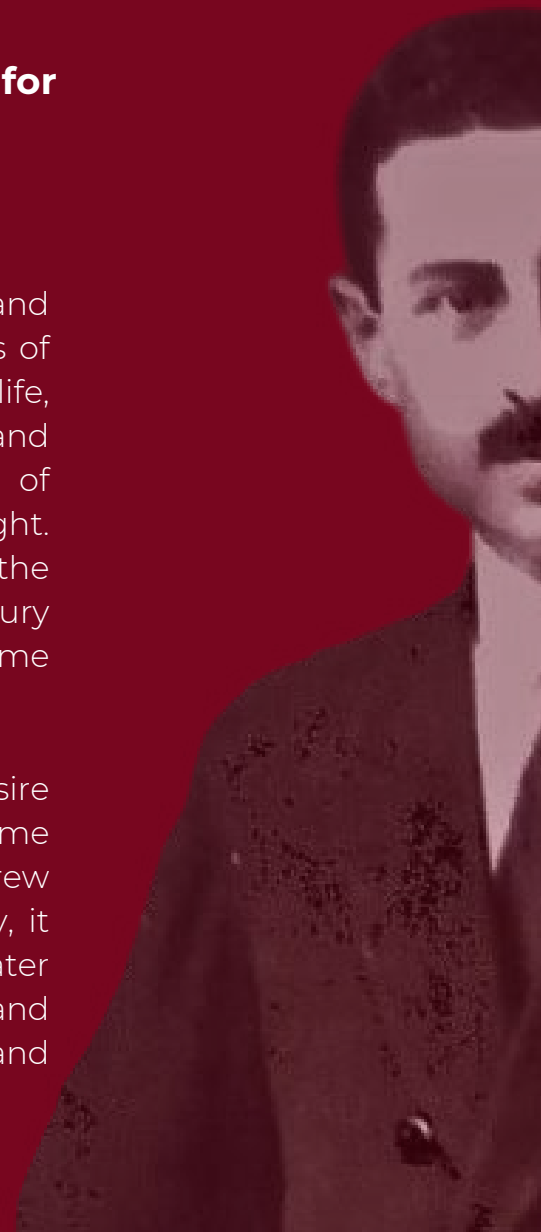
SOCIETY

THE BOOK OF I

The Duties of Authors Toward the Nation for Which They Write

No work exists without an aim that implicates its author and that does not vary according to the principles and morals of individuals. The primary objective in the struggle of life, therefore, is to obtain basic necessities: food, clothing, and shelter. Even if we were to stop at this simple limit of aspiration, we would still have to work day and night. However, over generations and years, we have surpassed the basic needs of existence, turning toward luxury, until luxury itself became a necessity, and the minimum gain became excessive for all these demands.

The source of this search beyond the basics lies in the desire for privilege, driven by whims and moral inclinations. At some point, while consuming a bit of meat and fruit, humanity grew dissatisfied with the array of colors on the table. Similarly, it became content only with wearing silk and satin, later disdaining the hut that protected against the sun's heat and the cold's brutality, aspiring instead to lofty palaces and grand buildings.



INCUMBENCIES

Sami Joaquim Racy

Translated from Portuguese by Gustavo Racy
Chapter originally published in al Hilal, n. 9, 01/06/1911.
Editor: Jirji Zeidan.



Thus, the goal of work, which once sought only what was necessary for survival, evolved into the fulfillment of the soul's desires. Our aspirations and desires knew no bounds, and the purpose of our work divided into what is beneficial and what is harmful. From the pursuit of survival, the goal shifted to the aspiration for fame and glory.

You, worker, do not perform well by merely expending energy for wages to live. Once you obtain enough bread, you transform from someone who earns to someone who seeks glory—for yourself, your nation, and your people. This is because within the self, two forces exist: the desire for privilege and the quest for fame. If these forces and talents are directed toward evil instead of good, then one seeks vain glory that benefits the self while harming others.

*the Great Wall of China,
of Babylon, the ruins of
structions have endured*

of work as far as it endures and benefits expand.

to the future and imagination to truth.

*'s Top Commandments,
of Babylon, the ruins of Athens, and Roman constructions have endured
Lucius, the philosophy of Aristotle, or the eloquence of Cicero. Similarly,
greater cruelty upon humanity or caused more urban decay than authors*

*Lucius the philosophy of
erial gain as long as they write in service of truth and the general good. Conversely,
blind to whether one's writing benefits others. The former represents the pen of
The latter represents the pen of vice, its hand deserving to be severed, as it insults
important duty is to aim for the general good.*

*nce of Cicero. Similarly,
e to bring into our homes, as they
Their authors, it is clear, seek only
st tastes of humanity. Such authors,*

*peoples or exterminated
and scientific authorship bears witness to its
d literature. Conversely, a nation enriched by
ay of its ethics and morals. If a nation's
it must care for its authors by uplifting the
works, and scorning the vulgar while banning
a greater cruelty upon*

more urban decay than

Not a worker, do not perform well by mere

The nation must elevate authors to the highest social ranks when their work genuinely serves the public good, even if fame and material gain accompany this service.

For authors, they must consider the audience for whom they write. Writing for the popular masses demands simplicity. Those who write only to display their literary prowess rarely benefit anyone. Books requiring astrologers and dictionaries for interpretation cater to a very narrow audience. Since the primary goal of writing is general benefit, books neglecting these factors often cause more harm than good.

The author must elevate people's emotions and ethics, not amplify their base instincts. They must nurture kindness and refine readers' sensitivities rather than stoking malice and resentments. Above all, before embarking on authorship, the writer must understand the importance of their subjectivity and the weight of their responsibility.

ely expending energy for waggas to live.

If you seek authorship, first of all, understand the importance of your subjectivity and the magnitude of the responsibility you bear; and understand how much your work affects general morality. Seek the common good before personal well-being and fame; seek truth in research and simplicity in expression, for literary, social, medical, and scientific authorship is proof of the ethics of communities, as well as the magnitude of their elevation. Communities, in turn, must support good and reject evil, so that those who benefit may have the glory and courage to face the difficulties of authorship, and so that authors who look down upon others may know they are lower than the communities they seek to poison, and thus abstain from authorship, disappointed and humiliated.



THE ARAB IMMIGRATION IN BRAZIL

In Brazil it is common to associate Arab immigration, originating from what are now Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine, with the figure of the peddler. This is not incorrect, but by limiting this image, often with the intention of creating a memory of this immigration through the lens of success—the self-made man, the intrepid, fearless, and courageous peddler who arrived poor and became wealthy through hard work—we overlook important facets of these immigrants and this immigration.

One of these facets refers to a class, if we can call it that, of intellectuals or at least people with a higher level of education, allowing this group to integrate into the community through other means. Doctors, teachers, philologists, poets, writers, booksellers, and even journalists like Taufik Duoun found themselves in Brazil, mainly in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, and mingled with the successful members of the colony—industrialists and merchants—who still carried the dominant propaganda of the myth of the successful peddler for a time. Somehow, these intellectuals depended on the support of these patrons, even though this relationship was not always pleasant.

While Salomão Jorge, in *Álbum da Colônia Sírio-Libanesa no Brasil* (“Album of the Syrian-Lebanese Colony in Brazil”), describes his project of collecting information, data, and history of these pioneers as the result of a young amateur's dream supported by figures like Nami Jafet, to whom the work is dedicated, Wadih Safady, in *Cenas e Cenários dos Caminhos da Minha Vida* (“Scenes and Scenery of My Life's Paths”) points out the failure of the formation of the “Centro Brasileiro de Cultura Árabe” (“Brazilian Centre for Arab Culture”) due to its administrative composition by merchants more concerned with showcasing their achievements and taking advantage of a cultural project that had little importance to them.

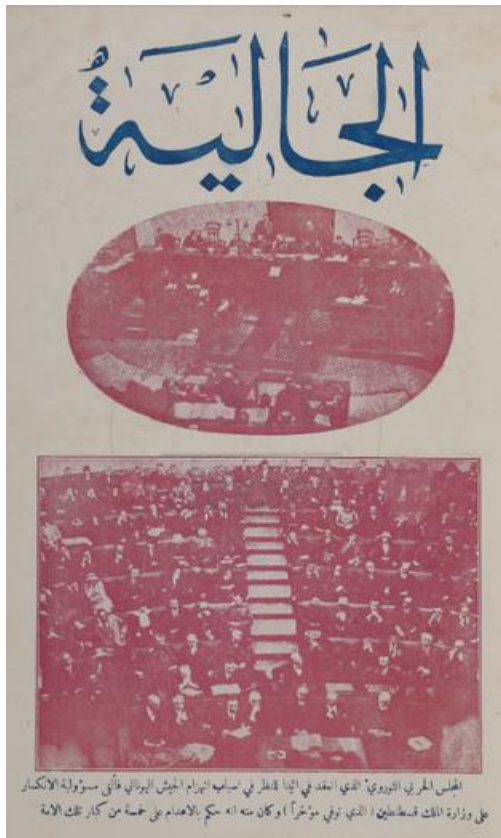


GRANT PRESS IN AZIL

Samira Adel Osman

Despite setbacks, these intellectuals coexisted with the wealthier members of the community and, in many cases, depended on them to ensure the exercise of their activities. While economic success, the value of hard work, and wealth accumulation were valued on one side, there was also an interest in creating associative movements, forming literary societies, organizing Arabic language study centers, founding publishing houses and printing presses, and creating numerous newspapers with the intention of maintaining, promoting, and informing about Arab culture in Brazil.

It can almost be said that the Arab press emerged together with the early years of this immigration. According to Wadih Safady (1966), the press was a living record of the Arab immigrant presence in Brazil, and we could add their political positions and the disputes over projects for the nations that would emerge from the liberation from Turkish-Ottoman power, the desire for or struggle against French domination, as well as the space to disseminate news, discuss social events, advertise, and publicize the numerous businesses and activities of this active colony, always speaking of itself in positive terms. In a symbiotic relationship, through the press, some ensured their survival; others gained recognition and social prestige.



“Al-Jaliah”, above, and
“Al-Karmat”, below.

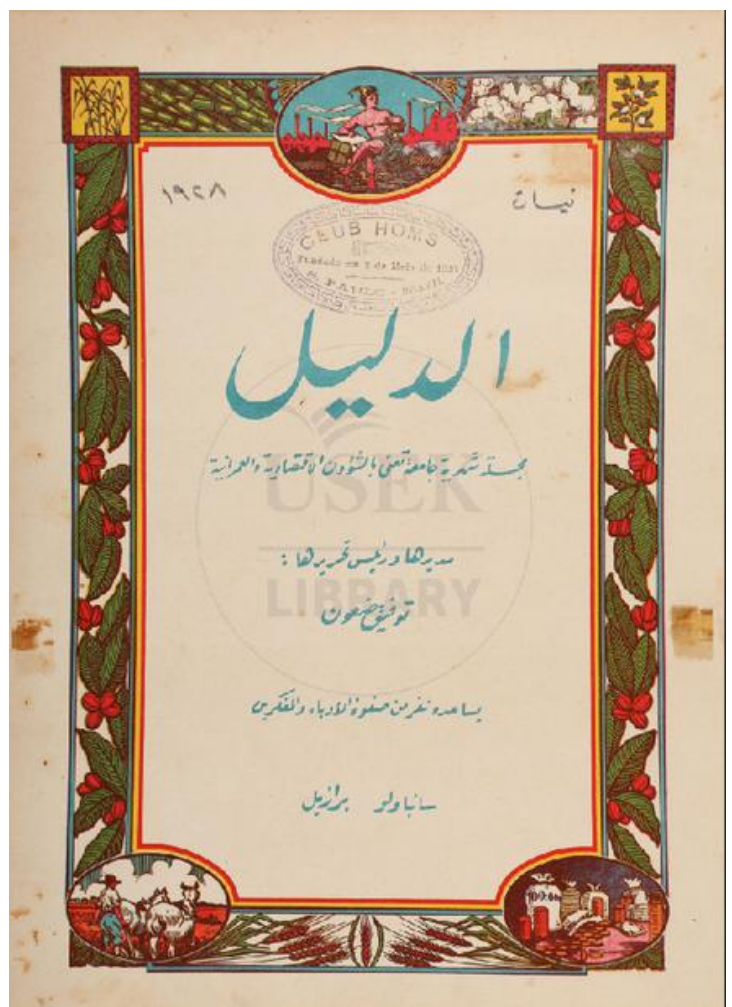
Jorge Safady, in his doctoral thesis in History defended at the University of São Paulo in 1972, presents a long list and information about the Arab newspapers that circulated throughout the Brazilian territory, some with brief details such as the name of the periodical, others with more extensive data about owners, editors, journalists; numbers, circulation, period, price; creation, circulation, merger, extinction. It is certainly a valuable catalog for studies on the subject. The Safadys (Wadih, Jamil, and Jorge) reported on the publication of the first Arab newspaper edited in Brazil: Al-Faiha, by brothers Salim and Duaibes Balech, whose first issue circulated on October 28, 1895, in the city of Campinas. The name of the newspaper, Al-Faiha, meaning “broad” or “spacious”, was a reference to the way cities like Tripoli, Damascus, and Basra were known. With Salim Balech's move to the city of Santos, the newspaper became known as Al-Barasil from April 2, 1896, incorporating other editors and writers, including Antun Najjar, who acquired the newspaper and moved the headquarters to São Paulo in 1897, due to the death of the founder. Between 1898 and 1902, the newspaper was owned by Kaisar Ibrahim Maluf, who sold it to Said Abu Jamra, changing its name to Al-Afkar (The Thought) and circulating until 1941.



The newspapers in São Paulo, besides being among the pioneers, were as numerous as they were short-lived. They emerged, merged, closed; changed hands and pens, but maintained their initial political orientation. Combining privately edited newspapers with editions from cultural, sports, and religious associations, there were about a hundred titles. Between 1900 and 1930, newspapers such as Al-Huariat by José Badaui, Al-Rumuz by Rachid Khuri, Al-Mizan by Estéfano Ghalbuni, Al-Watan by Ibrahim and Elias Farah, Al Kalam al Jadidi by Jorge Haddad, Fata Lubnan by Rachid Atiah, O Brasil by Jorge Massarah, Al-Itihad al-Arabi by Jorge Atlas, Al-Jaridat by Khalil Sasdah, Al-Siassat by Salim Akl, Al-Jaliah by Sami Racy, Síria by Elias Massarah, Al-Watan al-Hur by Assad Bechara were published.

Just like São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro hosted the pioneers of the Arab press. Al-Raguib (The Observer) circulated between 1896 and 1898 with editor Naum Labaki, who also published Al-Munazir in São Paulo. As-Sauab (The Reason), Al-'Adl (The Justice), by Chucrí Jorge Antún and Afonso Chucrí Antún, circulated between 1901 and 1941. Almost sixty periodicals were edited in Rio de Janeiro, including other cities like Campos and Niterói.

Other Brazilian cities also hosted Arab newspapers, demonstrating the geographical dispersion of this immigration across the national territory and how political engagement, partisanship, and events related to the homeland continued to be a factor of cohesion or dispute among compatriots. Belo Horizonte saw the birth of Al-Istiklal (The Independence) founded in 1910 by the Arab Society. As-Siham (The Arrows), by Jorge Ishac Iárid, was published in Manaus between 1912 and 1917, and in Belém between 1918 and 1925, circulating in the North region. In Porto Alegre, Antônio Zughbi founded Al-Faua'id (The Benefits) in 1909,



"Ad-Dalil"



"Ar-Raed", above, and "Homs" to the left.

العدد ٢ السبت في ٢٠ و ٢١ حزيران سنة ١٩٢٥ السنة السادسة عشرة

صاحب الامتياز
المراد الكسبريس طه

جميع المراسلات والملاحظات المالية
يتم بغير البريد للبريد
بغزة سوس
الرجائل لآلة اصحابها

الرائد
١٩٢٥

كل عام وطني

العدد ٢ السبت في ٢٠ و ٢١ حزيران سنة ١٩٢٥ السنة السادسة عشرة

بلد الانتداب
٩ ولايات جديدة في مصر وسوريا
٧٥ خرداً بصرى سبحة الحظير للمصريين
١٥ دعا في القبر الابريكية

الاعلام
تأريخ الادارة بناها

HOMS - SYRIE
تصدرها جمعية الرابطة الوطنية مرة في الاسبوع

الاعلام
عظيم الاصلي قواعدهم والاكتفاء بما
يبتصر لهم من اسباب الراحة في وطنهم الجليل.
تتبع ان هناك فئة ما برحت تنظر الى الوطن
القديم نظرة مئزها العوض والمساكن غير مهمة
وصية ترضى راحة الى السنوات الاثني به.
ومن هذه الفئة فئة من افاضل القوم في
الوطن والمهاجر تسميها "مجنون الياس" في
قولهم صبيلا، على ان الاخلاص وحسده لا
يبلى الى بيته التربة ان لم يتفق تجربة
واسعة وحسن تدقيق وري وشيد. والمر
الذي يتولون من برصه وشرفه على الاعتزاز
لا يكتفي بخل الغناض الطيب بل لا بد له من
دورة وديارة تدرك معها اهله للاصالة لآناش
الجسر السجى شيئاً فقيماً ورد دواعي الحياة
اليه.

فما اذا نحن السدث لم يصل الياس الى
قول بنا بعد ان نستبين بسدي الاملاخ
الواقع في اجزاء موت الامم والاعتزاز على
ما تركه لنا التاريخ من العرائث تحسد منها
ما يكفي لهم كل شأن من شؤون الحياة.
قال بعض علماء الاجتاج: ان الحروب
والظلم وضاد الاطلاق القاهي عوامل زائلة
في تقهير البلاد وهي لا تحسد شيئاً مذكوراً
إزاء نقص السكان وفساد التربة الطبيعي
وقواله جرائم الاراس.

اذا كانت هذه الجوانب الثلاث اعلم
عوامل الخراب في الامم وهي لسوء الخط
قد اتيت هذه النقطة بنوع الحس، افلا
يبدد ذلك ولاه الار فيها وقادة الفكر الى
بعضهم حارت ثم اعراضت عزائمهم قالوا

القول
انه جراب البلاد اما سنة ثلاثة : على حد
الاسكان ، والاعلان ، وانتشار الامراض ولا
سما الاراضي بها .
فيلسوف
ينظرون الناس كثيراً جربا ينظرون الى
بؤس الحياة والموت نظراً سلبياً لا يهتمون
بشؤونها ، مسائلهم انظمة مباشرة فاهين
من ان كلام من ارادهم عضو حي في ذلك
المسلك البشري العظيم فاذا اصيب احد
اعضاه هذا المهضول بمرض ما لا بد من
سرعة ذلك الضرر الى ماثر الاعضاء ، عاجلاً
او ابطأ على قدر قرب ذلك العضو من مركز
الحياة او بعده عنها ، والشعوب التي حسا
الاحساس الاكثر شعوراً من هذا القبيل
هي اكثرها تمسكاً باغالب الحياة وليندها
موقفاً عن عوارض الموت الشهي .
ومن سوء حظ سوريا ان كابوس الفتوحات
الذي اعادتها منذ طويلا قد امسك في امات في
بعض اجزائها وروح الوطنية وتدورها في بعض
الاجزاء ، والذين احدثت تنبت فيهم هذه
الروح يمانتهم الشعوب الاخرى وولايهم
اوضاعها متشعبة بقوميتهم الحية ، زعيمين
الراس يتقدمهم المخزومة ، يكاد يشرب
الياس الى قلوب بعضهم من امكان تحسين حاله
وطبهم الاصل لكثرة ما عانى المخطومين من
برازة القتل ، ثام مياليتهم اموالهم القتالة ،
وبعضهم حارت ثم اعراضت عزائمهم قالوا

انقاذ اسباب الخطية قبل تقادم الخطب وتمن
دفع الفتق على الرقيق .
قد بدأت الهجرة منذ اكثر من نصف
قرن تدفع اجناساً مقرونة ، امل العودة الى
البلاد ففسد اعمارها والسكن فيها ، وما
الآن فقد اتسع نطاقها وتحوطت المهاجرات
القرية المحيطة الى مهاجرات عائلية لا حد
لها ، والقرية بالعودة الى الوطن حلت عليها
الميل للاستهلاك في ديار الهجرة وطني
الكثير من مميزات اسللت الحياة الزرقة .
فهل هذه من امة الحياة فبالاد .
ان التاليت الكثيرة التي كانت مستقرة
في طول البلاد وعرضها قد فشت على معظمها
الايدي القوية الشاه الحارب وهي عالة انها
لم يبق لها امل للاستفادة من هذه الامتلاخ
فهل بعد عيشها ان ترها قاناً بقعة ، فهل اعتر
ابناء البلاد باعادتها الى ما كانت عليه بتدبير
المواضع القابلة لتلك لاستحداث النيت وابتعاد
مراع لمواضعي .
ان الحيات ولا سيما الملاوية منها حسا
برحت تتناب القري وحده بعد اخرى
فتفتحت بعدد ليس يقليل من القوى العاملة
واقدمت كثيراً من الاجام الشقيقة والابدان
القوية فلم تعد تشتر يذبح يذبحها الى العمل
واستثار الارض واخراج كوزها الدقيقة .
فهل بدأت تانية جديدة في هذا السبيل فاصبحت
الاراضي البائرة رقاعاً مخرقة . وهل تحوت
السيول الجارية الى جداول وبار بطيئة زوي
الارض التي قربها بدلاً من ان تجرف تربتها



União Árabe,
década de 1920.

