



SUBCONTRACTED NATIONS

A. M. Qattan Foundation - 2018

MUSA AL-ALAMI

The Arab Development Society Manifesto

Musa al-Alami (1897–1984) was the assistant attorney general of Mandatory Palestine. Both his father Feidi al-Alami and his grandfather Musa al-Alami were mayors of Jerusalem.

Alami was born in the Musrara district of Jerusalem into a prominent family. His sister was married to Jamal al-Hussayni and he was the uncle of Serene Husseini Shahid.

He was first taught at the school of the American Colony and at the French École des Freres in Jaffa. During World War I, Alami worked at the censorship office in Damascus. Alami maintained a positive view of the Ottoman Empire, recalling that the Arabs regarded the Turks as partners rather than oppressors and above all, Palestinian officials largely ruled Palestine. Alami claimed "a greater degree of freedom and self-government existed in Palestine than in many Turkish provinces." He later studied law at Cambridge University and was admitted to the Inner Temple and graduated with honours.

Upon his return to Jerusalem, Alami worked for the legal department of the government of the British Mandate and eventually became the private secretary of High Commissioner General Arthur Grenfell Wauchope. In 1934, Alami participated in talks with leaders of the Jewish community in Palestine David Ben-Gurion and Moshe Sharett. When Ben-Gurion suggested that the Zionists could provide significant help developing the region, Alami replied that he would prefer waiting 100 years and leaving the land backward as long as the Palestinians could do the job themselves.

Alami was ousted from his government position as legal adviser by the British authorities and went into exile in Beirut and later in Baghdad. He played an important role in the St. James Conference, negotiations with the British government in London in 1938–39. He was the major contributor to the White Paper of 1939.

After the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, Alami

lost most of his property in Jerusalem and the Galilee and went to live near Jericho, where he acquired a concession of 5,000 acres of desert from the Jordanian government. In 1952 he started working with the Arab Development Society to help Jericho's refugees. After he discovered water he founded a large farm and school for refugee children. Alami raised funds for building villages for the refugees and founded an agricultural farm whose produce was exported. The farm was destroyed in the course of the Arab riots in Jericho in 1958 against the British but with help from the World Bank and the Ford Foundation, Alami managed to rebuild it.

According to David Gilmour, who interviewed Alami in February 1979 in Jericho:

Both the farm and the school were highly successful until the Israeli invasion in 1967, when two-thirds of the land was laid waste and twenty-six of the twenty-seven wells destroyed. The Israeli army systematically smashed the irrigation system, the buildings and the well-boring machinery. Most of the land quickly reverted to desert. Perhaps some of the destruction was unavoidable in wartime but what seems utterly callous and outrageous is the way Israeli authorities have behaved since 1967. A chunk of land was predictably wired off for "security reasons" and turned into a military camp. It is now deserted, [...] the Israelis refused to allow him to buy the necessary equipment



either to restore the damaged wells or to drill new ones. So he made some manual repairs to four of the least damaged wells and with these he was able to salvage a fraction of the land and keep the farm and the school functioning. [...] The Israelis] are now telling him that he has too much water—though he has less than a fifth of what he used to have—and have warned him that they will be fixing a limit on his consumption and will be taking away the surplus for their own "projects" (i.e. their

expanding settlements near Jericho).[...] Alami] laughs at President Carter's obsession with human rights because he knows they will never be observed in Palestine. "Liberty and justice are meaningless words for my people and my country. We have never known either." He waves towards his farm, a philanthropist's dream that was once brilliantly successful. "I gain no pleasure from this place now," he says, "I stay here out of duty. I know the Zionists have been wanting to get rid of us for years. They want me to go and have told me so. They want to build a kibbutz here. But I have a duty to keep going, a duty to my people."

Alami's funeral took place in Al-Aqsa Mosque. The Israel Defence Forces checkpoint/crossing on the eastern exit of Jericho (through which Palestinians travelling to Jordan via the Allenby Bridge pass through) is named Musa Alami (after the adjacent farm). The site is still commonly known as "the Musa Alami farm."

