

20th Century Poetry from

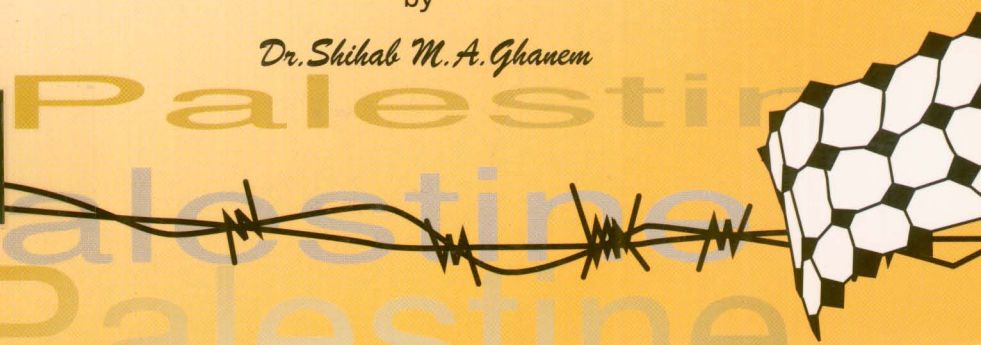
Palestine

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Translated
by

Dr. Shihab M. A. Ghanem

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Preface

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For the greater part of this century Palestinian poetry has played an important role in the fight of the Palestinian people for their cause, although one may safely say that most Arab poets have also written about Jerusalem and Palestine during the past fifty plus years.

Now that a Palestinian State is expected in the near future, either through political settlement or unilateral declaration, it may be appropriate to pay tribute to the role played by Palestinian poetry by producing this little volume. This will give the interested reader a chance to sample 20th Century poems from some of the best known Palestinian poets, including celebrated poets such as Fadwa Tawqan, one of the two best known twentieth century lady poets, and Mahmoud Darwish and Samih Al-Qasim, the popular resistance poets.

I have split the volume into two sections: *baiti* and *tafi'la* poems. The *baiti* poems follow the traditional style that has been standard since pre-Islamic days with two equal hemistiches to a line and a unified rhyme. The *tafi'la* poems follow the modern style that became popular after the Second World War, and in which the number of feet changes arbitrarily from line to line, and although there is often some rhyming this does not follow a fixed pattern. The purpose of this split is to give the reader of English a chance to compare the two styles.

Some of these translations appeared in magazines such as Gulf Weekly, Friday Magazine and Al-Shindagah and I am grateful for the support of these publications. My thanks are also due to Nan Ireland for her most valuable comments on the manuscript and to Jan Elliott for typing and setting.

Shihab M. Ghanem
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