Some of these newspapers, especially the older ones, received more generic and, why not, poetic names: "the new pen" (Al-Kalam Al-Hadidi), "the school" (Al-Madrasat), "the lighthouse" (Al-Manarat), "the vineyard" (Al-Karmat), "the stars" (An-Nujum), "the moon" (Al-Kamar), "the lilies" (Az-Zanabik), "the dawn" (Al-Fajr), "the pearls" (Al-Fara'id), "the new" (Al-Jadid), "the constellations" (Al-Kuakib), "the leaves" (As-Sahaif), "the nature" (At-Tabiat), "the bee" (Al-Nahlat), "the flowers" (Az-Zuhur), "the memory" (Az-Zikrat), "the garden" (Ar-Raudat), "the file" (Al-Mibrad). Others reflected political-philosophical positions like "the thought" (Al-Afkar), "the justice" (Al-'Adl), "the reason" (Al-Saub), "the sincerity" (Al-Ikhlās), "the tolerance" (At-Tasahul), "the truth" (Al-Hakikat), "the knowledge" (Al-Ma'arri), "the benefits" (Al-faua'id), "the curiosity" (At-Taraif), "the friend" (Al-Anis), "the cooperation" (At-Taaun), "the guide" (Ad-Dalil).

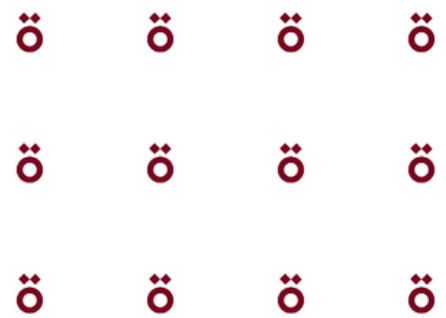
References to the communication medium or the professional's work were also used: "the journalist" (Al Jaridat), "the observer" (Ar-Rakib), "the mail" (Al-Barid), "The news" (Al-Akhbar), "the events" (Al-Hawadit), "the diary" (Ad-Diāb), "the opinions" (Ar-Ra'i), "the commentary" (An-Naqid), "the echo" (As-Sadah), "the illustration" (As-Surat), "the literary evening" (Al-Ussrat Al-Adabiyah). There were, as well, names referring to the homeland: "the homeland" (Al-Watan), "the Arab Union" (Al-Itihad Al-Arabi), "Syria" (Sírīa), and even "Brazil" (O Brasil).

National issues and debates on nations and nationalisms were also present in these newspapers, which expressed themselves in relation to projects in the homeland, advocating for the independence and the political future of their country. Oscillating between Ottomanism and maintaining ties with the Turkish Empire (such as in Al-Uthmani - "The Ottoman" and Al Micra'at - "The Whip" by two Labaki brothers, Salim and Kais), a conception of an imagined East (with Fata Ach-Charak - "The Young of the East", Correio do Oriente, and Oriente by Mussa Kuraiem) and an idealized East (with Al Andalus Al Jadidat - "The New Andalusia" and Al Usbat - "Andalusian League of Letters"), connections to Arabism, Lebanese nationalism, and Syrian nationalism were also created.

Those who defended the idea of an Arab nation and identity as a historical-cultural-linguistic concept gathered around newspapers such as Ar-Rabidat Al-'Arabíat ("The Arab League"), O Oriente Árabe ("The Arab Orient") and Notícias do Mundo Árabe ("News of the Arab World"), both published by the Arab League delegation in Brazil, as well as around Notícias Árabes ("Arab News") by Assad Zaidan; Saut Al-arab ("The Voice of the Arabs"), Saut Al-Alam Al-Arabi ("The Voice of the Arab World") edited exclusively in Portuguese; Al-Itahad Al-Arabi ("The Arab Union") by George Atlas; Al-Watan Al-Arabi ("The Arab Nation"); Akhbar Al-Arab ("Arab news"); An-Nafir Al-Arabi ("The Arab Clarion"); Al-Alam Al-Arabi ("The Arab World"), and Al Urubat ("Arabism"), which began as Az-Zikrat ("Remembrance") and changed its name in 1958, being published by the Muslim Beneficent Society.

The defense of the independence and autonomy of Syria and Lebanon was also a subject of intense debate in the colony, with ideas that reached the newspapers, which debated topics and defended positions. Some newspapers remained tied to local, tribal, and religious ties, as can be seen in the newspapers named after their place of origin, while others transcended these ties by appealing to broader and more generic elements.

'[...] it is common to assume that the Arab identity originates from what are now Palestine, with the figure of the Arab being incorrect, but by limiting the Arab identity through the intention of creating a model through the lens of success and the various facets of these immigrant



Cover of "Al-Jadid", 1920s.

Associate Arab immigration, the now Syria, Lebanon, and the memory of the peddler. This is not this image, often with the memory of this immigration [...]we overlook important and this immigration.'

Among the pro-Syria newspapers were Al-Mimás, Alepo, Homs, Al-Asimat ("The Capital"), Ach-Chabibat As-Suriat ("The Syrian youth), Suría Al-Jadidat ("The New Syria"), Al-Jaridat As-Suriat ("The Syrian Newspaper"), Al-Watan ("The Nation"), Al-Watan Al-Hurr ("The Free Nation") dedicated to the Syrian National Party, An-Najmat Al-Suriat ("The Start of Syria), Suria ("Syria"), Ar-Rabitat ("The League") of the Syrian Political League, Al-Faraid. Among the pro-Lebanon newspapers were Al Arzat ("The Cedar"), Al Arzart Lubnán ("The Lebanese Cedar"), Bicharri, Lubnan Al-Kabir ("Great Lebanon"), Arzat Lubnan ("Cedar of Lebanon"), Al-Jami'at Al-Lubnaniat ("The Lebanese Community"), Lubnán ("Lebanon"), Al-Itihad Al-Lubnani ("Lebanese Union"), An-Nahdat Al-Lubiniat (Lebanese Renaissance), Fata Lubnán ("Young Lebanon"), and Revista do Líbano ("The Lebanon Magazine").

After the initial decades of a great profusion of titles, editors, debates, ideas, and controversies, reaching hundreds of monolingual and bilingual newspapers and magazines, two issues led to a decrease in this cultural and political effervescence, and consequently, the number of publications in circulation. One was of a national nature and refers to the prohibition of publishing in foreign languages during the Vargas Era, which lasted from 1941 to 1945, directly affecting immigrants. The other was the end of World War II and the independence of Lebanon and Syria, ending the heated and passionate debate about a future that had just become the present. The titles that resisted or emerged assumed a less political character, and although concerned with reporting on events in the Arab world, they did so in a less committed manner and without major positions. Instead of this initial political character, newspapers and magazines became spaces for social themes, social events, celebrations, cultural and religious topics, moving away from an idea of national unity and identity engagement to become a social column of the wealthy, who celebrated, married, died, did charity and philanthropy, and promoted themselves, this time to garner votes in national politics.





SALUA ATLAS

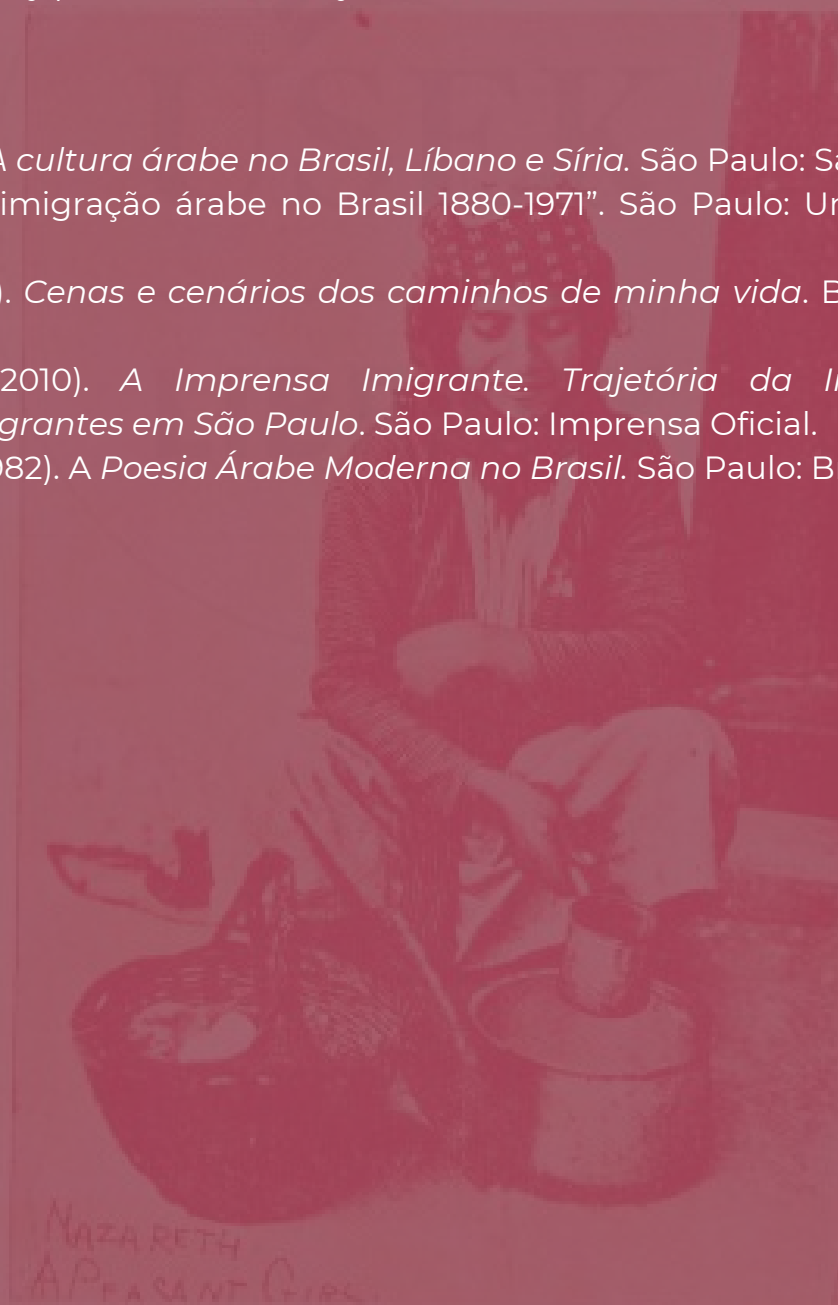
Founder of "*Al-Karmat*"

A highlight should be given to this Arab press: the women's newspapers and magazines. *Al-Karmat* ("The Vine") is considered the first Arab women's magazine in Brazil and the Americas and was founded in 1914 by Salua Salameh Atlas, married to George Mikhail Atlas who was the founder of *Al-Itahad Al-Arabi*. Salua was born in Syria in 1883, graduated as a teacher from the Women's School of Homs, a city where she taught as well as in Zahlé. In Brazil, where she arrived in 1914 newly married, she worked as a writer, poet, and speaker, in addition to directing the newspaper between 1914 and 1949, the year of her death. More recent was the founding of *Marahel* ("Phases") in 1954, initiated by Mariana Dabul de Fajuri. Born in 1889 in Lebanon, widowed at 26, she emigrated with three children to Cuba, moved to Argentina where she met her husband Elias Mussa Fajuri, and later settled in Brazil in 1940. A frequenter of literary salons and concerned with disseminating Arab culture in the Mahjar, she ran the magazine until 1984, which became *Chams* ("Sun"), one of the few that remained, along with *Al-Urubat*. A few decades earlier, the typewriters had gone silent in the remaining *O Clarim* ("The Clarion"), *O Telex* ("Telex"), *O Oriente* ("The Orient"), *Al-Arz* ("The Cedar"), *Brasil-Líbano*, and *Layazul*.

Many newspapers had short lives; some disappeared, others merged; many left no material evidence of their existence; few were preserved in their entirety, a part survived guarded by the dust of time and eaten by moths that fed peacefully on words, ideals, dreams, and hopes. Some more privileged ones survived in family memory and in search of ties with the past, reemerge. In another form, through another medium, with other intentions, but with the desire to be memory, celebration, and novelty. Al-Jaliah circulated from 1922 to 1929, founded by Beny, and Sami Racy, the idealizer of the project. Sami was born in 1880, studied at the American University of Beirut, emigrated to Brazil in 1900. He directed the magazine until 1927, the year of his death, and was succeeded by his brother Beny. In 1929 the magazine was sold to the brothers Taufik and Salim Kurban, who suspended the publication of the newspaper two months after the acquisition. The short existence is compensated with this project that intends to modernize the means of disseminating Arab culture in Brazil not only among the colony and their compatriots but also among those who wish to know, contribute, and spread the legacy that is already part of the country.

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THE ORDER AND T

A Historical Account of the Brazilian

I do not doubt that every thinking Palestinian, or those like myself whose trials have been cushioned by good fortune and privilege, know somehow that all the real parallels between Israel and South Africa get badly shaken up in his consciousness when he reflects seriously on the difference between white settlers in Africa and Jews fleeing European anti-Semitism. But the victims in Africa and Palestine are wounded and scarred in much the same sort of ways, although the victimizers are different.
[Said, 1980, p. 119]

Protests in support of the Palestinian cause around the world are often associated with democratic regimes, left-wing parties, and anti-imperialist movements. Governments and populations in colonized territories in Africa, Asia, and Latin America tend to sympathize with the Palestinian struggle for sovereignty and self-determination. According to Edward Said (1980, p. 68-69), 'there is an unmistakable coincidence between the experiences of Arab Palestinians at the hands of Zionism and the experiences of those black, yellow, and brown people who were described as inferior and subhuman by nineteenth-century imperialists.' Although anticolonial movements emerged in the same period as the spread of anti-Semitism in Europe, the same capitalist West is periodically forced to revisit the memory of some constantly repressed atrocities, including African enslavement, the genocide of indigenous peoples in the Americas, and the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and refugee camps over the past 76 years.

Despite the founding of the State of Israel being closely linked to the end of World War II, a racist stance prevailed in the division between Jews and other peoples classified as enemies. Such a dominant stance, in Hannah Arendt's (2016) view, would not commit to the conquest of its protagonists, but to their suicide. Furthermore, since its creation, the State of Israel has received subsidies and aid from U.S. administrations to build the nation's development and defense.


THE SUBVERSIVES

Pro-Palestinian Solidarity Movement

Luciana Garcia de Oliveira

Zionism, despite its multiplicity of components and meanings, has been characterized by the unequivocal expression: "a land without a people for a people without a land," adopting a classic colonial ideological tradition that asserts authority over a territory. In the specific case of Palestine, territorial control began through pernicious propaganda. By describing Palestinian territory as an empty, uninhabited land, Israel consequently considered the local population insignificant. Moreover, Zionist leaders reproduce tactics of discrimination and oppression, making Zionism solely associated with colonialism and racism.

Despite this, the Palestinian cause, as a humanitarian cause, has not been a unanimous one. And it still isn't. However, we do encounter solidarity through multiple forms of demonstrations defending the Palestinian cause in Brazil and around the world. The on-going genocide perpetrated by Israel in Gaza has driven various demonstrations in streets and universities in countries that have historically supported Israel and its military forces. In recent days, the largest pro-Palestine demonstrations have taken place in the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Belgium.




Since the Aqsa Flood operation on 7 October, 2023 many street demonstrations in Brazil continue to occur in cities like São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Porto Alegre, as the genocide in Gaza intensifies. Despite the global tendency for governments to support Palestine according to their position in the political spectrum, Brazilian foreign policy has been invariably pro-Palestine, with the exception of Jair Bolsonaro's administration. Already in the 1970s, during the civil-military dictatorship, therefore, the Brazilian government supported the UN's resolution 3379, which classified Zionism as a form of racism and racial-discrimination.

As a result of Brazil's support for the 1975 anti-Zionist motion - which reflected the country's stance for the Third World, having founded the Group of the 77 at the UN, revealing its militant unalignment in search of broader possibilities for international trade -, the country became a target of American activism in defense of Human Rights. At that time, global media emphatically denounced the torture, administrative detentions, and disappearances of people during the Brazilian Civil-Military Dictatorship. The death of journalist Vladimir Herzog* had immense international repercussions and was considered a significant symbol of authoritarianism and human rights violations in Brazil.

On the other hand, the continuity of the developmentalist project, with an emphasis on industrial modernization, depended heavily on oil imports from the Middle East. The fear of a potential fuel supply suspension led the Brazilian government to abstain from the boycott against Iraq in 1972, following the nationalization of the Iraq Petroleum Company, which had been controlled by foreign oil companies until then (Santos, 2000).

*Born Vlado Herzog, in 1937 in Osijek, former Yugoslavia, Herzog was a journalist, professor and playwright of the Brazilian Civil-Military Dictatorship while arrested in the DOI-DOCI (Department of Information Operations - Centre for International Information) in 1968. He committed suicide, but the chief-rabbi of São Paulo, Henri Sobel, upon seeing the torture marks on Herzog's body, performed a ritual according to Jewish tradition. This act led to immense repercussion and an inter-religious act that represented



According to Norma Breda dos Santos (2000), during the 1973 international oil crisis exacerbated by the Yom Kippur War, states that supported Portugal, South Africa, and Israel risked having their oil supply suspended. From then on, Brazilian diplomacy began to more explicitly defend the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. In 1974, the Foreign Minister under President Ernesto Geisel, Antônio Francisco Azeredo da Silveira, publicly reaffirmed Brazil's support for the independence of Portuguese Africa, vehemently condemned the apartheid regime in South Africa, and opposed the violent and arbitrary occupation of Palestinian territories.

In 1979, Brazil became the first Latin American country to open a representation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) on its soil, at a time when many Western countries still considered the PLO a terrorist entity. In the mid-1970s and early 1980s, during the military regime, the Palestinian-Brazilian community felt comfortable enough to establish the first representative institution of the Palestinian diaspora, the Arab Palestinian Federation of Brazil (FEPAL). In September 1982, FEPAL, together with the youth group Sanaúd, composed of young Arab-Palestinians, organized the first major public demonstration on Paulista Avenue, in São Paulo, to protest the massacres at the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila in 1982, during the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990). Besides the Palestinian diaspora in Brazil and the Arab community, the demonstration received support from various civil society groups and Brazilian political parties, such as the National Union of Students (UNE) and the Workers' Party (PT).

of Jewish origin. A militant in the Brazilian Communist Party, he was tortured and killed by the Brazilian Civil-Internal Defense Operations), at the HQ of the II Army, in São Paulo, in 1975. The killing was officially announced whilst preparing it for the burial, decided not to have the ceremony made in the area destined to suicidal ed an important episode in the resistance against the dictatorship (Editor's note)

Amidst the political fervor of the *Diretas Já!** movement, the ongoing political formation of Arab youth, composed of second-generation Syrian, Lebanese, and Palestinian immigrants, spurred a group of over 200 young people to gather at the headquarters of the Palestine Society of Brazil, which they had founded, located on Senador Queiróz Avenue in downtown São Paulo. The mobilization of Arab-Palestinian youth became quite intense. Most members of Sanaúd intended to transform the group, which met on Sundays at the Palestine Society headquarters, into a formal association governed by the PLO's directives.

The political activism carried out by FEPAL and Sanaúd members took advantage of the international outcry over the Sabra and Shatila massacres in Lebanon and the momentum of the *Diretas Já* movement to promote the Palestinian cause in Portuguese to the Brazilian public. In 1983, during the III Congress of the Palestinian Federation at the Hilton Hotel in São Paulo, some leaders of the Palestinian diaspora finally succeeded in formalizing the Sanaúd Cultural Association. A solemn letter was presented to the Palestinian ambassador to Kuwait, who represented the Palestinian Authority at the congress. The formalization of Sanaúd led to the founding of 14 more Sanaúd divisions in various Brazilian cities, including Maringá and Foz do Iguaçu, in the state of Paraná, Cuiabá, in Mato Grosso, Recife, in Pernambuco, and Porto Alegre, in Rio Grande do Sul, among others.

In the 1970s, during the military regime, the Brazilian government voted in favor of Resolution No. 3379/1975, which classified Zionism as a form of racism and racial discrimination.

According to testimonies from some organizers of the III COPLAC Congress in São Paulo, despite the UN's anti-Zionist motion being in effect, organizing a Palestinian event during a period of exception required some skill to bring together Palestinian leaders and leftist political parties considered "subversive" by the military regime. The congress organizers stated that they were obliged to invite some representatives of the military regime to the opening ceremony, despite the audience's disapproval (Oliveira, 2017). Otherwise, it would have been practically impossible for the III COPLAC Congress to take place officially.

Despite the vigilant presence, the III COPLAC Congress gathered the Palestinian diaspora from Brazil and Latin America in São Paulo, featuring an extensive cultural program, Dabke performances, debates, and demonstrations supporting the Palestinian cause. Similarly, in February 1985, the Sanaúd Youth organized their First Meeting of the Arab Palestinian Youth of Latin America and the Caribbean on the campus of the Methodist University of Piracicaba (UNIMEP), in the state of São Paulo. The event was dedicated to the memory of Fahed Kawasmeh, the

former mayor of Al Khalil city in the southern West Bank Hebron, who was assassinated in Jordan by a PLO dissident, and to UNIMEP's chancellor, Elias Boaventura, who resisted pressures to ensure the meeting took place at the university. In the end, the "Piracicaba Declaration" was issued, appealing to Arab governments to fulfill their commitments to the PLO and the Palestinian cause.

Political and cultural rigor of the Palestinian diaspora notwithstanding, mobilization for the Palestinian cause lasted until the late 1980s. The Sanaúd Cultural Association ceased to exist in 1987, at the beginning of the First Intifada in Palestine. The interruption of the Palestinian movement ironically coincided with Brazil's democratization process. The 1975 anti-Zionist motion was revoked at the end of the Cold War in 1991. Along with the disheartening atmosphere, the signing of the Oslo Peace Accords in 1993 was followed by significantly violent events: the massacre at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Al Khalil in 1994 and the expansion of settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. By the end of the 1990s, FEPAL had drastically reduced its political activity.

Until the mid-2010s, there were no programs dedicated exclusively to the Palestinian cause in Brazil. The Palestinian political movement would be revived decades later, in a new political-social reality, and primarily within other institutional spheres. Unlike the 1980s, the Palestinian-Brazilian movement has become broader, now bringing together previously opposing political groups in Palestine. And, as in the past, demonstrations in Brazil continue to feature Arab and Palestinian presence and diverse sectors of Brazilian civil society: political parties, social movements, and identity groups.