Text cited from the Palestine: Information with Provenance database.



**The Arab
Development
Society
Manifesto**

THE
ARAB DEVELOPMENT
SOCIETY

JERICHO

HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

Second Edition
OCTOBER 1953

The Commercial Press, Jerusalem

**Members of the Society as Registered
on December 31, 1952.**

<i>President:</i> Musa Alami	Lawyer and Landowner
<i>Members:</i> Khulusi Kheiry	Member of Parliament and Minister of Economics and Trade
Ali Hasna	Minister of Justice
Aziz Daoudi	Justice of Supreme Court
Abdulmajid Shuman	Deputy Director-General Arab Banks Ltd.
Dr. Tawfiq Canaan	President, Medical Association of Palestine
Dr. Yusuf Hajjar	National Hospital, Bethlehem
Dr. Mahmoud Dajani	Secretary, Medical Association of Palestine
Abdulrahim Nabulsi	President, Chamber of Commerce
Farid Anabtawi	Landowner
Mohamed Baradey Abbasi	Lawyer
Dr. Amin Majaj	Secretary, Medical Society
Mohamed Abboushi	Landowner
Ruhi Khatib	Member, Jerusalem Municipal Council

The Youth and their Future:

One of the most serious results of the refugee problem, is the presence of thousands of juveniles, many of them orphans, and most of them destitute, who roam from camp to camp, and who for practically five years now have had no home life, no instruction, no discipline. Having lost all the conditions of normal, stable life, these juveniles unless rescued, must inevitably lose self-respect, moral sense, and all hope. Even if it is possible to settle the majority of the older people now in the camps, the existence of a large juvenile "lost generation" must bring danger to the moral and spiritual climate of all the Arab countries.

2. To help deal with this problem, the Arab Development Society, before it embarked on its land development in Jericho, resolved as early as November 1948 to create training centres for refugee boys and girls, orphans and destitute, to teach them elementary education and train them in some craft.

After its success in developing the Jericho lands the Society decided to have these training centres in the lands of the Project. The boys and girls would thus be trained in agriculture and crafts.

3. These Training Centres would be the first of their kind in the Arab countries. The Society's plans are for taking care of 250 boys and 250 girls, and giving them as far as possible a normal, healthy environment and teaching them to manage their own affairs.

In addition to the moral and social training that they would thus obtain, they would be taught village crafts, domestic, agricultural and mechanical skills, and light industries. Their education would be a complete elementary program, with a chance for the successful and bright boys and girls to continue through university education.

On completion of their period of training they would be given the option to settle on the land provided by the Society.

4. The intention of the Society is **not** to produce white collared young men seeking office jobs and lazing about in the towns. Our intention is to produce cultivators (fallaheen), who are better equipped with agricultural knowledge and experience, who know about machine farming and new methods of cultivation, and who are also literate and educated so that they may follow up their studies in later life.

