

The Body as a Site for Becoming in Ghassan Kanafani's *All That's Left to You*

Dania Meryan
Lecturer in Zarqa University, Jordan

Abstract

Ghassan Kanafani's novella *All That's Left To You* (1966) attempts to alter the perception of the refugee camp from a prison to a bridge, opening literary possibilities for the politicised subject to move from death zones into becoming as characters try to delimit the regulated bodies by crossing the borders of the refugee camp. The language of Kanafani's texts is reflexive of the state of territorial siege. The narrative in *All That's Left To You* leads to a point of dispersal towards the end of the novella, indicating a new promise of what Giorgio Agamben calls the 'coming community' (1993).

Keywords: refugee camp, body, territory, Palestine, Kanafani.

The question of how to deal with the reality of limitation in the life of the Palestinian refugee in literature is vital for the Palestinian writer Ghassan Kanafani. In their introduction to Kanafani's *Palestine Children*, Riley and Harlow contend that: 'The tension between the political and historical events and their literary transformation distinguishes the writing of Ghassan Kanafani. Through narrative, historical necessities lose their implacableness as *faits accomplis* and become rich with possibility' (15). The political environment of the Palestinian people, as I shall argue, gave rise to certain types of literature (the (bio)political literature), that fuses between the literary and the political to produce new literary phenomena. This essay will focus the light on the refugee camp and the isolation of the witness in Kanafani's writings. The main focus will be on Kanafani's novella *All That's Left To You* (1966). I argue that the theme of transformation of politics into biopolitics (Agamben 120) and the totalitarian attitude of the nation-state towards undesirable human beings (refugees), and how all of this could be situated within the horizon of necropolitics is central to much of Kanafani's fiction. I will attempt to explore how Kanafani situates the refugee within the space of necropolitics and how he endeavours to move beyond zones of death into zones of 'becoming' by politicising death and rebirth in his work. I also attempt to show how Kanafani's work could be seen as a literary formula for crossing from death zones to becoming.

I want to think through these thoughts in relation to the notion of 'neco-politics', and the 'state of exception', which I am drawing respectively from the philosophical works of Achille Mbembe (2000), Giorgio Agamben (1995; 2000; 2005) and Michel Agier (2008). In my argument I will also use the works of Frantz Fanon (1961), Zygmunt Bauman (2004) and Jacques Ranciere (2004).

The figure of the stateless refugee in relation to necropolitics is central to much of Kanafani's fiction. In 'Death of Bed Number 12', Kanafani speculates the individual's life worth within a larger context. The narrator is a patient in a hospital witnessing the death of a young man. The story unfolds as we read letters from the unnamed narrator to his friend Ahmad. In his letters, the narrator creates a fantasy background about the twenty five year old man whom the nurses identify as (bed number 12). The facts about the young man are fragmented, but the narrator sketches his life from the bits and pieces of information known about him from the hospital records and creates an imaginary life, a memory.

Mainly, two things interest the narrator about this young man, that he clings to a small black box he keeps by his side, and that he insists he is summoned by his full name, Mohammed Ali Akbar. The true story of the patient is revealed to the reader towards the end of the story, once the nurses declare that 'bed number 12 has died' (Kanafani 30). The black box of Mohammed Ali Akbar is finally opened, and his true story known; that he is not stateless, he has a family and a home, and that he is in Kuwait for a job. The symbolic meaning of the story revolves around bare life and nameless death, how a human being is reduced to a figure whence his true identity is sealed in that box (camp).

In his study on refugee camps: *Homo Sacer* (1998), Giorgio Agamben argues that refugees are legally excluded by the hands of law: '*The originary relation of law to life is not application but Abandonment*. The matchless potentiality of the *nomos*, its originary 'force of law', is that it holds life in its ban by abandoning it' (Agamben 29). The barbed wires of the camp, or recently, the concrete Wall fragmenting the lives of the Palestinians inside their own country has been extended to include all the borders of the nation-states, making the 'state of exception' in the life of the dispossessed both an internal and external experience. 'Both walls and fences divide and distinguish. They mark a binary distinction. The stateless, living as a 'bare life' and dying as a figure is a constituent of the politicized subject, in Agamben words, a 'bare life, which dwells in the no-man's land between the home and the city—is, from the point of view of sovereignty, the originary political element' (*Homo Sacer* 90). The refugee is the embodiment of incomplete humanity 'neither completely dead as subject, nor completely alive' (Agier 65), 'living an indefinite life' (Agier 62) in 'worldless spaces'.

In the refugee camp, there is a deliberate segregation held against the generations of Palestinians; against communities of testimony. The function of testimony, hence, is constantly aborted since the world does not want to hear, and the witness is left in the trunk to die. In his article, 'Humanitarianism and Representations of the Refugee' (2002), Prem K. Rajaram demonstrates why a 'particular bureaucratized knowledge about refugees and the methodology for 'listening' to them do not properly allow refugees voice to emerge' (248). Fund raising, Rajaram argues, remains the priority of humanitarian agencies, and listening to the refugees' testimonies on the horrors of war is not given its due recognition (249-250). This reality has endorsed, Rajaram believes, the perception of a 'depoliticised, dehistoricized and universalised figuration of the refugee as mute victim' (248). Refugees are, thus, seen merely in terms of their 'biological corporeality', isolated not only from their home, but from their hopes and dreams as human beings as well (252-253). In his book *On the Margins of the World*, Michel Agier writes: 'The refugee camps of today are the most advanced form of a global treatment of stigmatized identities and undesirable groups' (Agier 61). The camp is a sort of social quarantine signifying bodily trauma. The camp 'establishes the ultimate and essential form of a 'politics of living beings' constituting a 'bio-political paradigm' (Agier 63). The contradictory recognition of the refugee as 'a bare life' with 'minimal biological' needs while denying them the right to social and political life results, Agier tells us, in a doubly bound 'gated identities' (Agier 40). These are identities bound from both the inside and the outside the nation-state.