As the organized Palestinian movement gained dialogue with the Brazilian government, many international policy demands were and still are being met. Some even recently led the current Brazilian president to be considered *persona non grata* in Israel. The Palestinian-Brazilian solidarity movement has also been and still is very active in Brazilian political and social causes. FEPAL supported the *Diretas Já!* movement and continues to work jointly with the Landless Workers' Movement (MST). Additionally, many Palestinians and their descendants are affiliated with Brazilian political parties, and some have held political office. Notable examples are Salvador Khuryieh and Souheil Sayegh, Brazilians of Palestinian origin. Khuryie was affiliated with the Workers' Party (PT), and served as mayor of Taubaté in São Paulo between 1989 and 1992 and state deputy congressman between 1997 and 2003. Sayegh was also affiliated with PT. He was the president of FEPAL and ran as state deputy congressman in 1983.

*The *Diretas Já* (Direct [elections] now) movement was a political movement of civil character which demanded direct presidential elections (Editor's note).

The movement of the Palestinian diaspora in Brazil is part of the history of the formation of Brazilian society. Although Palestinians and their descendants politically advocate for their homeland, this stance is not incongruent with their engagement and identification as Brazilians.

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BRAZILIAN NECROPOLITICS,

The following text was originally written on May 28th, 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Still unpublished, Dr. Calfat's article portrays an increasingly important issue within the Brazilian political and social scenario, namely, the rise of Brazil's far-right and its connection with Zionism through neo Pentecostal churches, headed, among others, by then President Jair Bolsonaro and his entourage.

By May 2020, Brazil had surpassed 25,000 deaths due to the Coronavirus pandemic, with a daily death rate near a thousand and with full lockdown being studied in bigger cities. Still, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, who within the course of one month had already dismissed two Health Ministers, was being frequently displayed supporting pro-government demonstrations, shaking hands with zealots and ignoring the repeated calls for social distancing. While some countries were then able to slowly reopen their economies and resume some sense of normality, Brazilians had to somehow make sense of the abnormal necropolitics they were left with.

Minoritarian, right-wing, anti-established press, pro-military intervention and down-with-congress-and-judiciary protests slowly became part of the political landscape of the country. Fueling a negationist rhetoric, these groups called for the ousting of pro-social distancing and pro-vaccine mayors and governors. On top of this, in demonstrations and rallies, the so-called Messiah [Jair Messias Bolsonaro] was courted by nothing less than USA and Israeli flags. These demonstrations demanded their 'myth' [mito, in Portuguese] to hold ultimate discretionary executive power to wipe the country clean of corruption, reestablish moral, family values, and put Brazil "back on the right track." Not ironically, Marx had already observed that history repeats itself - first as a tragedy, second as a farce.



WITH A ZIONIST TWIST

Natalia Nahas Carneiro Maia Calfat

Countless times since the beginning of his government, Bolsonaro highlighted Israel's importance to Brazil, arguing that the two countries should reconnect. The Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made the effort to be personally present when Bolsonaro took office in early 2019. On that occasion, Netanyahu received Brazil's highest commendation awarded to foreign citizens, the Ordem do Cruzeiro do Sul, a national prize formerly presented to Nelson Mandela, Queen Elizabeth II, Che Guevara and former US President Dwight Eisenhower.

The then Israeli ambassador to Brazil, Yossi Shelley, was one of the diplomats with the highest transit within the Brazilian government, appearing alongside the President at various public events. Commercially and diplomatically, though, Israel had never been among the closest countries to Brazil. However, home to the second largest Jewish community in Latin America (behind Argentina), Brazil was one of the first countries to formally support the recognition of the state of Israel after its creation. It was a Brazilian, Oswaldo Aranha, who chaired the United Nations General Assembly when the partition plan was approved in 1947.

Bolsonaro had been flirting with Israel as well as with Jewish symbols since quite early in his electoral campaign. Aiming at Brazilian conservative evangelicals' new right, the extremist and pro-armament approximation with Israel makes sense given Christian Zionists believe that the return of the Jews to the 'land of Israel' is in accordance with prophecy and necessary for the second coming of Jesus to the 'land of Israel' is in accordance with prophecy and necessary for the second coming of Jesus Christ. Additionally, such a segment of Brazilian evangelicals and Jewish settlers share a conservative social agenda, as well as a deep hostility towards Islam, as the Brazilian anthropologist David Nemer explains.

For at least two decades, Jewish iconography, rituals, clothing, and symbols have been incorporated in Brazilian protestant evangelical cults, mainly neo pentecostal ones. According to Marta Francisca Topel, anthropologist from the Center for Jewish Studies at the University of São Paulo, this is done by using dispensationalism - emphasizing the continuity between the Church and Judaism -, syncretism, bricolage and globalization of the religious. Brazilian messianic churches, which have multiplied in recent years, bear particular architecture with names written in Hebrew at the entrance to the temples. Despite criticism from orthodox rabbis, the President of the Israeli Confederation of Brazil (Conib), Claudio Lottenberg, even attended and praised the inauguration of Solomon's Temple (Templo de Salomão).

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tion of Solomon's Temple (Templo de Salomão).

Additionally, almost all evangelical churches frequently organize trips to Israel to visit Christian and Jewish holy places. Even though such trips to the Holy Land by Brazilian evangelical pastors started as early as the 1950s, mass evangelical tourism has significantly increased in the last two decades. Interestingly, as Magno Paganelli (2019) points out, although these trips serve as instruments to foment supporters and ambassadors who may potentially reinforce a narrative in favor of Israeli state interests, interview data gathered from such trips show otherwise.

Many examples of this form of Christian Zionism can be collected. According to the Brazilian newspaper *Folha de São Paulo*, in 2014, during an interview with the Israeli Federation of Rio de Janeiro, Church Minister Silas Malafaia stressed that 'For us, the God of Israel is our God. There is absolutely no difference.' In 2017, during the "March for Jesus" (*Marcha para Jesus*), Dori Goren, the Israeli Consul General in São Paulo, climbed on an electric trio marked "Jerusalem, the eternal capital of Israel." According to rabbi Michel Schlesinger, from the São Paulo Israeli Congregation, "The key to understanding the approach is the 'deep connection to Israel.' They recognize the legitimacy of Israeli sovereignty over the promised land, which means that there may be a common agenda."



So when Bolsonaro claimed he was committed to Brazilian Supreme Court of Justice - which actually happened with the nomination of André Mendonça to the Court -, what he was really doing was continuously and incrementally siding with the transnational evangelical far-right: the very foundation of Trump's electorate. According to the Pew Research Center, in the United States twice as many white evangelical Protestants as Jews say that Israel was given to the Jewish people by God (82% vs. 40%) - on par with the percentage of Orthodox Jews who believe this (84%). In a research from 2014, among white evangelical Protestants, nearly half (46%) said that the U.S. is not providing enough support for Israel. When asked whether they sympathize with either side, 72% of white evangelicals sided with Israel in the dispute while 4% picked the Palestinians.



Bolsonaro
and
Netanyahu

Image: Carta
Capital

The special relationship between evangelicals and the Zionist movement is an old one, and Bolsonaro rides on his diversionary tactics to maintain his hardcore quarter of supporters. The former President's form of populism was - and is, still - crisis-fed, betting on the politics of confrontation and division to keep his loyal voter base mobilized. He textually said that he "no longer wanted to negotiate with the other powers of the Republic" on April 24th 2020.

In early May 2020, Conib (Israeli Confederation of Brazil) issued a statement declaring that 'the constant use of Israeli flags [in demonstrations and declarations such as Bolsonaro's] can send the wrong message about the pluralist composition of the Brazilian Jewish community.' It also stated that 'Conib has a firm commitment to democracy and public freedoms' regretting the presence of Israeli flags – what it calls a "vibrant democracy" - in acts where attacks on democratic institutions are taking place.'

The organization Jews for Democracy (Judeus Pela Democracia) effusively declared on their Twitter account: 'The Israeli flag in a demonstration against democracy does NOT represent Jewish values!! What patriotism is this that waves flags and ignores thousands of dead? No more symbol hijacking!.' But Luiz Mairovitch, president of A Hebraica Club, in Rio de Janeiro, seemed to differ: 'I see no reason for it to be harmful (the use of the flag). On the contrary. [...] For a Jew, it is always welcome, a cause for joy to know that there are people with us, supporting us.'

It is true that, to a large extent, Bolsonaro's image of Israel dialogues with an "imagined Israel," one that excludes leftist or anti-zionist Jews in Brazil, as argued here by Michel Gherman, a historian from the Interdisciplinary Center of Jewish and Arab Studies at Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. According to Gherman, the use of Jewish symbols is a result of a Judeo-Christian civilizing perspective, a production and reinterpretation of Christian fundamentalism, bearing little resemblance to the actual Jewish element. So this "Imaginary Israel" Bolsonaro would be flirting with would have to do with specific demands from a new extreme right that looks at a mythical, magical place - or a non-place – an Israel connected with an imaginary time that responds to its political demands.

But this silencing of real Israel does not mean that the Israel connected to history is libertarian – neither that it is disconnected from the apartheid language. Not to deny the presence of anti-occupation Jews in Israel, but the insignia that binds together the new far-right is based on oppression, rejection of Palestinian self-determination and settled on legislations, policies, and practices that constitute the crime of apartheid according to the UN, and which currently unfolds as a genocide perpetrated against the Palestinian people.

In February 2017, Bolsonaro declared 'There is no such petty tale of the Secular State. The State is Christian, and the minority that is against it should move. Let's make Brazil for the majorities. Minorities have to bow to majorities. Minorities either fit in or just disappear.' I am sure his declaration shows complete disregard for mathematician Nassim Nicholas Taleb's minority rule, according to which the intolerant minority precisely sets the authority – meaning Bolsonaro actually got it backwards. Quite symptomatic, I should say.

An analogous spirit is found in Israel's 2018 law declaring the country an officially Jewish nation-state and reserving exclusively to the Jewish people the right to self-determination – something the Palestinians have known for decades in practice. The nation-state law states that: 'the right to exercise national self-determination' in Israel is 'unique to the Jewish people'; establishes Hebrew as Israel's official language, downgrading Arabic to a "special status"; and establishes 'the development of Jewish settlement as a national value,' normalizing occupation given the state 'shall act to encourage and promote its establishment and strengthening.' In 2019 Netanyahu went on to call the Joint List, an alliance of Arab political parties, a "terrorist-supporting fifth column".

Adding to the frequent appropriation of the Israeli flag, the Brazilian President abused of scurrilous language, calling the Coronavirus a 'hysteria', a 'little chill or a trivial flu' during an official televised statement in March 24, 2020, and a 'fantasy'. 2020 Brazilian style of the "*L'État c'est moi*" was Bolsonaro's "I am the Constitution" from April 20. Nazi grammar and references also abounded. In January 16, 2020, the then Special Secretary for Culture, Roberto Alvim, was fired after posting a video on his social media in which he paraphrased excerpts from a 1933 speech by Joseph Goebbels in Nazi Germany to the sound of Richard Wagner. On April 22 the Minister of Foreign Relations, Ernesto Araújo, compared social isolation to Nazi concentration camps.

He also wrote on his personal page that the coronavirus pandemic was being used to implement a communist plan, which he called 'comunavirus'. In May 9 Felipe Cruz Pedri, working at Flávio Bolsonaro's office and author of the founding manifesto of Aliança Pelo Brasil - a party launched by Jair Bolsonaro – published on his social networks: "Stay home" is the new Heil Hitler!'. The following day, the federal government's Special Secretariat for Social Communication (SECOM) published a message on its social media stating: "work, union and the truth will set us free", similar to the Auschwitz 'Arbeit macht frei' motto.

The rising tide of demonstrations of intolerance, including Nazi statements, do not seem to bother Netanyahu. Not surprisingly, though, as Christian Zionists share with Israel the interest in the colonization movement and financially support Israeli settlement and annexation projects in the so-called 'Biblical Heartland' in the West Bank.

Seeking greater alignment with US foreign policy, in August 2019 president Jair Bolsonaro and his son, the congressman Eduardo Bolsonaro, both claimed they intended to classify Hezbollah, the Islamic Jihad, and Hamas as a terrorist organizations, as well abandon the Brazilian participation in the peacekeeping operation in Lebanon - the Brazilian Armed Forces had been in charge of the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force mission since 2011. The positioning, as well as the campaign promise to transfer the Brazilian embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, also distanced itself from the domestic tradition of an autonomous foreign policy.

Historically, Brazil has struggled to build a state agenda grounded on pacifism, dialogue, and independence, as well as based on the respect and prevalence of human rights and international law. Neutrality, respect for sovereignty and self-determination of peoples, as well as reinforcement of UN resolutions has guided Brazilian foreign policy towards the Middle East and other regions. Consensus building, balance, national independence, self-determination of peoples, and no intervention have historically oriented Brazilian international stance and diplomacy - not repulsive unilateralism and subordination to foreign governments. The automatic alignment to the United States and Israel is highly detrimental in terms of the country's legitimacy in the world, crumbling our diplomatic efforts and external credibility – not to mention commercial and investment losses with Arab and Islamic partners.

The striking resemblance and blunt references to Nazi-fascism *modus operandi* might fool the observer into thinking a thin line is established between anti-semitism and opposition to Zionism. After all, this is a commonly used diversionary strategy. But do not be fooled. Brazilian new right's alignment with Israel and other ultra-right governments around the world is part of a bigger transnational ideological agenda. Intentionally blurring the line between Judaism and Israel also suits Netanyahu's interests.

Currently, the Israeli government does not only enforces a military state but imposes a genocide on the Palestinian people, openly declared after the Hamas attacks of October 7th, 2023. The regime drew a secondary focus on southern Lebanon, promoting continued attacks, and whose invasion is a strategic agenda for extreme right authorities.

As a broader phenomenon, Bolsonarism captures different demands from Brazilian society, and certainly does not respond to Christian Zionism alone. The right has many faces, extreme or not, and encompasses as many elements as anti-Labour Party (PT) stances, previous economic and political crises, and the threat of moral decay.

Nonetheless, the alliance between the Israeli far-right, Trump, Bolsonaro and many other autocrats takes place under a broader transnational axis of autocratization. To the forsake of the Palestinians, such leaders leverage their own political agendas and domestic constituents by reinforcing the global alliance and by supporting Israel as a beacon of democracy and progress. Such endeavor normalizes violence by means of dehumanizing the otherness and alterity.

While Brazilian leftist Jews and progressive evangelicals tried to detach their image from Bolsonaro and his far-right agenda, for the Israeli government these manifestations of support only conveniently furthered the normalization of the occupation. Zionist business as usual, with an added Latin bonus.

2020 Brazilian style of the “L’État c’est moi” was Bolsonaro’s “I am the Constitution” from April 20.





A replica of Bolsonaro's head used in a performance by Indecolletive: [FOLHA DE SP](#).

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Bolsonaro in Occupied Palestine,
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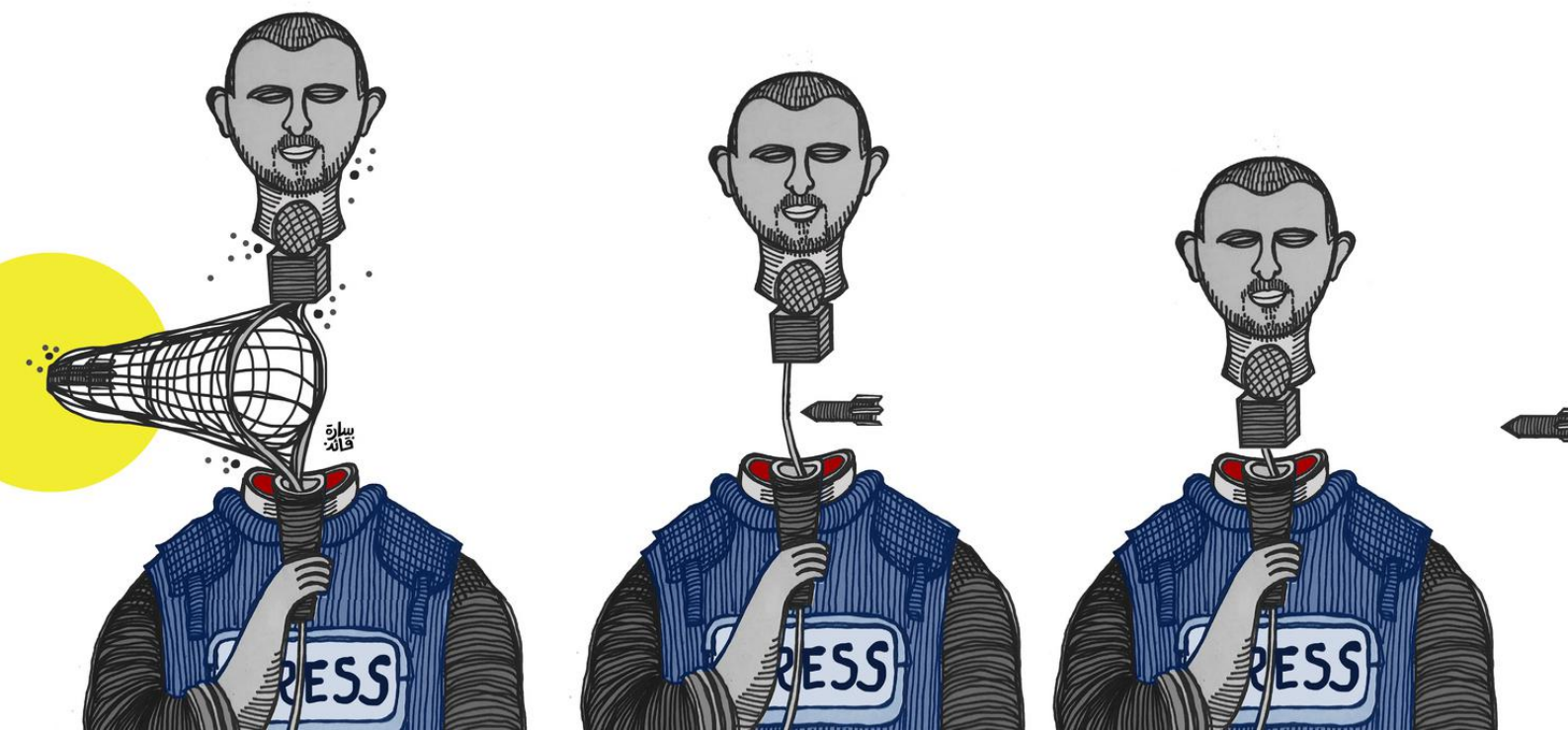
“Minorities have to bow to majorities. Minorities either fit in or just disappear’.”

ORIENTALISM,

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The Israeli occupation army is waging an ongoing genocidal war against the Palestinian population in the Gaza Strip. The 2.4 million inhabitants of Gaza live under constant Israeli bombardment and face unprecedented violence. More than 2 million Palestinians have been displaced within the Gaza Strip, representing over 90% of its total population, while the number of Palestinians killed exceed 34,000, including nearly 14,000 children. The number of children reported killed in the first 4 months in the Gaza Strip was already higher than the number of children killed in 4 years of wars around the world combined.



IMPERIALISM

AND THE WESTERN COVERAGE OF PALESTINE

Joseph Daher

Moreover, there are reports that Biden cut a deal with Israel, greenlighting an offensive on Rafah—where more than 1.5 million people have taken refuge—in exchange for Israel limiting its response to the Iranian counterattack. Israel has amassed dozens of tanks and armored vehicles in southern Israel in apparent preparations for an invasion of Rafah and is likely to pursue its genocidal war against the Palestinians in Gaza before conducting further and more intense military operations against Iran and Hezbollah.

Its occupation forces and settlers have also escalated violence against Palestinians in the West Bank, assassinating more than 480 people since October 7. They have seized 1,100 hectares of land, declared them state property, and given Israeli Jews exclusive rights to lease them.

This in many ways represents a new Nakba (“catastrophe”), following the first in 1948, when more than 700,000 Palestinians were driven by force from their homes and became refugees.

Western mainstream media are however still focusing mainly on Israeli “suffering” and “self-defence” following Hamas attacks on October 7, 2023, leading to the death of 1,139 persons, including 695 Israeli civilians, 373 members of the security forces and 71 foreigners. It should be noted that many Israeli civilians this day were also killed by Israeli occupying forces, including by firing tank shells at houses where Israelis were detained. This information has however remained mainly uncovered by

mainstream western media. Some articles have nevertheless started in the past few months to debunk numerous false information initially produced by Israeli media and relayed without any verifications by western mainstream media, such as claims that 40 Israeli children had been beheaded during the Hamas attack. These fabricated accusations were initially endorsed and repeated by mainstream western media and several politicians, including US President Joe Biden. In addition to this, several studies have demonstrated media biases against Palestinians in different western countries.

Moreover, alternative journalism from the ground has become nearly impossible as Israeli occupation forces have been quasi systematically targeting Palestinian journalists in the Gaza Strip. More than 133 Palestinian journalists have indeed been killed by Israel since October 7th.

At the same time, the reality of the ongoing Israeli genocidal war against the Gaza Strip is often ignored by mainstream media. Palestinians are dehumanized, as well as their political agency. In mainstream western media, history starts indeed on the 7th October and attempts to explain why we reached this point are not allowed, particularly from Palestinians themselves. As explained by Palestinian journalist Motaz Azaiza in a recent tweet regarding questions relating to 7th of October in mainstream western media “So I answered this question multiple times but they never kept it or shared it because they record my

interview before and then take what is suitable for their agenda”.

Indeed, the nature of the Israeli state as a settler colonial entity and its policies created the conditions for the events of October 7th and after, just like any colonial and occupying actor throughout history. Until today however, October 7th is generally called a “terrorist attack” without any historical context, while Israeli response on Gaza is described as an act of “self-defense”...

But why are the majority of Western mainstream media continuing to adopt and defend the Israeli narrative? Why the dehumanization of the Palestinians and blaming them for the current event? What are Western mainstream media’ interests in such covering?