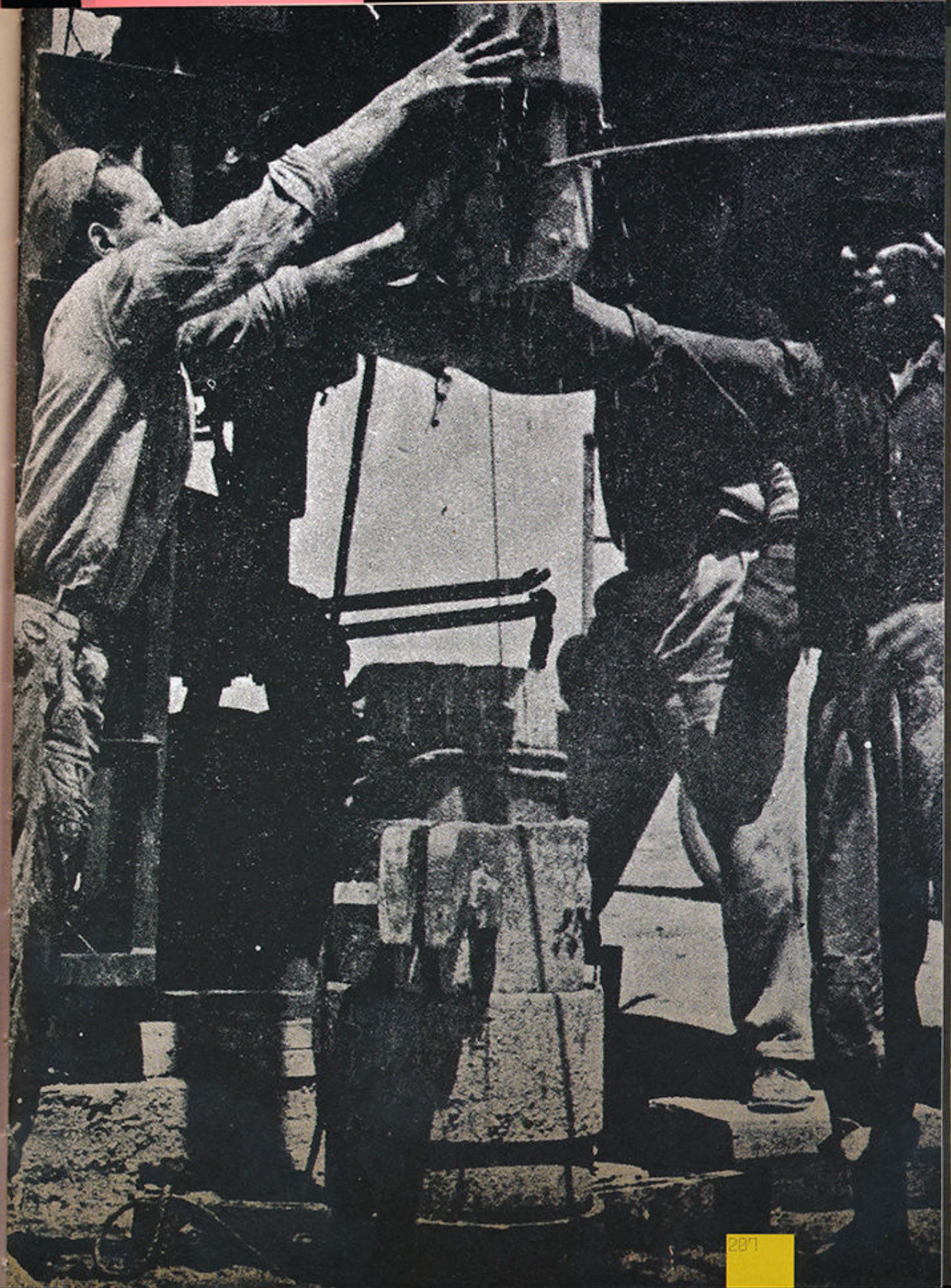
As to craftsmen and artisans, the country is now practically devoid of all skilled labour and artisans, and mechanics. Great numbers of the refugee artisans have migrated to different parts of the Arab world and elsewhere, in search for a living. It is highly desirable and imperative for the country that as many as possible of such people be trained. But we wish them to be better artisans than those of the past. We want to give them education; to train them to discipline and to co-ordinated life; in short to make of them men with an all-round knowledge who can use their hands and their brains to the best advantage.

5. As to the girls, it is already common knowledge that the girls in this country need even greater care than the boys, because they have much less opportunity for training and education.

Here again besides a complete elementary education, they will be trained in domestic skills, sewing and handicraft, dairy and poultry farming and so on.

It is the considered opinion of the Society that if we are to train and produce better farmers and artisans, we must ensure that their higher standard continues after they leave the Centre and start on their own. This can only be achieved if they build up better families and a solid family life. That again can only be attained if their wives and mothers of their children are educated and trained.

This is the objective of the Society.