The roots of the answers to these questions are to be found in orientalism, racism and imperialism, which are all connected. The images and propaganda promoted by mainstream Western media are indeed not separated to Western ruling political and economic elites’ interests.

ORIENTALISM, HISTORICAL EVOLUTION, BUT SERVING SAME PURPOSES

Orientalism is an essentialist ideology, a method of analysis deeply rooted in philosophical and methodological idealism, in Hegelian philosophy, promoting the idea that the destiny of people is determined by their so called “eternal” culture, and their religion above all. The term orientalist appeared in English around 1779 and in French in 1799. While focused on the study of oriental languages prior to the 19th century, the development of orientalism as a science afterwards was very much linked to the development of Western imperialism and colonialism in the Orient and elsewhere. European invasions and dominations over regions of the Middle East, Africa and Asia became increasingly significant from the beginning of the 19th century and onwards. The concept of the “sick man of Europe” appeared for instance in the second half of the 19th century to describe the Ottoman Empire, which was more and more suffering of European imperial interventions and influence, while the term of “Homo Islamicus” also appeared at this period. The idea of a specific Arab/Islamic essence is still very much relevant in traditional and neo-orientalist analysis.

The growing economic, technical, military, political and cultural superiority of Europe over the Ottoman Empire, and more generally the “Orient”, was associated during this period with the Christian religion (in its Western understanding and practice) and the setbacks of the Muslim world with Islam. Christianity was presented as favorable to progress, while Islam was on the contrary described as repellent to progress. Any resistance to Europe and its influence was presented as religious fanaticism and a rejection of civilization.

This type of discourse has never really disappeared from the Western political scene and mainstream Western media, its intensity varying in certain periods. The speech made more than a year ago in October 2022, of Josep Borrell, Vice-President of the European Commission and High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs, at the new Diplomatic Academy European in Bruges illustrates this orientalist perspective. He explains that “Europe is a garden” where “everything works”, combining “political freedom, economic prosperity and social cohesion that humanity has been able to build”, while he worried that “most of the rest of the world is a jungle, and the jungle could take over the garden... The gardeners have to go to the jungle. Europeans have to be much more engaged with the rest of the world. Otherwise, the rest of the world will invade us, by different ways and means”. This speech of course ignores the the constant rise of the far right throughout Europe, the rise of racism and attacks on democratic rights and of migrants, etc...

Thus, it comes as no surprise that both Israeli and Western officials and mainstream media used such a rhetoric to describe Hamas actions on October 7th as barbarian and justify Israel's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip. An Israeli communist in the Jerusalem Post, for instance, declared that: "On October 7, Western civilization lost and the barbarians prevailed... The modern West versus the murderous jihad", while President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen "It is an ancient evil, which reminds us of the darkest past and shocks all of us to the core... Israel has the right to defend itself against such heinous attacks,"

In this strategy, comparisons between Daesh ("Islamic State") and Hamas have flourished in Israeli and Western officials and mainstream western media, such as US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin describing Hamas as "worse than ISIS". Attempts by Israel and Western governments to portray Hamas, and Palestinians more generally, as terrorists similar to jihadist organizations are not new. In the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001, the Israeli ruling class described its war against the Palestinians during the Second Intifada as its own "War on Terror." This is despite both the Palestinian Authority and Hamas condemning al-Qaeda's actions. Hamas suicide actions in Jerusalem and elsewhere within historic Palestine were presented as "being one symptom of global Islamic Terrorism". Prior to this, the PLO and its factions were also compared by Israeli ruling officials as similar to the Nazis.

More generally, attempts by Israel and Western officials to conflate Hamas and jihadist groups such as Daesh or al-Qaeda are part of a larger strategy to increasingly rely on Islamophobia to justify their so-called War on Terror. In the early 2000s, the Bush administration defended Israel's right to self defense against "Islamic terrorism," just as the current US administration and Western states do today.



The Vice-President of the European Commission, Josep Borrell.
Official Photo

In this perspective, the objective of eliminating Hamas justifies Israel's war on the Gaza Strip, as explained by a columnist of The New York Times: "The central cause of Gaza's misery is Hamas. It alone bears the blame for the suffering it has inflicted on Israel and knowingly invited against Palestinians. The best way to end the misery is to remove the cause, not stay the hand of the remover." Thus, Israeli officials and pro-Israeli commentator, can claim to act in self-defense, and even in some cases in order to help Palestinians, by committing a genocide against Palestinians...

This racist perspective of mainstream western media is rooted in an orientalist view of the world, and more particularly of the region. This orientalism is entrenched in modern political dynamics, including imperialism, colonization, class struggle, gender and racist dynamics, etc... This understanding is therefore different than of the famous Palestinian author, Edward Said, author of the book Orientalism. Said indeed did not criticize historical idealism as the main matrix of cultural essentialism in his book "Orientalism", and there is a form of homogeneous historical continuity in his criticisms of orientalism going back to ancient Greece until nowadays. As argued by Aijaz Ahmad, there is no consideration of class dynamics, gender dynamics, not even history, no site of resistance, no human liberation projects, etc...



In other words, Orientalism is not really a profoundly modern phenomenon, as we have explained, but is the natural product of an ancient and almost irresistible European spirit to distort the realities of other cultures, peoples and languages, in favor of Western self-affirmation and domination. Joining the constructive criticisms of other oriental authors also critical of orientalism, such as Sadiq Jalal al-Azm, Mehdi Amel, Samir Amin and Aijaz Ahmad, there is a risk with Said' understanding of orientalism to fall into his own denunciations of Western essentialism, in a form of "orientalism in return or inverted" as explained by al-Azm.

Indeed, how do we explain the defense of Israel's murderous policies by mainstream western media, if not rooted in the protection of their own political interests. This is done through an orientalist lens.



ISRAEL, IMPORTANT ASSET OF WESTERN RULING ELITES

In a typical orientalist framework, Israel has been presented by its western allies and its mainstream media for decades as a beacon of democracy and of progress in a hostile region populated of barbarians.

This propaganda has also been promoted by leaders of the Zionist movement prior to the creation of Israel, and until today by current Israeli officials. Prior to the Nakba and the foundation of Israel in 1948, Theodor Herzl, main ideologue of the Zionist movement, wrote that the future Jewish State would be “the vanguard of civilization against barbarism”. He advocated indeed for a colonial project seeking to install a predominantly European population, of Jewish origin, on a land predominantly populated by Arab populations, in this case Palestine.

Today this discourse is held by Israeli officials. Prime Minister Netanyahu has stated in numerous speeches after the 7th of October that: “Israel is fighting not only its war, but humanity’s war against the barbarians...“Our allies in the Western world, and our partners in the Arab world, know that if we do not win, they are next in line in the campaign of conquest and murder from the axis of evil”... Similarly, Israeli President Isaac Herzog claimed that Israel’s war on Gaza “is intended...to save Western civilization,” as Israel was being “attacked by a jihadist network,” and “if it weren’t for us, Europe would be next, and the United States follows.”

Western officials and mainstream media have supported this propaganda. The word genocide or genocidal war is nearly never mentioned by these actors, but moreover is rejected when used by critics of Israel. This impunity of the Israeli state did not start following the 7th October, but has been ongoing for decades. Even mainstream groups now recognize the violent and reactionary nature of Israeli state.

For example, both Human Rights Watch and Israel’s B’Tselem have denounced Israel’s ongoing seizure of Palestinian land. They have documented how Israel has violated international laws to back more than 700,000 settlers building colonies in the occupied territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. They also concluded that Israel is an apartheid state that gives Jew’s special privileges and reduces Palestinians to second-class citizenship.

This demonstrates once more that the so-called principles of European states and US regarding democracy and respect of human rights are only used for rhetoric propaganda, seeking to cover policies rooted in the protection of their own political and economic interests. In the framework, the statement made by Palestinian pastor Munther Isaac, of Bethlehem, saying is totally right: "To our European friends, I never, ever want to hear you lecture us on human rights or international law again.

As mentioned above, the Zionist movement from its origins in Europe to its foundation of Israel in 1948 and its displacement of Palestinians today has been a settler-colonial project. To establish, maintain, and expand its territory, the Israeli state has had to ethnically cleanse Palestinians from their land homes, and jobs. In order to do this, it had to seek foreign support. Indeed, throughout this process it allied with, and found sponsorship from, imperialist powers, first the British empire and then the United States, which used Israel as their agent in the struggle against their enemies, or perceived as such, in the region.

The British initially supported the Zionist project in order to create an allied nation in a region of great political and strategic importance – a "loyal little Ulster" in the words of Ronald Storrs, a senior civil servant of the British Foreign and Colonial Office.

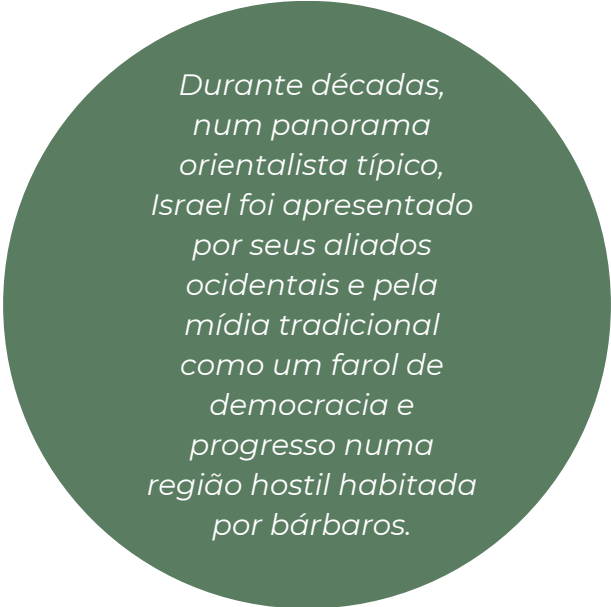
**Sir Ronald
Henry
Amherst
Storrs**



Then, Washington, particularly following the Six Days War of 1967, has been the main and principal support of Israel, which also acted as its local police force against the perceived American threats in the region, and any event that would challenge its control over its strategic energy reserves. Since then, the US has backed Israel. Washington has poured an average of USD 4 billion annually into Tel Aviv's coffers, backing its colonization of Palestine and its wars of aggression against different governments and movements in the region. According to a Congressional Research Service report from March 2023, the US had provided Israel with USD 158 billion in bilateral assistance and missile defense funding since 1948, which constitutes the largest cumulative recipient globally of US foreign assistance since World War II.

While US officials have used at several occasions its veto card against resolutions calling for a potential ceasefire, the current Israeli war against the Gaza strip would have been impossible in military means without US continuous support.

The current US administration has indeed supplied Israel with F-35 combat aircraft, over 1,800 MK84 bombs (which are no longer used by Western states in densely populated areas due to inevitable collateral damage) and 500 MK82 bombs. The Biden administration circumvented Congressional authorization for these arms shipments by invoking emergency powers. It has made more than one hundred arms transfers to Israel without any public debate by limiting the specific dollar amount of each sale below the threshold at which Congress must be notified. The Israeli newspaper Haaretz documented that at least 140 heavy-lift planes bound for Israel have taken off from US military bases around the world since October 7, transporting equipment primarily to the Nevatim Air Base in southern Israel. In mid-April, Biden also called the US Congress to vote in favor of a bill allocating \$26.4 billion of support to Israel.



Durante décadas, num panorama orientalista típico, Israel foi apresentado por seus aliados ocidentais e pela mídia tradicional como um farol de democracia e progresso numa região hostil habitada por bárbaros.

Washington's strategy of guaranteeing Israel's qualitative military edge (QME) has been the conceptual backbone of US military aid to Israel for decades, and it was made US law in 2008. It commits the US government to maintaining Israel's ability "to defeat any credible conventional military threat from any individual state or possible coalition of states or from nonstate actors, while sustaining minimal damage and casualties.."

Similarly, by November 2023, the German government had approved the export of close to 303 million euros' (USD 323 million) worth of defence equipment to Israel. By comparison, 32 million euros' worth of defence exports were approved in all of 2022.

The reason is that Israel is still perceived as a key actor to preserve western interests in the region. The process of normalization between Israel and Arab countries initiated by President Donald Trump and continued by President Joe Biden, had the objective to consolidate US interests in the region, including in its rivalry with China. One of the main objectives of Hamas's attack on Israel on October 7 was to undermine this process, and has been temporarily successful. Soon after the Israeli war against the Gaza Strip erupted, Saudi Arabia indeed responded by halting all progress on bilateral agreements between itself and Israel, and announced that no normalization process will occur between the two countries before a clear establishment of a road plan for the creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel.

Moreover, many European states and the US have tried to amalgamate antisemitism and antizionism in order to criminalize solidarity with the Palestinian struggle and support for the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign. These actions must be understood in a larger objective by Western elites of targeting progressive and left-wing politics as we have seen in the UK, France, Germany, and US, and attempts to curtail democratic rights in these societies.

In this framework, conspiracy theories claiming that Jews control the world do not challenge orientalist perspective, but on the contrary reinforce them. Indeed different forms of racisms generally nurture each other, as anticolonial thinker Frantz Fanon said "When you hear bad things about Jews, prick up your ears, people are talking about you" (Frantz Fanon). Moreover, these kinds of explanation partially undermine the responsibility of western elites in the Palestinian tragedy. This is without forgetting that Western support to Israel has never prevented continuous antisemitism of their own elites. From Lord Balfour to US president Trump, they all have supported antisemitic policies or dynamics. Lord Balfour was indeed the author of the letter saying that "His Majesty's Government view favorably the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people", but also one the promoter of the Aliens Act of 1905 which closed British borders to Jewish emigrants fleeing Russian pogroms, while Trump supporters marched in Charlottesville in 2017 shouting "The Jews will not replace us". Similarly, in France, Emmanuel Macron has been criticized for rehabilitating Marshal Pétain or putting the anti-Semitic theorist Charles Maurras back into the spotlight.

CHALLENGING ORIENTALISM AND IMPERIALISM, A COMMON STRUGGLE FROM BELOW

The challenge to orientalist and racist perspectives on Palestine and Palestinians, as well as other non-white populations, are connected to struggle from below throughout the world and particularly in the western societies, which ruling institutions are the main producer of such ideas. As mentioned above, the Palestinian cause influences political dynamics far beyond the Middle East.

The first critiques of orientalism and orientalist studies in the west emerged during the period of decolonization following the 2nd World War by authors from colonized regions and very often living in Western countries, such as Anouar Abdel al-Malek and Edward Said. Mainstream orientalist studies and orientations in academia have started to be challenged after the First World War of 1914-1918, and by the Russian Revolution, but moreover by the increasing and rising resistance by anticolonial movements to Western imperialism in the "Orient", from Asia passing through the Middle East to Africa. Later on anti-racist and feminist movements have also played a role to challenge such ideas in western states.

Similarly, today, the multitude of struggles occurring in various societies, academia, work places, alternative media etc... by pressuring ruling authorities and governments to act to prevent the continuous Israeli genocidal war against the Palestinian population in the Gaza Strip, to shed light on the historical context of Palestine, the settler colonial nature of Israel and its Apartheid system of rule, and more importantly act in solidarity with the Palestinians, is challenging the oriental perspective of mainstream western media, acting as a shield (one of them multiple ones) in protection of Western ruling elite interests.

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PALESTINE IS THE WORLD

Gustavo Racy

When Walter Benjamin undertook his analysis of fascism, that regime, phenomenon, or whatever name we might give it, had not yet reached the height of its destructive potential. Spared from witnessing what would happen to his native Berlin, spared from knowing Telegram 71 and the death sentence of an entire nation, Benjamin left us with the prophetic theses *On the Concept of History*. It is no wonder that an author like him is today repeatedly cited in the endless weaving of arguments that cry for the end of the current state of affairs. That things remain as they are—he would say—this is the true catastrophe. How could one disagree?

For people caught between the ever more oppressive demands of daily life, the meager possibilities of political expression, and the attempt to mobilize ideas and feelings grounded in minimal principles of decency and honesty, it is simply not enough—far from enough—to view the current state of affairs through the lens of culture, understood as the transmissibility of our tradition. Today, as in the past, we live through the death of the transmission of truly human components that gave social life a shared meaning: work, our relationship through it to nature, the shaping of identities built on difference—not free

from conflict, of course, but not synonymous with negativity—and the possibility of turning these into stories that flow within a greater totality. Instead, we experience the death of this very culture, coldly and programmatically calculated. Just as in Benjamin's time, we prepare ourselves to survive culture.

Let it not be shocking what we say: culture has become the death of itself; it has become that which wounds, tallies, regulates, and pathologizes. In this, none of us is innocent. But some, undoubtedly, are victims.

"We are a little soul carrying a corpse," said the Stoic Epictetus. Translated into our time, this observation is magnified to the nth degree by a politics that, surpassing its hunger for corpses, now focuses on destroying the soul as well. For while this observation inspired the Stoics to seek the happy life, today it becomes the slogan by which we invest great libidinal energy into our own ruin, smiling as we do so. After all, things have always been this way. The Stoic recipes for life, the science of death, the fleeting nature of both pain and joy, were not elements of resignation but, on the contrary, the very reasons why a just, beautiful, and ethical life should be pursued. It is no coincidence that these were the philosophers of antiquity who left behind the most astonishing legacies of life and poetic beauty. That the modern world can only imagine an alternative history through dissimulation is something that would astonish Epictetus, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius, who understood—as did La Boétie centuries later—that humanity is born to live free.

A hundred years ago, the experience of trench warfare through the "frail, minuscule human body," quoting Walter Benjamin, taught us that every form of transmission is lost. Today, we face the loss of experience within our own bodies, both physical and social. Transmission becomes death, and death signals the loss of transmission. This does not mean that we cease to tell stories or engage with facts and their manipulations. At this point, it is crucial to recognize that racism, colonialism, economic domination, and essentialism are inherently incompatible with the potential of a life in a in a free world. In addressing these issues, however, we failed miserably.



The histories of Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Sub-Saharan Africa, and what remains from French colonialism in the north of the continent; the destruction of traditional ways of life in the Asian subcontinent, and Latin America have been told but their meaning is still unrevealed. The telling of such histories, however, remains obtuse, non-transmissible. As the colonized, we resent our past but do not listen to those who envision a different present. We ignore the possibility of "many worlds within a world."

Derived from endless chatter, this strategy is often an unintentional consequence of well-meaning actions. Nonetheless, it clearly expresses our incapacity to convey concrete meaning regarding catastrophes. We observe attentively but never engage as witnesses to the massacres and horrors unfolding before us. Instead, we seek empathy, hoping to erase our discomfort at the lingering pains of those who seem distant from us. This is how we construct our culture: an endless chatter of analyses and sensitive considerations that produces semblances

of identification.. By placing ourselves in this position, we appropriate others' pains and stand in their place, in the place of the real victims.

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As a result, as Walter Benjamin, once again, observed, “the dead continue to die.”

Derived from endless chatter, this strategy is often an unintentional consequence of well-meaning actions. Nonetheless, it clearly expresses our incapacity to convey coherent meaning regarding catastrophes. Departing from what we ordinarily call “culture,” and more specifically, political culture, such chatter also serves as a trap set by the powerful, destructive machine that governs the current world. This tactic, successfully employed by Zionism over the past 75 years, justifies every violence committed against an indigenous population. It aligns us with the aggressor, even as we denounce them. As we have been aware at least since La Boétie, history shows us that we have usually carried within us a component of political resentment and a desire for aggression that drives us toward both dominating and being dominated.

This chatter strategy, however, is not exclusive to Zionism but is characteristic of a broader phenomenon: fascism, the ineradicable stain on the human experience from the 20th century onwards. It is a force that we will not easily eradicate. Zionism, however, is the primary force to be combated, as it mobilises many other forces in its favour—major global powers and their allies, as well as their opponents, whose intentions are also questionable. Zionism has the capacity to turn its denunciation into a crime on a global scale.

Right at the beginning of the current invasion of Gaza, Naftali Bennett declared on a British news network that no one cared to talk about the RAF raids over Germany during the second World War. With this, Bennett probably meant to put the British interviewer in a tight spot, suggesting that the news anchor criticism of Israeli action was hypocritical, since he belonged to a nation that had promoted something similar to what was being done in Gaza. According to Naftali, these actions should not be questioned because they were aimed at destroying Nazis, exactly like what the Israeli occupation is doing

His accusation would not be completely wrong if it were not for the fact that his words were a complete lie. W.G. Sebald, a German writer and professor in England, his adopted country, dedicated himself to the topic of the British air raids in a powerful and foundational essay on the meaning of memory, grief, and suffering in extreme situations.

His thoughts on aerial warfare are not only a study of the massacre of Germans perpetrated by the British but also a critique of the very formative principle of modern reality and its memory—one that testimony and lived experience refuse to inhabit.

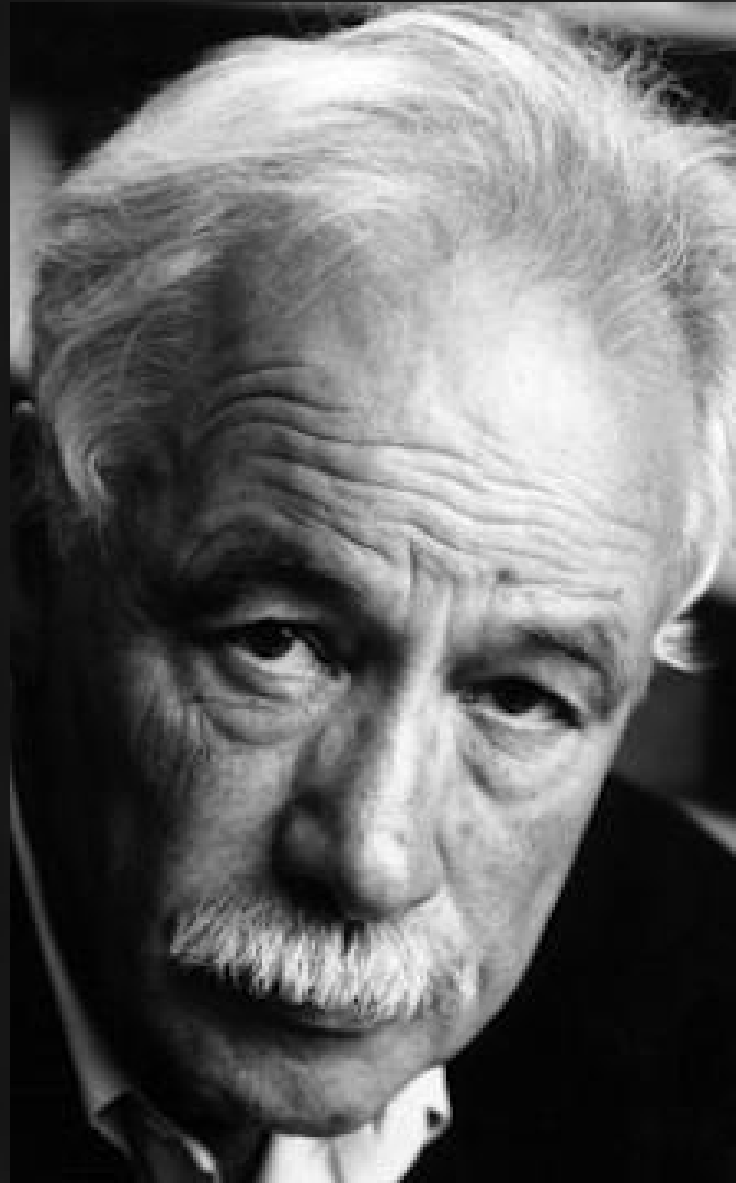
Sebald's diagnosis:

reality can no longer be presented in comprehensible terms.

His conclusion, which underpins his entire body of literature, is that insensitivity has become the operating principle of our totalitarian culture, preventing us from taking a real stance when confronted with the horrors that unfold before our eyes.

Insensitivity, we say, and not empathy, for empathy can also be insensitive insofar as it turns towards this absolute ego that reigns in our narcissistic society. I sympathize, I am moved, therefore I am empathetic, thus I feel the other's pain as if it were my own. And if it is mine, I have precedence. This is a common logic and device by which whiteness, for example, ends up capturing minority agendas, overshadowing their voices. No.

Sebald deals with insensitivity, the inability to of positioning oneself as a third party, as someone on the outside who, in the face of an act of horror, must choose between fleeing and closing their eyes or opening them and observing, if that is all that remains to be done. This is bearing witness; deciding on a stance at the moment when history itself is in danger. This is what Giorgio Agamben taught us in his book (unsurprisingly) dedicated to Auschwitz and what Walter Benjamin conveyed in his testimony on the concept of history.



W. G. Sebald

Here we get to what I believe to be a central question concerning what is happening in Gaza. There are those who bear witness and those who empathize. In Brazil, there are testimonies from people like Breno Altman, who faces constant threats, and Salem Nasser, who endures academic persecution. Numerous intellectuals and activists have testified, raising their voices and showing their faces in defence of what – also in terms of juridical categories – has long been deemed indefensible. But nothing in the world concerns juridical categories more than ethical categories.

This is the Gordian knot of contemporary culture: the constant attack aimed at emptying all possible ethics in the face of exacerbated moral precepts stemming from a memory war founded on a mythology that stifles any alternative.

Society, as Adorno – yet another Jewish philosopher – observed, has been naturalized and accepted as a force of nature, like the weather, storms, blizzards, droughts, and floods. There is no escape. We know, however, that even the climate is connected to our actions in the world, and if nature itself suffers the consequences of our actions, what can we say about culture? How can we justify what is unjustifiable: that certain lives are worth more than others because they are believed to respond to a certain “natural” designation, a Manifest Destiny, which turns a people into the Chosen Ones among others? I elaborate. These reflections are merely an exercise in attempting to understand what more we can do in the face of what becomes logically and affectively absurd. And the choice that remains, regarding that which cannot be spoken, is to keep speaking, but perhaps in a new dimension: that of bearing witness. To do everything we can to ensure that voices narrate the horrors, no matter how impossible it is to make such horror transmissible.

In this task, Palestine is the world because it expands the possibility of narrating the un-narratable, because it amplifies the voices of those who, like the Palestinians, endure years and years of destruction and erasure without the possibility of concrete expression, of the work of transmission.

But there is something else that makes the Palestinians, and the Levant, an image of the contemporary: in the jargon of the Nazi concentration camp, the untestimonable had a name, der Muselmann, the Muslim. This coincidental nomenclature was used for those who had abandoned all hope, abandoned by their companions, incapable of discerning anything, and who, painfully, according to Jean Améry, should be excluded from considerations of the Holocaust. But not according to Primo Levi, this allegorical man of survival from Nazism, who put all his efforts into making transmissible the transformation of the prisoner into Muselmann.

It is this figure that today erupts from the sky of global politics: the Muslim (the majority religion of the Levant, and which suffers the consequences of anti-Arab racist hatred most directly, let us remember) synthesizes the global vision of the countries that gave Europe and the world medicine, algebra, the algorithm, the survival of Aristotle and Plato, the first universities...

Palestine, and with it the Levant, is the world because it gives us the ineffable image of the Muselmann, of humanity placed at the threshold between itself and the inhuman. It is the place in the world where, as with the forest peoples (look at what is happening right now in Santa Catarina), the exception becomes the paradigm of the everyday. And it becomes, like the Muselmann of the camp, that which no one wants to see.

Let us see, however. Let us notice. There are no excuses. Everything is said. And everything is set. Right in front of us.





"[...] Palestine is the world because it expands the possibility of narrating the un-narratable."

LITERARY MANIFESTATIONS IN POLITICAL JOKES

Discussing political jokes can be approached from two perspectives: the joke itself, tied to humor, laughter and jest, and politics, associated with seriousness and gravity. The relationship between these seemingly contradictory aspects creates a dynamic interplay, fostering interactions and role reversals between stern politicians and the laughing populace. This tension allows humor to serve as a tool for subversion and critique.

Analyzing political jokes involves three key components: the teller, the audience, and the target—often the authority or dominant narrative being satirized. The transformation of a political joke from a satirical concept to a literary one lies in its symbolic language, which employs rhetorical techniques like brevity and layered meanings. As Henri Bergson (1913) notes, Jean-Paul defines humor as delighting in "concrete terms, technical details, definite facts" (p. 128), highlighting its linguistic artistry and persuasive power.

The joke-teller, akin to a folk storyteller, plays a pivotal role. They must possess linguistic skill and the ability to engage their audience. Bergson (1913: 128) likens the joke-teller to "an anatomist who practices dissection with the sole object of filling us with disgust," suggesting humor transposes the moral into the scientific. Through deconstructing language, the joke-teller selects impactful words, whether improvised or premeditated, to resonate with the audience.



THE SYRIAN CONTEXT

Eithar Daher

This paper examines political jokes as a literary phenomenon, focusing on their role in reflecting political repression and public sentiment. Specifically, it analyzes Syrian political jokes, exploring their symbolic language as a form of hidden resistance against dominant elites. These jokes function not as direct portrayals of reality but as referential tools, using literary devices to reflect lived political experiences.

The examples of Syrian political jokes discussed do not represent all Syrian political views, as the population is not monolithic. This is evident in the evolution of a 2011 uprising chant from "One, one, one, the people of Syria are one" to "One, one, one, the people of Syria are twenty-three million and one" (Camps-Febrer, 2012: 37-38), acknowledging diverse political stances. Political jokes, by nature, "deal explicitly with certain beliefs held by only a portion of the society" (Mulkey, 1988: 85-86). This paper does not aim to catalog all political jokes but focuses on select examples analyzed through Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the carnivalesque, offering a fresh perspective on the Syrian context.

Before delving into the literariness of political jokes, it is essential to consider them as oral expressions capable of becoming textual through their cultural significance, which shapes their textual elements. Unlike written texts, whose textuality is tied to writing, the textuality of oral texts is linked to their enduring presence in collective memory and their cultural significance. As Lotman, Piatigorsky, and Shukman (1978: 234-235) observe, "in oral cultures, texts [...] were endowed necessarily with a supraorganization in the form of proverbs, aphorisms with definite structural features."

What distinguishes a text from a non-text is not only its linguistic level but also its semantic depth—its ability to reference and suggest meaning beyond itself, depending on the speaker's authority and context. As Lotman et al. (1978: 236) note, "[A] poem is not received as a text for the definition of the scientific, religious, or legal position of the community, but is taken as a text in the sphere of art."

Political jokes, while not traditional oral heritage, become texts through their circulation and spread. They emerge in specific spaces like protests, uprisings, or social media as a means of expressing covert dissent. Here, political jokes offer a space for presence without repression, acting as a form of symbolic resistance experienced through language, responding swiftly to particular events. Their author and audience, often a collective and anonymous entity, engage in a form of nonviolent resistance that challenges dominant narratives.

Thus, political jokes cannot be read solely as humorous statements but must be understood in terms of their revolutionary resonance within "a specific culture" (Kletu, 2006: 16). From this, we deduce that political jokes are texts because they belong to a particular culture at a specific moment, distinguishing them from non-texts, which are "merely linguistic arrangements with no cultural significance inferred—unlike texts" (ibid.: 17).

This does not negate the ability of political jokes to travel across contexts, incorporating timeless political humor that transcends temporal and spatial boundaries. For instance, jokes about rulers' prolonged terms or hereditary power are common across the Arab world. As Hans Speier (1998: 1352) notes, similar forms of political jokes repeat themselves, "indeed identical jokes, in different centuries and among different peoples." This literary identity "involves both repetition of what is recognized as 'the same' and openness to new contexts and hence to change" (Attridge, 2004: 75). This openness defines their literariness, as literature "may be a cultural product, but it is never simply contained by a culture" (ibid.: 6).

Political jokes employ rhetorical and linguistic tools as weapons to achieve their purpose as both literary and cultural products. Often, they use concise yet impactful language, as seen in the following example quoted by Blanca Camps-Febrer (2012: 33):

**A child asks his father:
"If I lie, will I go to the
afterlife?"
His father replies:
"No, if you lie, you'll go to
Al-Dunya (The Life)."**

This joke begins with a question about the fate of a liar in a religious context, hinting at an undesirable destiny. Structurally, it consists of a question and a definitive answer, ending without further dialogue. For an outsider unfamiliar with the Syrian context, the term "al-dunya" (الدنيا) might not immediately reveal its secondary meaning as a reference to Al-Dunya, a television channel affiliated with the Syrian regime. Here, we see the cultural specificity of the political joke, which positions it as a text within its cultural framework. This joke is born out of the existence of this particular television channel. Upon further examination, the joke implies that lying leads one to Al-Dunya: if you intend to lie, go to Al-Dunya, or if you lie, you will end up on Al-Dunya, which is portrayed as worse than the afterlife. The afterlife itself remains ambiguous—whether it is heaven or hell is left undefined.

The verb "to go" adds complexity, placing the father and child in a liminal space. The linguistic interplay is notable: the joke is in colloquial Syrian Arabic, which creates a dissonance, highlighting the joke's symbolic use of

The verb also adds another layer of complexity. The father and child exist in a liminal space akin to barzakh (the intermediary realm). Their clever manipulation of language and the

The paradox here lies in the linguistic interplay: the joke is entirely in colloquial Arabic because it references the name of the television channel (الدّنيّه). The necessity of pronouncing the channel's name in formal Arabic creates a linguistic dissonance. The joke's symbolism, echoing what Bakhtin refers to as the "carnavalesque"

But what exactly is the carnivalesque according to Bakhtin?



...akin to *barzakh*, the intermediary realm, waiting to discover their ultimate path. ...for "Al-Dunya," pronounced in formal Arabic to reference the channel. This creates ...language, echoing Bakhtin's concept of the carnivalesque.

...wild in the joke are neither in "The Life" (Al-Dunya) nor the afterlife. ...realm), waiting to discover their ultimate path. This highlights the ...the symbolic use of the word "Al-Dunya."

...al Syrian Arabic, except for the word "Al-Dunya", which is pronounced in formal ...annel. In colloquial Syrian, "Al-Dunya" would typically be pronounced "Al-Denyeh ...ance. This demonstrates how the colloquial language forms the cornerstone of ...ivalesque" in his analysis of the public square's lexicon in folk humor

Bakhtin, and what is its relationship to political jokes?



Bakhtin's carnivalesque theory, developed in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* and *Rabelais and His World*, describes the carnival as a space where opposites lose their fixed positions: the center becomes the margin, and vice versa. It is a humorous, imaginary space depicting the world upside down, outside its usual order. The carnival is "organically connected with the category of familiar contact; it permits—in concretely sensuous form—the latent sides of human nature to reveal and express themselves" (Bakhtin, 1999: 123). It is a temporary liberation from prevailing truths, characterized by opposition to any affirmation, akin to Bergson's (1913: 127) definition of the joke: "the contrast [...] between what is and what ought to be." In carnival, everyone is equal, fostering liberated interactions between individuals otherwise separated by social distinctions. Similarly, political jokes facilitate role reversals between politicians and the people, creating an imaginary space for interaction.

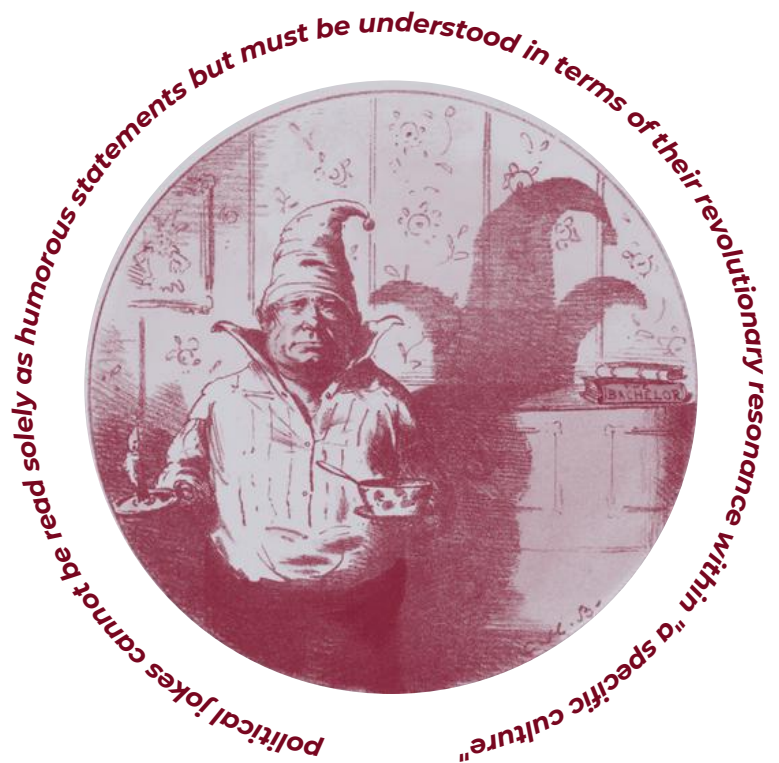
Studying the carnivalesque in political jokes reveals their multifaceted meanings. While Bakhtin (1978: 88) theorized about polyphony and the carnivalesque in the novel, describing it as involving "the social diversity of languages, and sometimes of individual languages and voices," political jokes share some narrative elements, particularly in their expressive weight and storytelling methods. They function as ephemeral utterances, reflecting marginalized voices and unveiling the literary censorship imposed on lower social classes.

Political jokes highlight collective language against the monologue of authority, emphasizing the centrality of the listener, speaker, or audience. They create a space where hidden dialogues unfold between the marginalized and dominant discourse, blurring power boundaries and allowing suppressed voices to challenge authority through wit and satire.

What distinguishes the carnivalesque is not just the mask worn by participants but also Bakhtin's concept of grotesque realism, characterized by the lowering of all that is high and the profanation of the sacred. Bakhtin (1984: 21) ties this to the body, which is connected to all things lower and earthly: "[D]egradation digs a bodily grave for a new birth; it has not only a destructive, negative aspect, but also a regenerating one."

An example of this is seen in jokes targeting the physical traits of rulers, such as Bashar al-Assad's long neck, earning him the nickname "the giraffe." In the following joke, grotesque realism is evident:

"Bashar al-Assad entered one of the old baths in Damascus to take a shower. Upon leaving, he asked the bath attendant: 'How much do I owe?' The attendant replied: '200 lira.' Bashar said: 'Why? My father used to come, and you only charged him 100 lira!' The attendant responded: 'Well, you're dirtier than your father'" (Deeb, 2019).



This joke condenses spiritual foulness into physical foulness, embodying grotesque realism. The language of political jokes emerges from lived political events, as "new types of communication always create new forms of speech or a new meaning given to the old forms" (Bakhtin, 1984: 16). In spaces of oppression, new linguistic forms allow people to craft narratives by desecrating the alleged divinity of rulers, as seen in Bakhtin's carnivalesque theory.

An example of that is the following political joke:

"A man who was accustomed to telling jokes about the president was arrested for his actions, but returned to his habit of telling jokes about the president. He was arrested because he did not hate the president, but it was just a habit he couldn't get rid of. The official response of the president is not involved.' When the man was released from detention, he told the phrase: 'But thank God... the president is not involved.'"

The previous joke is an artistic depiction of Bakhtin's grotesque realism through the symbolic use of vulgarity regarding the wife, who in Syrian culture represents "honor" or "dignity." It insults the president's persona and strips him of his invulnerability and divinity. Therefore, the space of political humor closely resembles the sanctioned vulgarities in the public sphere where the voice of the people is always the dominant one. This is evidenced by the inability of the intelligence officers to control the talented joke-teller, who, each time they attempted to control him, became freer in the space of political humor.

The political joke may resemble carnival as a collective act in which freedom of expression is enacted. The latter, however, is generally an authorized event.

'As Bakhtin describes it, carnival was organized, often scheduled for a specific time and place, and allowed and permitted. In contrast, the telling of Soviet jokes in Bakhtin's time was secret, monitored, and forbidden, a non-licensed activity. Therefore, comparing the political joke to the carnival is somewhat questionable. (Davies, 2007: 301).



d and tortured by the Syrian intelligence. He promised not to repeat his
arrested again by the security officers, and he assured them that he did
icers asked him to end each joke with the phrase 'but thank God the
a group of his friends that the president's wife was pregnant, and added



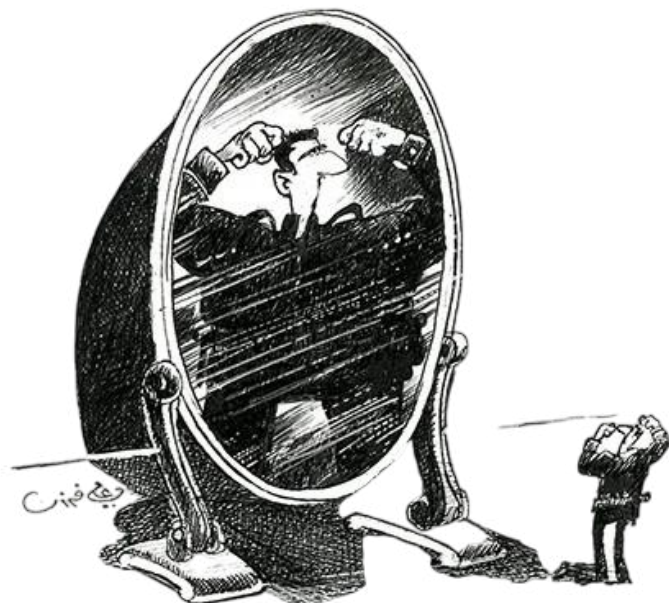
Brueghel. *Three Fools of Carnival*

However, like a carnival, political jokes may also be permitted, as some politicians and rulers may allow a degree of release through them and make them unbanned for their people. This is because political jokes are the enemy of the oppressor, yet they are not independent of the oppressor's subtle approval to create "beautiful vengeful illusions" (Benton, 1988: 5) among the people. These illusions are seen as a form of verbal resistance, which is considered easier and better than physical violent resistance. But the verbal release created by political jokes through laughter

is essentially not an external but an interior form [...] Laughter liberates not only from external censorship but first of all from the great interior censor it liberates from the fear that developed in man during thousands of years: fear of the sacred, of prohibitions, of the past, of power' (Bakhtin, 1984: 94).

The laughter caused by the political joke liberates people from the repression imposed by the ruler or any infiltrating power in their lives. This liberation from fear of the repressed, imposed by the ruler, is reflected in the following joke, which uses a religious context to deify the Syrian ruler and represent the extent of his sacred dominance:

"God asked the Angel of Death, Azrael, to go down to Earth and take the soul of Hafez al-Assad. Azrael protested, reminding God of Hafez al-Assad's power and cruelty, but then obeyed and went down to Earth to fulfill the command. At the palace gate, the intelligence officers detained him, beat, and tortured him until he returned to God, bloodied. God asked him what had happened, and Azrael replied: 'As you see, the intelligence officers caught me.' God responded: 'Don't say It was me who sent you!'".



Caricature by Ali Ferzat

The storyteller in the previous political joke tries to express the repressed fear caused by the regime's power by placing the ruler in a position far above his own, a metaphysical rank where no human belongs. This joke also symbolizes the title given to Hafez al-Assad by the Syrian people, *Al-Khalid*, the Eternal, implying a supernatural power over death. Moreover, this joke reveals the oppressive and authoritarian control of the ruler

Thus, the mocking and humorous Medieval carnivalesque criticism contrasts with the serious criticism that Bakhtin (1984: 94) describes as

infused with elements of fear, weakness [...] As a spokesman of power, seriousness terrorized, demanded, and forbade. It therefore inspired the people with distrust. Seriousness had an official tone and was treated like all that is official. It oppressed, frightened, bound, lied, and wore the mask of hypocrisy. Seriousness was avaricious, committed to fasts. When its mask was dropped in the festive square and at the banquet table, another truth was heard in the form of laughter, foolishness, improprieties, curses, parodies, and travesties. All fears and lies were dispersed in the face of the material bodily festive principle.