SUSANNE BOSCH

A Visionary's Footprint: The ADS - Arab Development Society

Susanne Bosch is an artist and independent researcher. She received a PhD "Learning for Civil Society Through Participatory Public Art" from the University of Ulster in Belfast in 2012. From 2007–12, she developed and led the Art in Public MA at the University of Ulster in Belfast, together with artist Dan Shippides. As an 'interface activist', Susanne practices internationally in public art projects asking questions about long-term issues and building creative arguments around the ideas of democracy and sustainable futures. Her art often involves the issues of money such as the *Restpfennigaktion* (the Left-Over Penny Campaign), Germany, 1998–2002, *Initiativa Centesimo Avanzato*, PAN, Naples, Italy, 2008–9, *Hucha de Deseos*, Madrid Abierto, 2010–11 and *Leftover-Coin-Action*, Liechtenstein 2017; migration – examples are the video *My European Family* 2012, Athens and Kassel, Germany, *The Prehistory of Crisis II*, Belfast and Dublin, 2009; and societal visions as well as participation models such as *Cities Exhibition*, Birzeit University Museum, Palestine 2012–2013, *Das Gute Leben*, *Glücklich kommt von Selbermachen*, Bregenz, Austria 2014; *Dies ist Morgen*, Kunsthalle Osnabrück, Germany 2015;

Utopisten und Weltenbauer, Dortmund, Germany 2015; and *Das Mögliche im Sein*, Götzis, Austria, 2015.

Bosch develops site- and situation-specific interventions, installations, videos, drawings, and audio as well as dialogical formats. In her artistic research, as editor for publications and as facilitator, she works with formats such as writing and workshops. She is trained in Open Space and Art of Hosting facilitation (2008 - 2014), as well as conflict transformation (2004) and systemic constellation work (2014). Bosch has been working internationally and is currently the independent research fellow in the Collaborative Arts Partnership Programme, a European partner network of six countries, since 2015. In 2012/2013, Susanne Bosch was part of the 4th Edition of *Cities Exhibition Jericho – Beyond the Celestial and Terrestrial* at the Birzeit University Museum, looking in her work at the strategies of transformation and creation of a civil society that the ADS originally committed to in the 1950s.

A Visionary's Footprint: The ADS - Arab Development Society

Multimedia installation consisting of a film and printed visuals:

A 5–8-minute film about the ADS - Arab Development Society, consisting of original film and audio footage from the 1950s, as well as original film and audio footage from 2013, including interviews with contemporary witnesses. Additional visual material of maps, images from the 1950s and written footage.

In 2012/2013, Susanne Bosch was part of the 4th Edition of Cities Exhibition *Jericho – Beyond the Celestial and Terrestrial* at the Birzeit University Museum; looking at her work at the strategies of transformation and creation of a civil society that the ADS originally committed to in the 1950s, the founding of the institution. The incentive behind the plan was the idea of a joint, collaborative, social action to transform the Arab world, ultimately changing Palestinian civil society. Through fieldwork, exploration of the archive and dialogue, the artist explored past and present thought processes and the design of ADS as an act of collective learning, spatial inhabitation and cultivation as well as its forms of narration through various periods.

In 1945, a strategic plan was developed by Musa Alami and others to improve the lives of Palestinians villagers with "the object of raising the social, economic and educational standards of Arab villages in Palestine." The Arab League approved the plan "to strengthen the fallah, to rid them of debt and thereby save the lands from being lost to money-lenders and to fall into alien hands." In 1948, the course of history in the region transformed the plans and led to the need not only "to raise the standard of existing villages, but to create the very

conditions of an ordered and settled life" for tens of thousands of refugees.

Purchasing land in the Jordan Valley and finding water in the desert in 1948 led to the foundation of a non-profit organisation; an agricultural school and experimental farm in Jericho to provide training for the Palestinian refugee population. Musa Alami ran the ADS jointly with a board until his death in 1984. The educational vocational training centre that provided skills and education for several generations and thousands of Palestinians closed in the 1990s due to various reasons.