From this, we can deduce the dual analogy between political jokes and celebrations—carnivals—and between serious political criticism and the seriousness of the Middle Ages. Therefore, we conclude that the political joke is a space for freedom.

The following joke describes the dictatorship of family succession and the praise and cheering from the people:

"One day, Bashar suddenly passed away, and his son was eight months old. The People's Assembly convened and decided to amend the constitution so that anyone aged eight months or older could take office as president. The Syrian people then took to the streets in support of the Assembly's decision and the constitutional amendment, chanting: 'Goo goo ga ga!'"

In the image painted by the previous political joke, we see what Bakhtin describes as the "official celebration," which 'a simple form for expounding already found, ready-made irrefutable truth' (1999: 110): However, it does not carry the "serious tone" that is immaculate, and it presents what exists, in a mocking and satirical way, referencing actual events from the past. When Bashar al-Assad came to power, the Syrian constitution was amended to suit his age, establishing a required age for the ruler in the constitution. Thus, the previous political joke is a seed that combines carnival elements through the use of super-linguistic expressions and official celebratory moments, where the people support everything that the constitution dictates.

Finally, the presentation in this paper on political jokes in general, and Syrian political jokes—though not representing all Syrian political jokes— touches upon their textuality, which carries cultural significance alongside linguistic elements used for symbolism and concealment. This aspect adds to their literary quality and individuality, positioning them as a literary text that contains a particular and condensed narrative type capable of creating a free, imaginary space detached from reality, yet emerging from lived experience—specifically the experience of marginalization, oppression, and suppression. This aligns with Bakhtin's concept of the carnival, which opens horizons for those within the carnival to enter spaces they have never accessed before. These spaces represent a performative rebellion against everything that is established.



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The political joke may resemble carnival as a collective act in which freedom of expression is enacted.

CULTURE

ARTS

LETTERS

THE COFFEE SELLER



Nione

Translated by Gustavo Racy

Every morning, not at the brisk hour the West might commend, she attends to the terrain - a landscape that, to my eyes, seems to await nothing but litter and debris. The ochre earth of Khartoum is tenderly brushed by her plastic stools - yellow, green, and red - obediently arranged around a small, blue table. She bends her body, caressing the ground with a bundle of straw; and the terrain, expectant of refuse, transforms into the foundation of an invisible castle. Silent. The empress of this domain reveals her majesty in every subtle gesture: the kindling of a fire, the slow assembling of old jars filled with herbs and secrets over the table... Elsewhere, on a different corner, blocks away, the scene repeats itself. The earthy-toned morning is challenged by another sovereign, reigning over tastes and fragrances. Further yet, where the haze of life thickens, other empires spring up simultaneously. They surrender to the day's toil: ginger, cardamom, cinnamon, coffee - their steam rises skyward and merge...On that morning, those were the only smoke trailers that dared cut the skyline of the Sudanese capital.



Photograph by Fouad Hamza Tibin, 1975
Wikicommons/[Elnour](#)

Al Jaliah
Exhibition

LEVANT

Syria, 2017-2019

YAN BOECHAT

December 7, 2024: one day prior to Assad's fall

The last time I was in Aleppo, the city was a poignant mix of destruction and hope. This incredibly beautiful city, rich in history, had endured nearly five years of brutal war. Destruction was everywhere. Every building, every wall, every street bore the scars of the brutal battles that had claimed countless lives.

My last visit to Aleppo was in March 2017, just a month after Bashar al-Assad's forces had driven out the last fighters who had controlled part of the city for nearly half a decade. These pictures are from those days.

Sadness hung heavy over those who had endured years of barbaric conflict. Yet, amidst the sorrow, there was also a flicker of hope. At that moment, it felt like Aleppo was on the verge of a new beginning. Some people returned from forced exile, while others fled, fearing the Assad regime, the Russians, and Hezbollah forces now in control. I had the opportunity to visit Aleppo during those days.

Freedom of movement was limited, as regime minders ensured I was never left alone. Still, I managed to catch a glimpse of that historic moment, witnessing firsthand what the war had done to Aleppo—at least on its surface.

Last month, I found myself in Syria once again. Not in Aleppo, but not far from it. There, more than ever, that unsettling feeling that grips people just before a war begins hung in the air. Everyone seemed to sense that change was imminent. Aleppo, they said, would become the new battleground. The regime, weakened without the direct support of Hezbollah, Iran, and Russia, was vulnerable. Meanwhile, Islamist fighters were sensing blood in the water.

Blood is being spilled in Aleppo once again. Who knows how many lives will be lost this time? How long will it last? Who will emerge victorious? Once again, Aleppo stands as the stage for tragedy—another Syrian tragedy, another bloody chapter in this endless war.

Yan Boechat











Sara Qaed

An artist and illustrator born and raised in Manama, Bahrain, Sara Qaed currently resides in the UK. Sara began her artistic practice, including drawing, at an early age.

She was influenced by television, which acts as a device for connection and disconnection at the same time, and by her family environment where conversations constantly revolved around complex political and social issues.

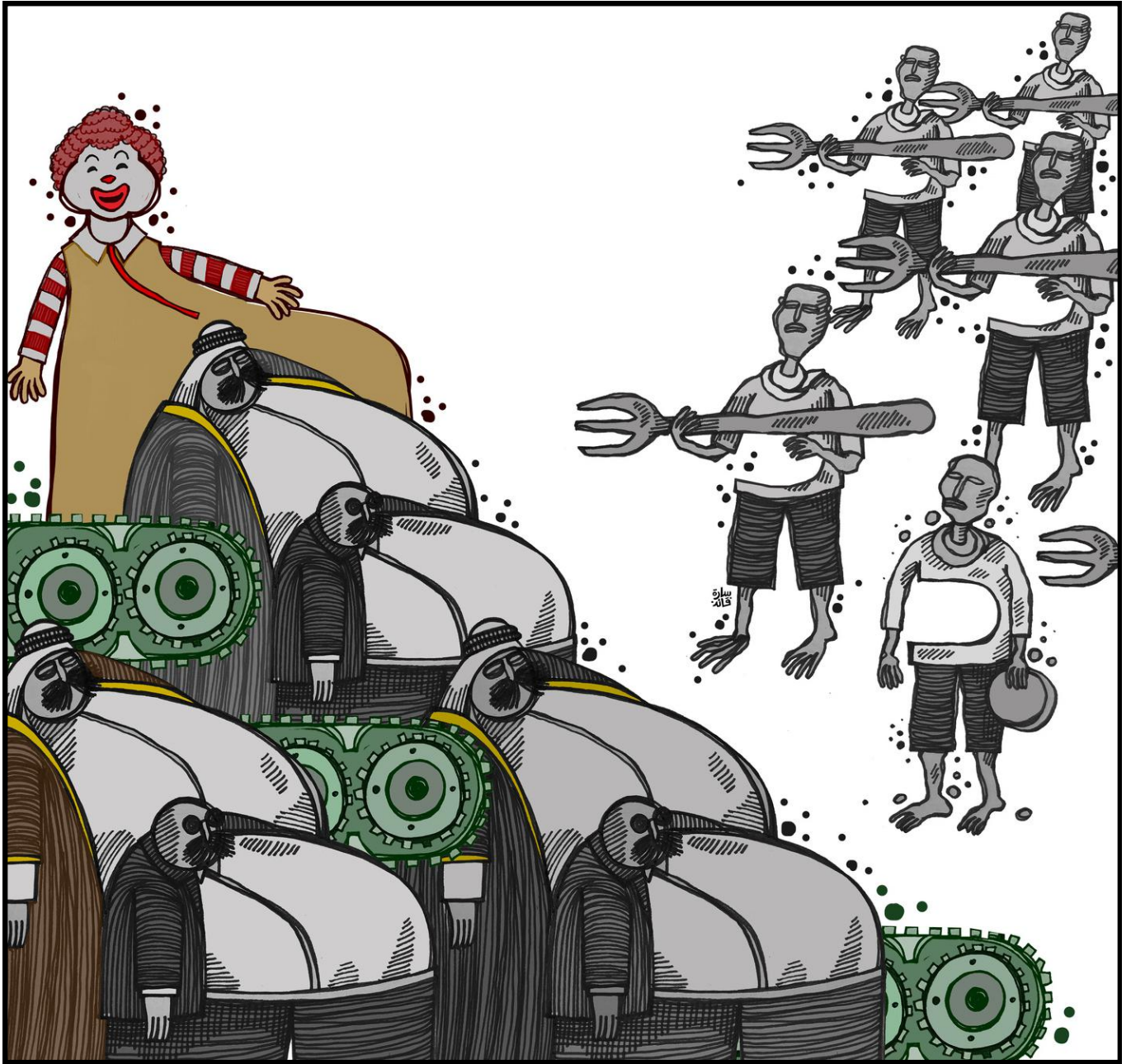
She studied Interior Design and began her career as an art teacher for children. Her environment and experience of working with children later influenced her approach to various political and social ideas in her work. Sara continued teaching and developing freelance projects that included writing, comics and social art before moving to the UK, where she deepened her practice and experimentation. During this time, she obtained a Masters in Art, with research exploring themes such as women, refuge and suitcases as tools of migration and protest, translated into collections of wearable pieces.

Political cartooning is a central part of Sarah Qaed's practice, using acerbic humor and a direct approach to address the news of the day. Her focus is on topics such as occupation, authoritarianism and power. Using simple language, Sarah presents sensitive political and social issues, giving her audience (and herself) space to reflect on controversial topics surrounded by censorship and corruption.

In addition to independent publications, she has collaborated with several newspapers and platforms, such as Al-Hudood, the cultural magazine Rumman and the website Tanween. For this work, she received the [Ibn Rushd Prize for Free Thought](#) (2019) and the [Mahmoud Kahil Prize for Journalistic Cartooning](#) (2020).

In addition to her work with cartoons, Sara seeks to visually document the everyday life of objects and situations. She carries notebooks and pens with her to explore different worlds. This practice, which has accompanied Sarah since childhood and in various places, was later transformed into more specific projects, related to themes such as Arabic poetry, isolation, demonstrations and collective solidarity. Sarah uses these notebooks as surfaces to reflect more deeply on symbolism and various themes.

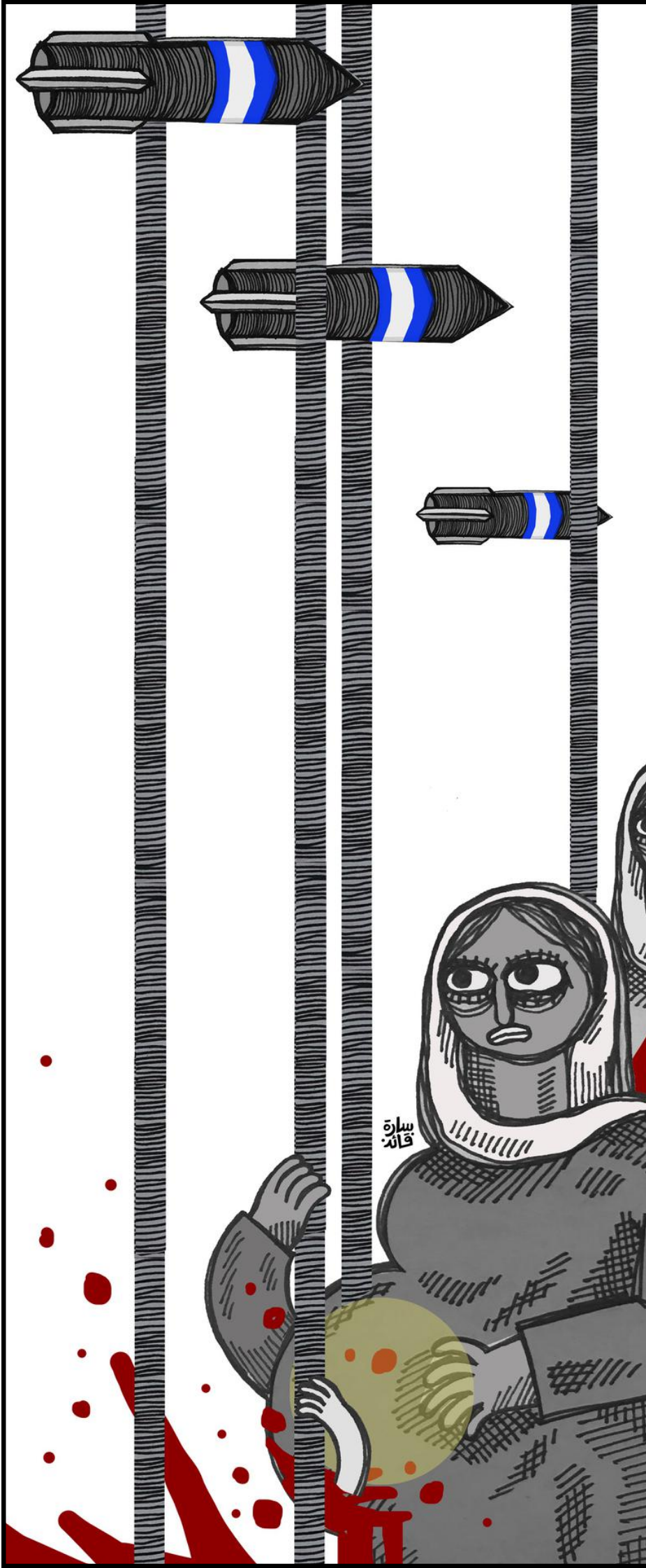
Her individual practice is closely linked to the social activities she develops. Sara makes visits to create collaborative works with foster homes, classrooms and to produce publications. She sees social arts and publications as forms of silent protest and collective solidarity. She has recently collaborated with offices in [Gateshead](#), in the north of the UK, to produce work on window surfaces, and also with the [MotherOther](#) project in the same region, exploring themes such as genocide, imagery, children's perception and the school environment.