Alter-Nationality - 4 Aphorisms is a title based on a talk and text that I was introduced to in 2015. In *Alter-rurality, 24 Aphorisms*, Architect and professor Pieter Versteegh introduces his approach to challenge ways of looking at, thinking of and behaving in rural areas. He developed his thoughts as a cloud of aphorisms to attempt to knit a web of potentials for rurality as contemporary practice and wisdom and to challenge general rural perceptions from an urban perspective.

Versteegh's approach inspired me to revisit the term 'Subcontracted Nations' in an equally thought-provocative and playful manner. For now, I call it 'alter nationality'. We use the term 'alter-nation' in German and we have two etymological meanings for it: one is *der Wechsel*, meaning change, exchange, changing, switch and transition; the other is *die Abwechslung*, meaning variety, diversity, diversion and relief. In this attempt, I am not being nostalgic by visiting the Arab Development Society (ADS) as an experimental model farm in the Jordan Valley, but I am rather interested in revisiting the potentials of something that started in the past and never came to complete flourishing.





LIVES OF INFAMOUS MEN

Edited by James D. Faubion

Excerpts from Essential Works of Foucault,
1954-1988

New York: New Press, 2000.

pp. 157 - 160

As I recall, the idea came to me one day when I was reading, at the Bibliotheque Nationale, a record of internment written at the very beginning of the eighteenth century. If I'm not mistaken, it occurred to me as I read these two notices:

Mathurin Milan, placed in the hospital of Charenton, 31 August 1707: "His madness was always to hide from his family, to lead an obscure life in the country, to have actions at law, to lend usuriously and without security, to lead his feeble mind down unknown paths, and to believe himself capable of the greatest employments."

Jean Antoine Touzard, placed in the castle of Bicetre, 21 April 1701: "Seditious apostate friar, capable of the greatest crimes, sodomite, atheist if that were possible; this individual is a veritable monster of abomination whom it would be better to stifle than to leave at large."