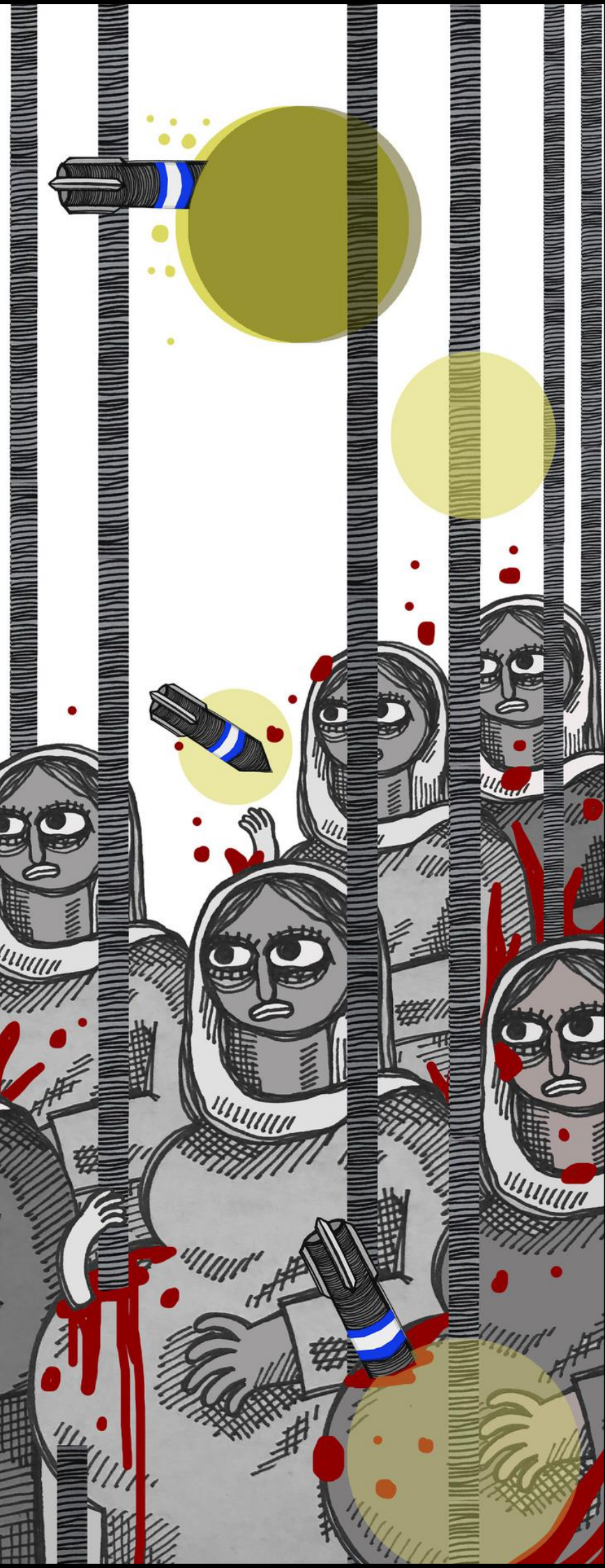


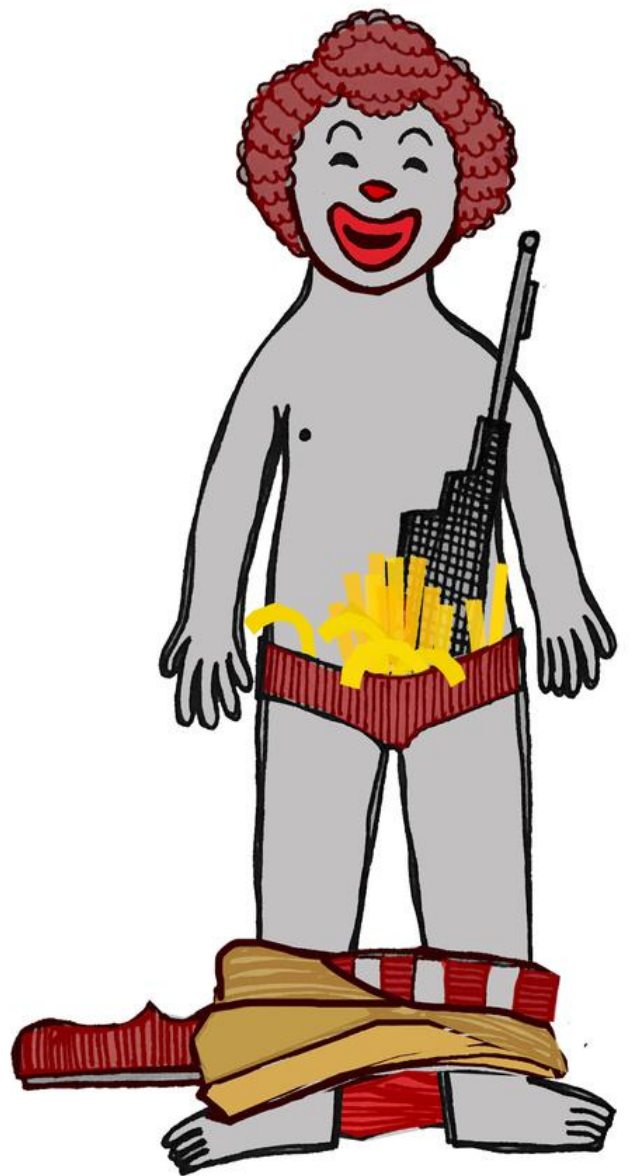


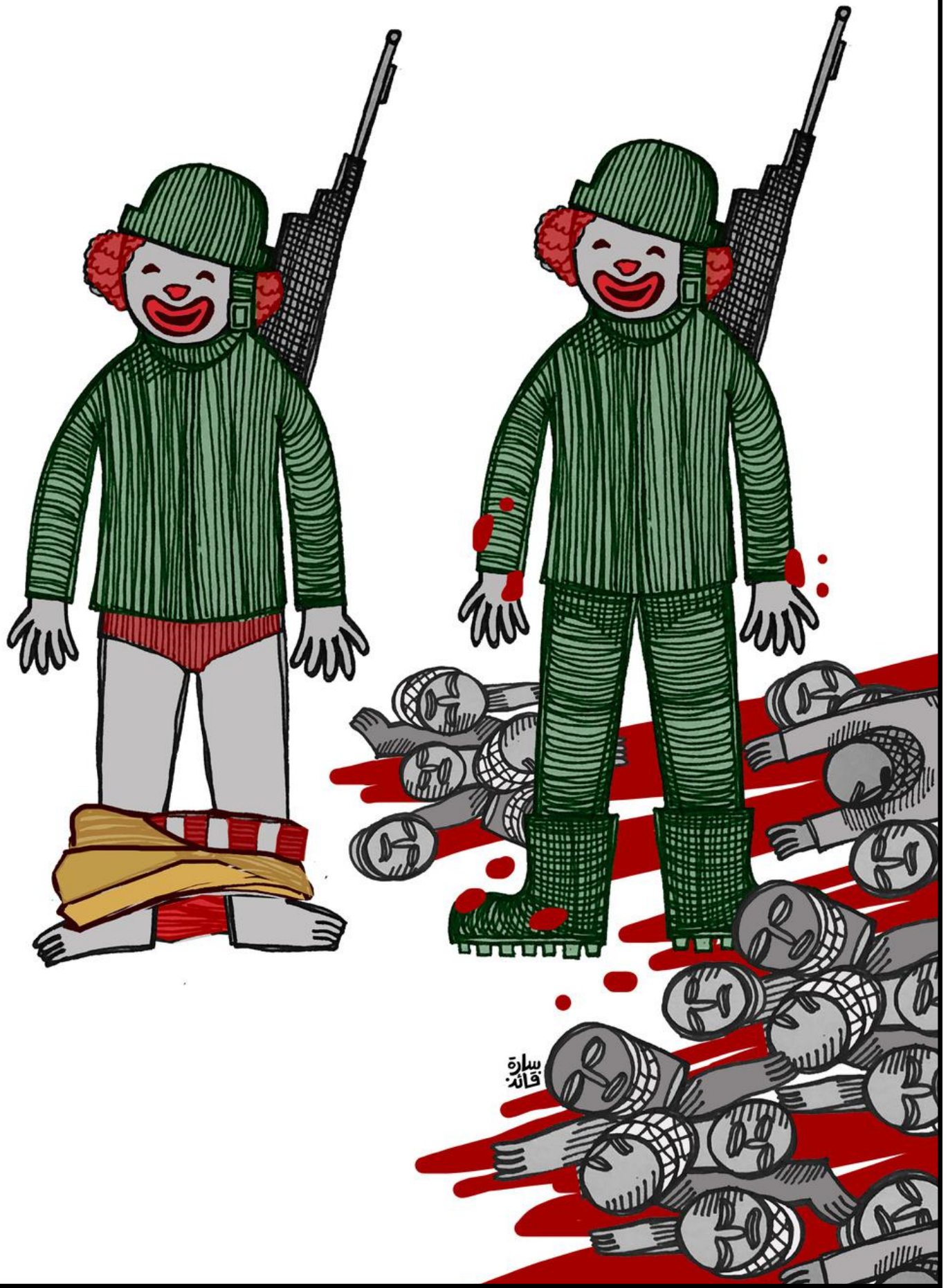
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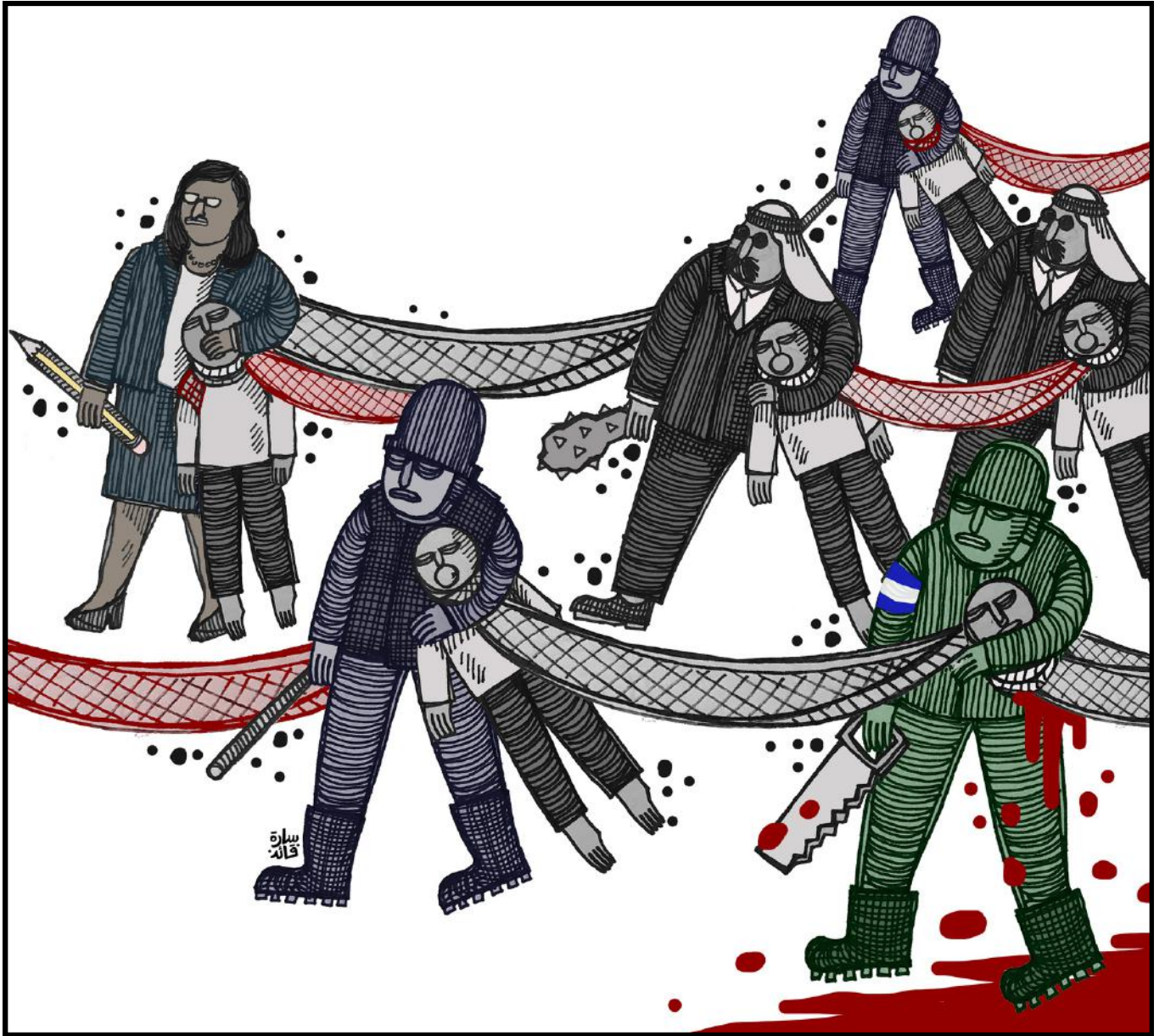


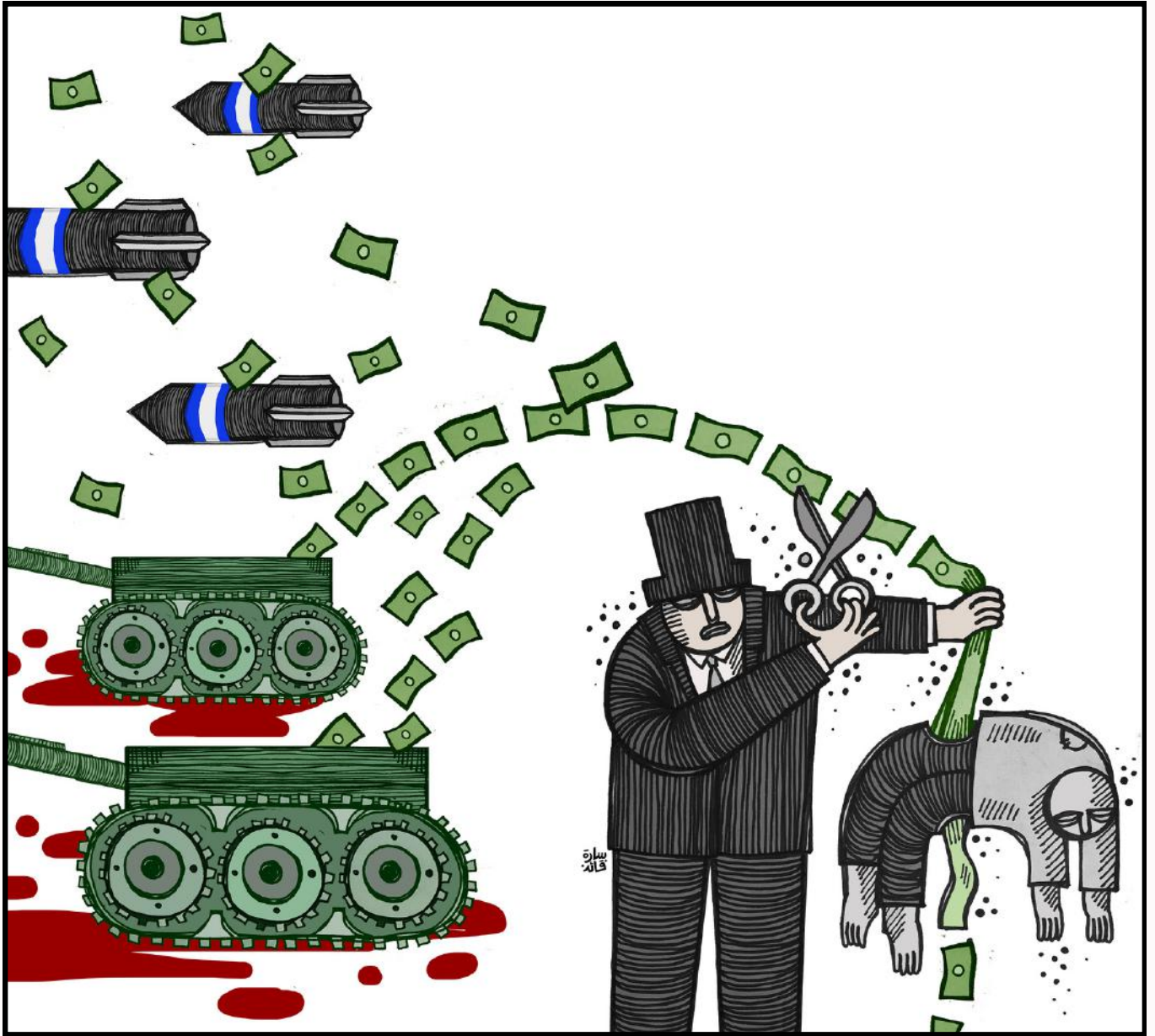










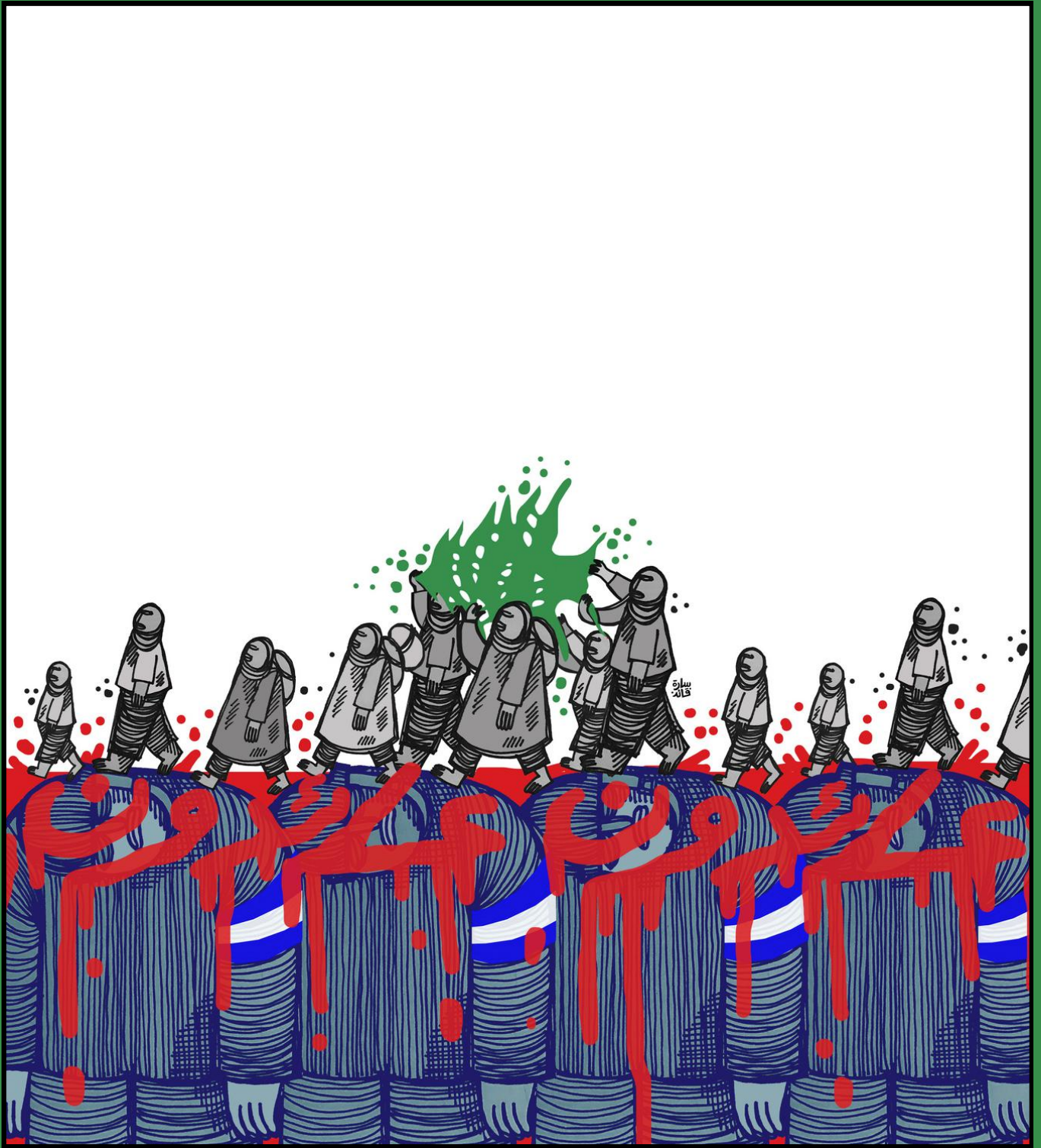













Follow Sara Qaed





With a Bird's Eyeview: Three Terrains of Songs on the Palestinian Cause

Ali Moraly

This article intends to offer a “bird’s-eye view” of three terrains that may define the evolutionary trajectory of a musical-literary production organically linked to the Palestinian cause. Using the generational coordinates in line with the current classificatory trends, starting with Generation X (Gen X), the following will present a macro-historical narrative on a body of work that emerged in response to the political struggles of the Palestinian cause, shaped in form and substance by the resonance of its liberationist discourse.

When examining the path threaded by Arabic-language songs that take a stance standing up for, or in solidarity with, the Palestinian people's cause, it becomes possible to distinguish three distinct eras. These eras connect the 1980s to the present and intersect with three key milestones: the First (1987–1993), and Second (2000–2005) Intifadas, and the ongoing Israeli war in the Gaza Strip since the fall of 2023, triggered by an attack launched from northern Gaza by the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, and allied factions on October 7.

When the First Intifada erupted in the late 1980s, the Palestinian struggle once again became the central issue in Arabic-speaking countries, especially those neighboring historical Palestine, known as the frontline states: Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt. These countries, geographically and socially, were the cradle of much of the activism since the Nakba of 1948, as they hosted a large portion of the Palestinian diaspora.

This reality applied geographically and demographically to these states, as well as to the collective popular consciousness and official ideological discourse. At that time, and within this context, Lebanon played the most prominent role in producing and disseminating songs committed to the Palestinian struggle. This was likely due, first and foremost, to the coastal country's suffering following Israel's first occupation of an Arab capital in 1982, which turned Beirut into a direct front on all levels—military, intellectual, and especially artistic.

Secondly, Lebanon not only hosted the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) for two decades (1960–1982), but its relatively open political, economic, and cultural climate, compared to the other neighboring states, provided a fertile environment where creative and productive resources were available. This was despite a tragic civil war that lasted for decades, in which the Arab-Israeli conflict was a central element.

Among the songs that emerged from Lebanon is “Unadikum” (I Call on You) by Ahmad Kaabour, which echoed across Arabic-speaking radio and television channels, becoming akin to a soundtrack accompanying news footage from the cities, towns, and villages of occupied Palestine. These scenes depicted “the children of the stones” throwing rocks at Zionist armored vehicles and tanks. The song’s popularity at times rivaled that of mainstream pop songs. Children and youth embraced it, eager to acquire cassette recordings of the song in Beirut, Damascus, and Amman, where they were sold in shops and on street corners.

The lyrics of the song come from a *mīmiyya* poem (a poem whose verses end with the Arabic letter *mīm*) written in 1966 by Palestinian poet Tawfiq Ziad. Kaabour composed the melody in 1975 during a night filled with bombardments in the early months of the Lebanese Civil War. He first performed the song in a field hospital in Beirut, accompanying himself on the guitar in the progressive style of that era, inspired by Chilean icon of political poetry and music, Victor Jara (1932–1973).

Ziad’s *mīmiyya* had previously been performed in a sung version accompanied by the oud, with music composed and sung by Sheikh Imam (1918–1995), an Egyptian icon of political art. However, the widespread popularity of Kaabour’s version can be attributed to two factors. The first was related to timing and destiny, tied to the historical moment of the Lebanese Civil War and the Palestinians’ central role within it, while the second is Kaabour’s skillful melodic investment in the first word of the poem’s opening line, the verb “Unadikum” (I call on you), which he transforms into a prolonged and independent motif, separated by a musical pause from what follows. It is placed at a high vocal pitch, gradually descending throughout the verse, thereby turning the motif into a theme that encapsulates the entire meaning of the poem. This is a brilliant compositional stroke, tying the act of calling to the act of pleading, making the call a resounding cry that amplifies the song’s expressive potency and deepens its instantaneous emotional impact on the listener.

The Second Intifada erupted at the dawn of the 21st century, amid a global and regional political and social landscape that seemed markedly different. Perhaps the most significant difference affecting songs in solidarity with the Palestinian cause was that Palestine was no longer merely a diaspora and a collective imagination. It now had a geographical entity on its native land. Following the Oslo Accords signed in 1994 as a result of the First Intifada, the Palestinian Authority was established as a temporary self-governing body. It began to administer areas in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, envisioned as the nucleus of a promised independent Palestinian state under a political negotiation process known as the "Two-State Solution."

Although the Oslo promise faltered, its pathways disrupted until coming to a standstill, it shifted the Palestinian collective consciousness toward a state of grounding. This grounding gave rise to a Palestinian youth—now categorized as Millennials—who grew up on parts of their ancestral geography. They wove together the notions of "diaspora" and "homeland" with a distinctive national awareness that produced songs representing Palestine both popularly and officially, whether in Arabic-speaking countries or on international stages.

The singer Mohammed Assaf, 34 years old, must be seen as a fruit of this phase. He grew up and studied in Khan Younis, in the southern Gaza Strip. In 2001, one year into the "Al-Aqsa Intifada," an 11-year-old Assaf appeared in a video singing "Shiddi H̄ilik ya Balad" (Hold Strong, O Country), written in colloquial Palestinian Arabic by the poet





Kifah Al-Ghussain, a Gazan who had previously been honored by the Ministry of Culture of the Palestinian Authority. Her poetry collection, *Washm 'Ala Jabeen Badawiya* (A Tattoo on a Bedouin's Forehead), was published in 2000.

As for the melody, it was composed by Jamal Al-Najjar, 67 years old, a musician of Gazan origin with roots in Ramla, born in the Rafah refugee camp. Al-Najjar was the first to sing Al-Ghussain's poem. He also worked within the Palestinian diplomatic corps at his country's embassy in Romania and was honored, in the city of Ramallah in 2013, for his artistic contributions by the National Committee for Jerusalem as the Arab Capital of Culture. Additionally, he composed and wrote for Assaf the widely celebrated song "Ally Al-Kufiyyeh" (Raise the Kufiyyeh) in 2005.

From the opening line of the refrain of "Shiddi Hīlik ya Balad" (Hold Strong, O Country), when the word "balad" (country) is mentioned as the agent of the act of arousal—expressed colloquially as "shidd el-ḥeil" (tighten your resolve)—one can discern a symbolic invocation of the promise of "nation-building" that the Oslo Accords extended to Palestinians as the bitter fruit of their struggle and sacrifices.

Al-Najjar excelled in selecting Maqam Al-Huzam as the scale for composing the song for two reasons. The first is the inherent tension of this maqam's root note, characterized by its quarter-tone, which resonates with feelings of readiness and embarking on a path of construction. This naturally called for arranging the melody within the dynamic and rhythmic structure of the traditional Dabke dance. The second reason lies in the indigenous identity of Maqam Al-Siga and its branch, Al-Huzam, deeply rooted in Palestinian musical folklore, particularly in Gaza.

From Gaza, devastated at the outset of the second decade of the third millennium, the pro-Palestinian solidarity song transitioned into a new phase marked by both defeat and triumph. The defeat is evident in the Oslo solution reaching a deadend, suspending the dream of building a state on Palestinian soil indefinitely, while Israeli airstrikes continue to pound what remains of Gaza, and tanks encircle those left behind after more than a year of a catastrophic war. This war spilled into Lebanon and Syria, bearing apocalyptic features that brought upon Palestinians a humanitarian tragedy of historic proportions.

The triumph, however, lies in the fact that after Gaza 2023, the Palestinian cause is no longer a cause of the Arabs but has become one of the world's central causes, particularly in the West. Not only does it not hold true for most of its official international fronts, it resonates profoundly among progressive movements that transcend geographic boundaries and institutional political frameworks. It has found widespread support among the globalized middle-class youth of Generation Z, who align themselves with the weak against the powerful, and the marginalized against the privileged. This shift has produced a different kind of solidarity song—not just in form and content but also in the way it emerges from and the audiences it seeks to reach.



Some of the most significant platforms for launching these songs in 2023 are the capitals: Beirut, Cairo, and to some extent, Jerusalem. These spaces. This prominence arises not only from the vibrant atmospheres in these cities compared to the regional context of the Arab Spring, but also due to the presence of young people who have turned into progressive vanguards. These groups seem to embrace postmodern discourse, actively operating within a globalized context adept at engaging with Generation Z.

It is worth noting here the paradox that educational legacies in these cities, such as the American University in Beirut, have produced a generation that actively adopts Western culture, yet chooses to align itself with the colonized rather than the colonizer. This and mastery of foreign languages—especially English—have shaped and thought patterns in both the Eastern and Western worlds, both realms equally.

Within this cosmopolitan environment, enriched by global influences, a new shape in a global Indie style, incorporating its postmodern elements, that establish musical crossover bridges to and from the West. The Palestinian cause is increasingly presented in a way that links the Palestinian right to self-determination with global progressive movements.

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d by the outcomes of the Arab Spring, the "alternative song" emerged and took
popular musical genres such as rock, soul, and hip-hop, while adding Eastern flavors
from local identity. As for the content, namely the poetic text here, it is striking that
from a humanistic perspective, transcending the Arab-Israeli conflict binary and
n with a comprehensive, united, and multi-layered liberation movement.

While the alternative song intersects with the progressive songs of the 1970s and 1980s—such as Sheikh Imam and Ahmad Kaa'bour's "Unadikum"—in their global view of struggle, it diverges in its aversion to ideological rhetoric and its attraction to irony and metaphorical expression. One of the best examples is the song "Tilka Qadiyyah" (That's a Cause) by the Egyptian band Cairokee, released as an early artistic reaction to the Gaza 2023 war.

The lyrics, written by Mustafa Ibrahim, 38 years old, are marked by a dialectical depth infused with a captivating emotional charge. The structure of the poem is built upon contrapuntal ironies that challenge Western humanism for its reductionism, selectivity, and arrogance, exposing its double standards when applied in reality. The literary architecture is clad in a minimalist, transparent musical spiral that facilitates the absorption of meanings. It is woven through the strings of the acoustic guitar, ensembles of piano keys, vocal lines, and electronic soundscapes, interspersed with an Eastern signature left by the rhythmic riq instrument.