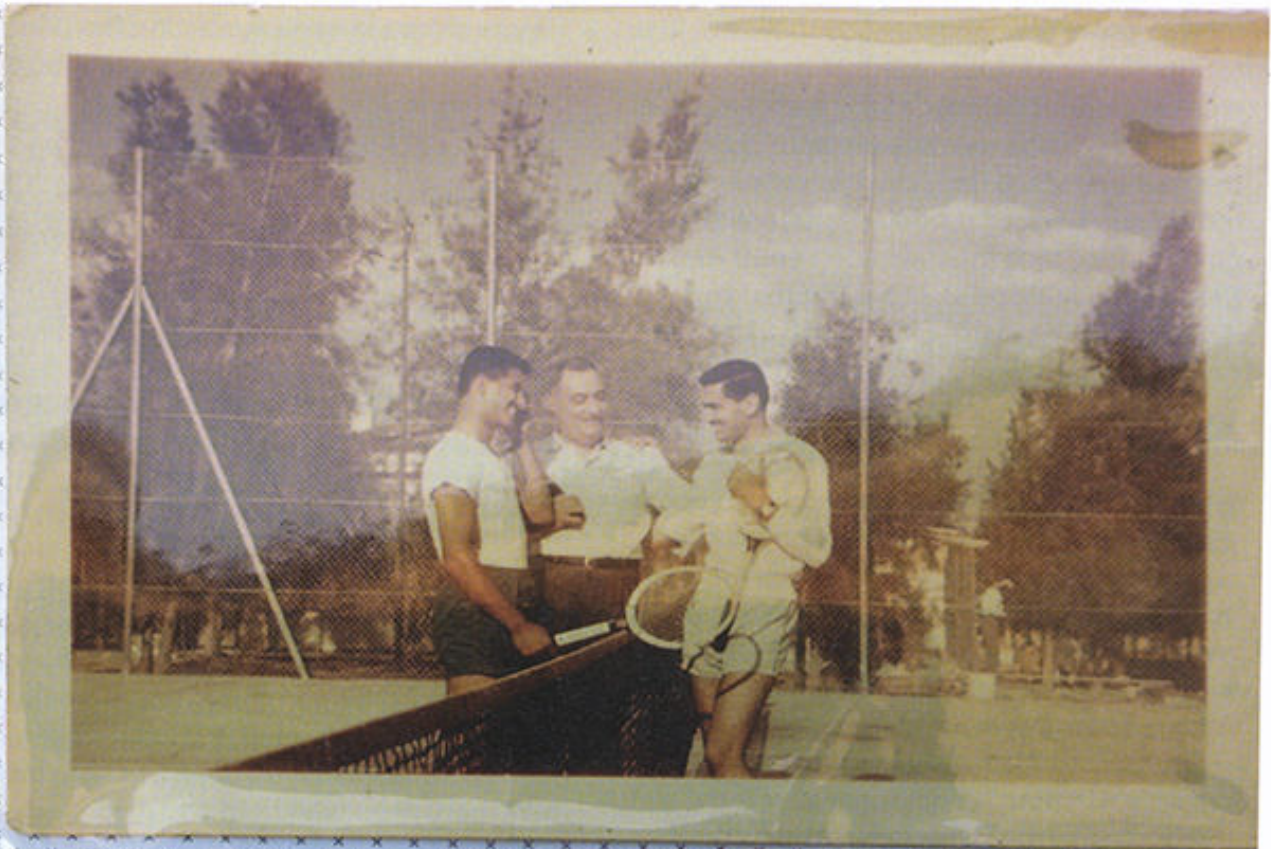


Image by Susanne Bosch from a photo album at
Taufic Hussein and Wajida Taji's house, Ramallah, 2013.

It would be hard to say exactly what I felt when I read these fragments and many others that were similar. No doubt, one of these impressions that are called "physical," as if there could be any other kind. I admit that these "short stories," suddenly emerging from two and a half centuries of silence, stirred more fibers within me than what is ordinarily called "literature," without my being able to say even now if I was more moved by the beauty of that Classical style, draped in a few sentences around characters that were plainly wretched, or by the excesses, the blend of dark stubbornness and rascality, of these lives whose disarray and relentless energy one senses beneath the stone-smooth words.

A long time ago I made use of documents like these for a book. If I did so back then, it was doubtless because of the resonance I still experience today when I happen to encounter these lowly lives reduced to ashes in the few sentences that struck them down. The dream would have been to restore their intensity in an analysis. Lacking the necessary talent, I brooded over the analysis alone. I considered the texts in their dryness, trying to determine their reason for being, what institutions or what political practice they referred to, seeking to understand why it had suddenly been so important in a society like ours to "stifle" (as one stifles a cry, smothers a fire, or strangles an animal) a scandalous

monk or a peculiar and inconsequential usurer. I looked for the reason why people were so zealous to prevent the feeble-minded from walking down unknown paths. But the first intensities that had motivated me remained excluded. And since there was a good chance that they wouldn't enter into the order of reasons at all, seeing that my discourse was incapable of conveying them in the necessary way, wouldn't it be better to leave them in the very form that had caused me to first feel them?

Whence the idea of this collection, done more or less as the occasion arose. A collection compiled without haste and without a clear purpose. For a long time I thought of presenting it in a systematic order, with a few rudiments of explanation, and in such a way that it would exhibit a minimum of historical significance. I decided against this, for reasons that I will come back to later. I resolved simply to assemble a certain number of texts, for the intensity they seem to me to have. I have appended a few preliminary remarks to them, and I have distributed them so as to preserve, as best I could, the effect of each.

So, this book will not answer the purpose of historians, even less than it will others. A mood-based and purely subjective book? I would say rather-but it may come to the same thing-that it's a rule- and game-based book, the book of a little obsession that found its system. I think that the poem of the oddball usurer or that of the sodomite monk served as a model throughout. It was in order to recapture something like those flash existences, those poem-lives, that I laid down a certain number of simple rules for myself:

The persons included must have actually existed.

These existences must have been both obscure and ill-fated.

They must have been recounted in a few pages or, better, a few sentences, as brief as possible.

These tales must not just constitute strange or pathetic anecdotes; but, in one way or another (because they were complaints, denunciations, orders, or reports), they must have truly formed part of the minuscule history of these existences, of their misfortune, their wildness, or their dubious madness.

And for us still, the shock of these words must give rise to a certain effect of beauty mixed with dread.

But I should say a little more about these rules that may appear arbitrary.

I wanted it always to be a matter of real existences: that one might be able to give them a place and a date; that behind these names that no longer say anything, behind these quick words which may well have been false, mendacious, unjust, exaggerated, there were men who lived and died, with sufferings, meannesses, jealousies, vociferations. So I excluded everything in the way of imagination or literature: none of the dark heroes that the latter have invented appeared as intense to me as these cobblers, these army deserters, these garment-sellers, these scribes, these vagabond monks, all of them rabid, scandalous, or pitiful. And this was owing, no doubt, to the mere fact that they are known to have lived. I likewise ruled out all the texts that might be memoirs, recollections, tableaux, all those recounting a slice of reality but keeping the distance of observation, of memory, of curiosity, or of amusement. I was determined that these texts always be in a relation or, rather, in the greatest possible number of relations with reality: not only that they refer to it, but they be operative within it; that they form

part of the dramaturgy of the real; that they constitute the instrument of a retaliation, the weapon of a hatred, an episode in a battle, the gesticulation of a despair or a jealousy, an entreaty or an order. I didn't try to bring together texts that would be more faithful to reality than others, that would merit inclusion for their representative value, but, rather, texts that played a part in the reality they speak of - and that, in return, whatever their inaccuracy, their exaggeration, or their hypocrisy, are traversed by it: fragments of discourse trailing the fragments of a reality they are part of. One won't see a collection of verbal portraits here, but traps, weapons, cries, gestures, attitudes, ruses, intrigues for which words were the instruments. Real lives were "enacted" ["jouees"] in these few sentences: by this I don't mean that they were represented but that their liberty, their misfortune, often their death, in any case their fate, were actually decided therein, at least in part. These discourses really crossed lives; existences were actually risked and lost in these words.

Another requirement of mine was that these personages themselves be obscure; that nothing would have prepared them for any notoriety; that they would not have been endowed with any of the established and recognized nobilities - those of birth, fortune, saintliness, heroism, or genius; that they would have belonged to those billions of existences destined to pass away without a trace; that in their misfortunes, their passions, in those loves and hatreds there would be something gray and ordinary in comparison with what is usually deemed worthy of being recounted; that, nevertheless, they be propelled by a violence, an energy, an excess expressed in the malice, vileness, baseness, obstinacy,

or ill-fortune this gave them in the eyes of their fellows and in proportion to its very mediocrity, a sort of appalling or pitiful grandeur. I had gone in search of these sorts of particles endowed with an energy all the greater for their being small and difficult to discern.

But in order for some part of them to reach us, a beam of light had to illuminate them, for a moment at least. A light coming from elsewhere. What snatched them from the darkness in which they could, perhaps should, have remained was the encounter with power; without that collision, it's very unlikely that any word would be there to recall their fleeting trajectory. The power that watched these lives, that pursued them, that lent its attention, if only for a moment, to their complaints and their little racket, and marked them with its claw was what gave rise to the few words about them that remain for us - either because someone decided to appeal to it in order to denounce, complain, solicit, entreat, or because he chose to intervene and in a few words to judge and decide. All those lives destined to pass beneath any discourse and disappear without ever having been told were able to leave traces - brief, incisive, often enigmatic - only at the point of their instantaneous contact with power. So that it is doubtless impossible to ever grasp them again in themselves, as they might have been "in a free state"; they can no longer be separated out from the declamations, the tactical biases, the obligatory lies that power games and power relations presuppose.