Finally, as the Palestinian case shows us through this short analysis, one may consider that any song carrying a cause often necessitates a teleological musical design, aimed at ensuring that the message's essence reaches its audience. The goal is to elicit an emotional response and provoke intellectual engagement on both individual and collective levels, in the hope of influencing public opinion—a factor that ultimately impacts state policies and international organizations' agendas.

**LISTEN TO THE SONGS BY
AMHAD KAABOUR,
MOHAMMAD ASSAF
E CAIROKEE**

<https://youtu.be/3XBxPX8VqFI?si=w6tuibApdHTrxZwz>

<https://youtu.be/tj5tJkkyvvg?si=XjwClwWNIGyEOHJ1>

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REVIEW

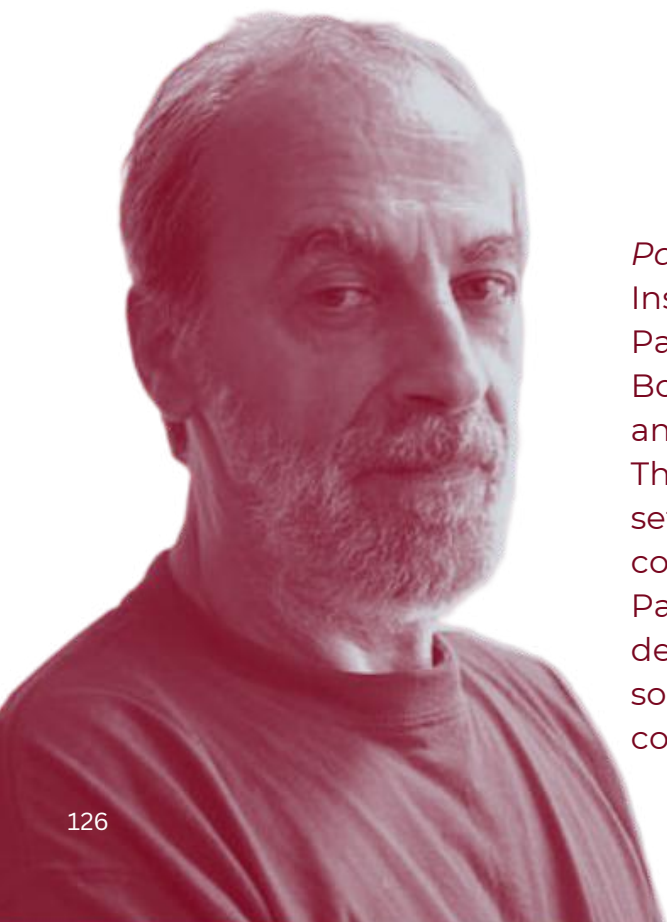


A BOOK AGAINST DACHAU'S GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Wander Wilson

"Let us leave aside the waiting, the hesitations, the dreams of social peace, the minor compromises, the naivety. Let us leave aside the grand analyses that explain everything down to the smallest detail, the massive books filled with judgment and fear. Let us leave aside the bourgeois democratic illusion of discussion and dialogue, debate and assembly, of the enlightened skills of mafia leaders. We are certain that from our struggle, here and now, communities of pleasure will emerge. And for the first time, life will triumph over death."

Alfredo Bonanno



Palestina mon amour, published in Brazil by Insurrectas Editions, compiles texts on the Palestinian question written by Alfredo Maria Bonanno between the 1980s and 2000s for the anarchist newspapers *Provocazione* and *Canenero*. The writings cover the arrival of the first Israeli settlers in Palestinian lands, the formation of the colonial state of Israel, the resistance of the Palestinian people, international solidarity, ongoing deaths and genocide, critiques of the two-state solution, and a sharp reflection on the concept of community.

In a preliminary note preceding the publication, Bonanno states that during his imprisonment in Trieste in 2004, he managed for the first time to write about his torture at the hands of Mossad, the Israeli intelligence service, in 1972. We know of this story only through this brief mention, which nonetheless sets the tone for the texts that follow: the Palestinian question speaks to more than the systematic genocide perpetrated by the Israeli state since its founding. From a prison in Trieste, territory under Italian state control, Bonanno asserts that “the directions of the catastrophe are the most comprehensible consequence of its conclusion” (Bonanno, 2023: 15).

The chronological arrangement of the writings reveals hesitation as a persistent challenge that prevents the existence of an assertive position both for the left and within anarchist circles. In *A Molotov in Turin*, Bonanno describes the reaction to a Molotov cocktail thrown at a Zionist bookstore in solidarity with the Palestinian cause, which was claimed by the Gruppo Anarchici Rivoluzionari. Many anarchists, he notes, framed the event as reminiscent of Nazi antisemitism, which caused deep divisions and discomfort within these movements.

Bonanno's writings exhibit unwavering solidarity with the struggle for Palestinian liberation. He unequivocally states: “The destruction of a pro-Israel bookstore is not something that disturbs us much when compared to those truly disturbing facts” (Bonanno, 2002: 71). These “disturbing facts,” detailed in a 1989 text, include: “Massive deportation, concentration camps, indiscriminate massacres, destruction of homes, violence, rape, the use of death squads...” (ibid., 64-65). Bonanno compares those who seek historical nuance to mitigate these atrocities to the neighbors of Dachau who, while witnessing the Holocaust, complained only about the factory smoke killing birds in nearby trees.



What *Palestina Mon Amour* demonstrates is that the catastrophic nature of the Palestinian genocide has been evident since 1948. Even before extensive research clarified its links to colonial genocides and fascism, attentive observers could see it clearly. However, the association between the antisemitic genocide of Nazism and the role of Jewish settlers in building the Israeli state complicated clear positioning for many. How can one understand extermination perpetrated by those who were once its victims? Did fascism truly end with World War II?

Antisemitism is crucial to understanding the Nazi genocide. Yet an exclusive focus on this erases the annihilation of Roma, communists, and the disabled. A broader view of Nazi horror reveals unsettling continuities: the first sterilizations of “degenerates” and the mentally ill occurred under Michigan law in 1907, and in 1924, Brazil's concentration camp for anarchists and military deserters—Clevelândia—operated in Oiapoque. Prisons, as Ruth Wilson Gilmore (2024) reminds us, proliferated globally under capitalism, far beyond fascism, embedding the logic of labor exploitation. Viewed in this light, Nazism was not an aberration but the “paroxysm of established normality,” as Michel Foucault (2007) notes. Fascism, far from opposing democratic states, coexisted with them. Spain's Francoist regime, for instance, joined the United Nations in 1955, sanitized by euphemisms like “authoritarian regime.”

No international body or state can critique Israel without revealing its own complicity. Fascism thrives in the democratic frameworks of states with legacies of genocide. The colonial roots of Israel's foundation, as Edward Said (2012) highlights, were established by British imperialism, which framed Arabs as barbaric and juxtaposed them against “Western civilization.” This rhetoric influenced apartheid policies in South Africa and global institutions like the Mont Pelerin Society. It also shaped mental health policies, as seen in the work of Brazilian psychiatrist Antônio Carlos Pacheco e Silva, a proponent of São Paulo's racial superiority and co-founder of the UDN* party (Tarelow, 2018).

The colonial origins, derived from the British Empire, embedded in the agreements that led to the Nakba of 1948, are sustained, as Edward Said (2012) shows, by establishing the concept of Western civilization in relation to the image of the barbaric or savage Arab. The defense of civilization would guide neoliberalism figures like Wilhelm Röpke (1964) in advocating apartheid in South Africa, the foundational documents of the Mont Pelerin Society and its influence on the creation of international organizations, and would be present in the construction of mental health policy within the WHO through psychiatrists like Brazil's Antônio Carlos Pacheco e Silva (Yi-Jui Wu, 2021), a proponent of the supposed superiority of São Paulo's bandeirante* blood and one of the founders of the UDN** (Tarelow, 2018).

Colonial narratives underpin not only Israeli state violence but also Brazil's developmentalist projects, which fund agribusinesses, destroy indigenous lands, and poison the Amazon with open-air gas fields. The catastrophe—whether softened by the left or intensified by the right—remains the ultimate expression of a global order built on the illusion of civilizational superiority.

Palestina Mon Amour confronts us with the Palestinian genocide as a microcosm of global oppression (Racy, 2023). To dismantle this world order, we must refuse to be like Dachau's "good neighbors," complicit through inaction.

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* By the time of São Paulo 450th foundation birthday, psychiatric power in the city had helped establishing archetypes of a racial superiority in the figure of the *Bandeirante*, colonial explorers of the São Paulo hinterland. Portuguese, sometimes cyprto-jews, and mixed with natives, these men were slave and precious stone hunters, as well as experts in the geography, and passed on to São Paulo's history as pioneers of Brazilian territorialization.

** The UDN (National Democratic Party) was a conservative party founded in 1945 as an opposition to Getúlio Vargas. Defending classical Liberalism, the party was extinguished with the rise of the civil-military dictatorship.

*'[...] fascism was never the
opposite of Democratic
Rule of Law.'*



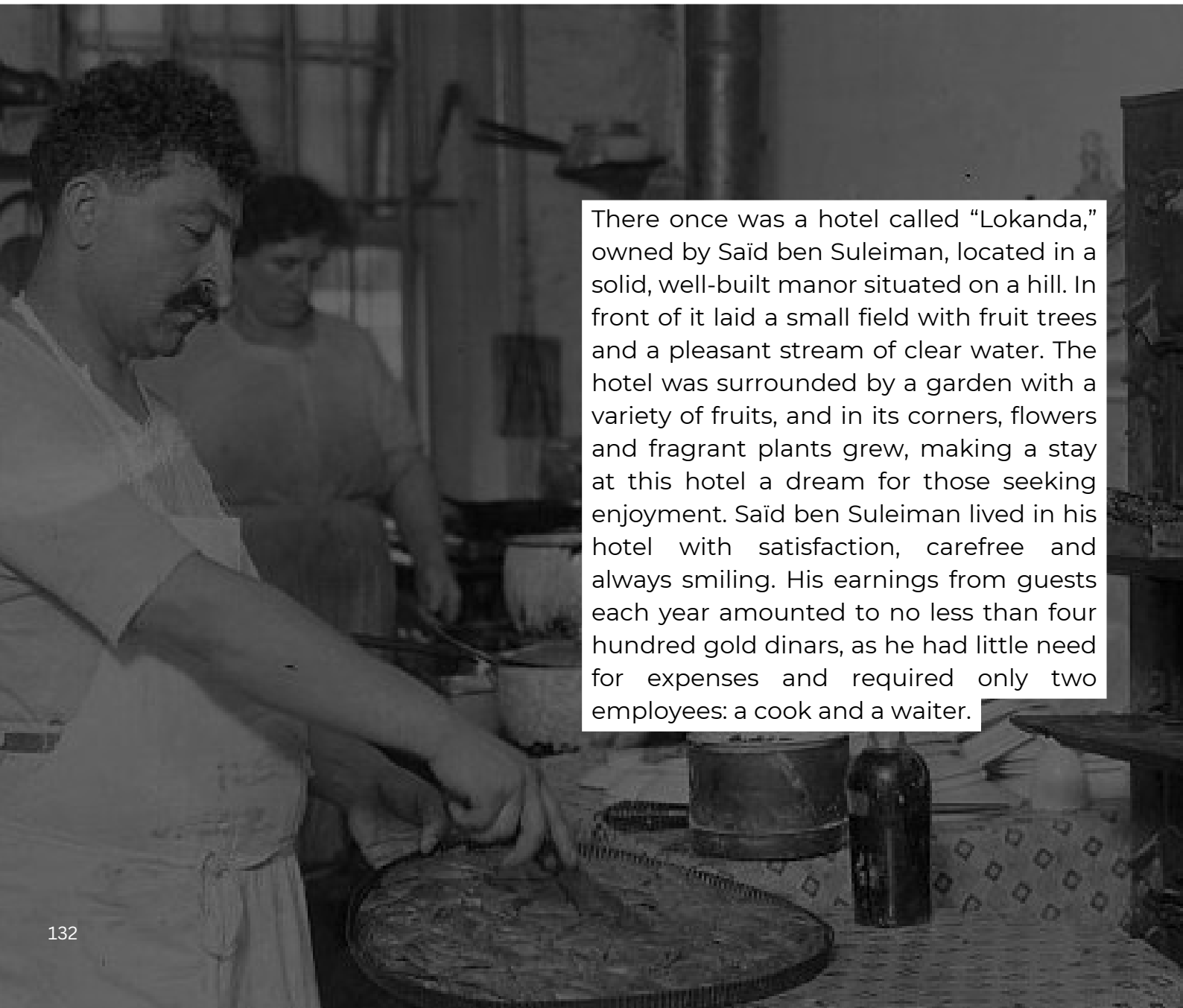
ANECDOTE

“WHAT A PITY IT DID NOT REMAIN SMALL”

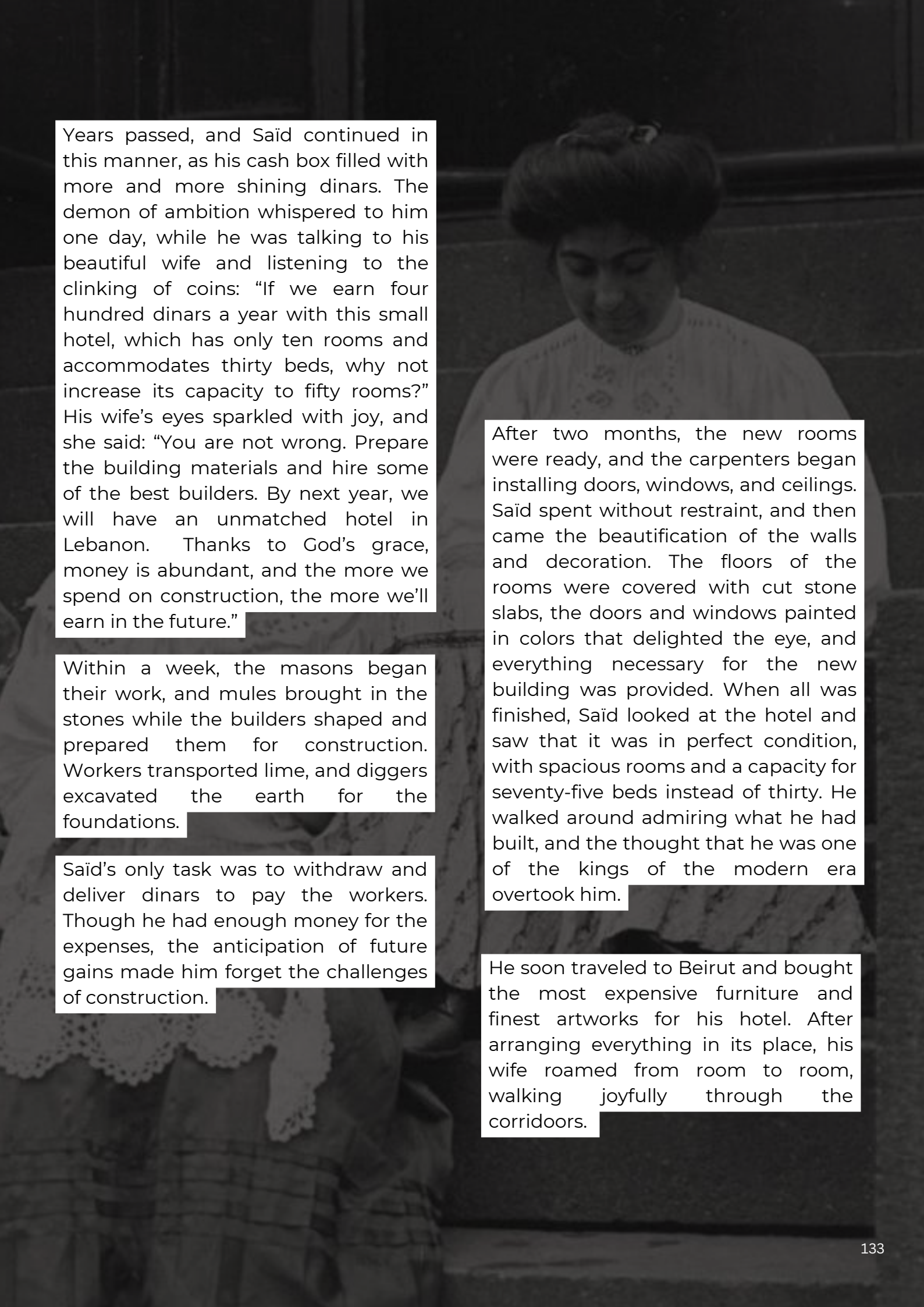
Story of a Situation

Amin Afandi Nasser al-Din

Translated by Yara Osman and Gustavo Racy
Published in *Al Jaliah*, n.51, 25/12/1923.



There once was a hotel called “Lokanda,” owned by Saïd ben Suleiman, located in a solid, well-built manor situated on a hill. In front of it laid a small field with fruit trees and a pleasant stream of clear water. The hotel was surrounded by a garden with a variety of fruits, and in its corners, flowers and fragrant plants grew, making a stay at this hotel a dream for those seeking enjoyment. Saïd ben Suleiman lived in his hotel with satisfaction, carefree and always smiling. His earnings from guests each year amounted to no less than four hundred gold dinars, as he had little need for expenses and required only two employees: a cook and a waiter.

A woman with dark hair styled in an updo, wearing a white dress with intricate lace detailing on the sleeves and collar. She is looking downwards with a thoughtful or somber expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

Years passed, and Saïd continued in this manner, as his cash box filled with more and more shining dinars. The demon of ambition whispered to him one day, while he was talking to his beautiful wife and listening to the clinking of coins: "If we earn four hundred dinars a year with this small hotel, which has only ten rooms and accommodates thirty beds, why not increase its capacity to fifty rooms?" His wife's eyes sparkled with joy, and she said: "You are not wrong. Prepare the building materials and hire some of the best builders. By next year, we will have an unmatched hotel in Lebanon. Thanks to God's grace, money is abundant, and the more we spend on construction, the more we'll earn in the future."

Within a week, the masons began their work, and mules brought in the stones while the builders shaped and prepared them for construction. Workers transported lime, and diggers excavated the earth for the foundations.

Saïd's only task was to withdraw and deliver dinars to pay the workers. Though he had enough money for the expenses, the anticipation of future gains made him forget the challenges of construction.

After two months, the new rooms were ready, and the carpenters began installing doors, windows, and ceilings. Saïd spent without restraint, and then came the beautification of the walls and decoration. The floors of the rooms were covered with cut stone slabs, the doors and windows painted in colors that delighted the eye, and everything necessary for the new building was provided. When all was finished, Saïd looked at the hotel and saw that it was in perfect condition, with spacious rooms and a capacity for seventy-five beds instead of thirty. He walked around admiring what he had built, and the thought that he was one of the kings of the modern era overtook him.

He soon traveled to Beirut and bought the most expensive furniture and finest artworks for his hotel. After arranging everything in its place, his wife roamed from room to room, walking joyfully through the corridors.

Summer arrived, and the hotel was filled with tourists, forcing Saïd to hire many cooks, waiters, and servants. Authorities, impressed by Saïd's unparalleled hotel, imposed taxes on him that he had never imagined. When summer ended, Saïd calculated his earnings but discovered that his expenses exceeded his revenue. He covered his face with his hands and sighed. His wife came to inquire about the situation, and when she saw the summary of the accounts, her face turned pale. The couple looked at each other and said simultaneously: "What a pity it didn't remain small."

Storytellers began recounting the tale of Saïd and his hotel, and whenever someone heard it, they would say:

How how similar is this story to that of Lebanon?!



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Yan Boechat is a journalist based in São Paulo. He has worked in Brazilian media in newspapers, magazines and news websites and has been an international contributor to outlets such as The New York Times, BBC, Deutsche Welle, NBC, among others. His work is dedicated to covering the human impact of major events, covering humanitarian issues in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey, Iran, Ukraine, Congo, Afghanistan, Palestine, Angola, DRC, Venezuela, Egypt, Tunisia, Colombia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Nepal, Venezuela and Brazil.

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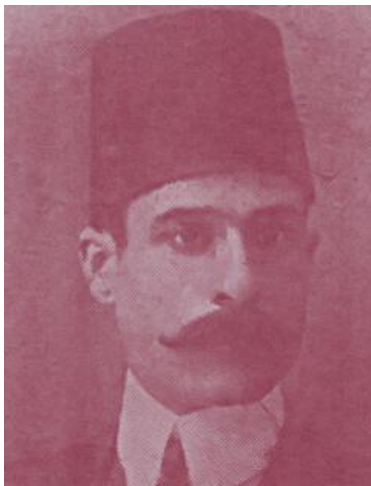
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Amin Affandi Nasser el-Din (Kfar Matta, 1876 - 1953)



Amin Nasser el-Din was a prominent Lebanese poet, writer, activist, and journalist. He served as the editor of *Al-Safa*, a magazine founded by his father, and was a mentor to later intellectuals such as Nayef Talhouk, Salman Fares Jaber, and Wadih Youssef Malaeib.

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Gustavo Racy

With a Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Antwerp, Gustavo Racy is currently conducting postdoctoral research at UNIFESP. He was a co-founder of Sobinfluencia Edições, publishing works by Guy Debord and Walter Benjamin, and has authored several articles on Brazilian and international journals. He is the director of Al Jaliah.

Sami Joaquim Racy

(Saida, 1880 - São Paulo, 1927)

Sami Joaquim Racy was the founder and director of the original Al Jaliah. After pursuing various commercial ventures in São Paulo, he established Al Jaliah, which brought him significant success until his untimely death in 1927. Among his many writings, the Kitab al-Wajibat (Book of Duties), published in 1911, stands out. Throughout the eight years of Al Jaliah's publication, he contributed numerous reflections, translations, analyses, and anecdotes.



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