Borders are meant to restrict the deterritorialized movement of the dispossessed by placing the refugees in social 'ghettos', chaining their lives from within and without. The 'tank' in *Men in the Sun*, does not only represent the 'mute' death of the refugee inside the camp, but also the 'ghettoized' life of the refugee. Israel was declared by Balfour in 1917 a nation-state that would be a homeland for the Jewish nation. For Joseph Massad this means 'Israel was declared the state of Jews worldwide and not of its citizens' (318); an exclusive nation in which the Palestinians suffer from exclusive inclusion, meaning they are absent in spite of their presence.

In *All That's Left To You*, Kanafani uses indirect, experimental approach and symbolic language to demonstrate the predicament of the Palestinian subject and view the relation between the imaginary narratives in reference to the geopolitical reality. Kanafani narrates the story 'in a single burst' (Kanafani xxi). Actions occur simultaneously, having no distinction between time and place and times between speaking subjects. Kanafani arranges the events of the novel by 'internal association rather than by chronology' (Harb 69), using 'emotional relations' (Zalman *Nation* 50) between the characters in the novel to explore their political connotations. Kanafani as Zalman explains, articulates the theme of Return by engendering emotional relations that flow carrying 'an intensified political meaning' (Zalman *Nation* 50). Similar to the memory of his mother, Palestine, for Hamid, 'exists in exile as a signifier whose signified does not match its shape or magnitude' (Muhawi 31); as a dream that 'seems to be endlessly postponed' (Muhawi 31). Kanafani politicizes the myth of death and rebirth in Hamid's search for his mother to arrive at a new consciousness of becoming (Harb 77).

In *All That's Left To You*, the camp is depicted as a worldless alleyway, a space between worlds: 'Your long journey will end, finally, in that total banality. An alleyway! Everything you'd always hoped [...] be yours will pass you by without leaving so much as a trace' (Kanafani *All* 33). The camp is another extension of the desert, in the sense that it is impossible to inscribe or leave a trace on its surface. Agier writes on this:

[T]he refugee camp is constructed, in its very principle, as an authentic 'desert', [...] The common space between refugees, their 'world', is not desired or foreseen. In its place there is just an empty space, and so it remains, despite the recommencement of life that is attempted within it. [...] Nothing can ever be totally achieved in such contexts, [...] quarantine being their very horizon. (Agier 39-40)

Palestinian refugee camps are inhabited by 'subcommunities' who are united by familial ties which at times go back to before 1948. These communities have their social codes and norms, which could be both helping and restricting the life of the refugees. Refugees need this sense of belonging to the collective, yet any attempt at breaking through the confining social codes could result in an isolation imposed on them by the community of the camp (Lamis Abu Nahleh 151). Hence we can see that although the life of the refugee is governed by displacement and movement, it also holds characteristics of the sedentary. In his essay 'The Camp as Nomos of the Modern' (1997), Agamben tells us: 'The camp is the space which is opened when the state of exception becomes the rule. In the camp, the state of exception [...] is now given a permanent spatial arrangement, which as such nevertheless remains outside the normal order' (Agamben 108), thus the camp can be thought of, Agamben continues, as a 'dislocating localization' (Agamben 113-4). By living in a kind of community, refugees affect a transformation of space in the camp. However, the life in the camp keeps moving between the transitory and the sedentary and the psyche of the refugee remains in a state of displacement regardless of the camp turned into what Agier sees as 'a kind of town [...]' (Agier 57).

The social confinement in the camp mirrors the choking existence of the refugee, whose life is postponed to an unthinkable time. Thus the camp, designed to protect the refugees turns into imprisonment where there is no space for initiation, even dreams are confined. Time is measured by the events and experiences in the life of refugees. In this wordless space, extracted from the context of the outer world, the refugees are

‘separated from its context, and which having as it were survived death, has become incompatible with the human world’ (Agamben qtd. In Agier 62). Hamid has no intimate relation with women. He is in the camp *waiting*. Time is frozen both in the camp and in the life of refugees. In the camp, all desires should remain encrypted for as Hamid recalls, his father had always said ‘there will be no licit expressions of desire until national cause is decided’ (Kanafani 35). The life in this ‘dislocating localization’ makes the refugee live in a state of waiting having unthinkable duration, it is ‘bitter wait, and there’ll be no end to it’ (Kanafani 20). Hamid’s sexual immaturity also indicates that his subjectivity is still on the making. Hamid—similar to a child desiring his mother—his subjectivity is undefined still and waiting to be fulfilled in the pursuit of the mother and the reunion with the landscape.

The metaphor of the desert is used by Kanafani for shifting focalisation and has a radical temporal features, an archaic symbol of temporality which affects the construction of content throughout the novel. Kanafani attempts to show the refugees’ consciousness of time as Hamid takes off his watch in the desert, and leaves it behind, Kanafani writes: ‘*It wasn’t long before the watch went crazy. Abandoned in its exile, it went on ticking to itself, building up that impenetrable barrier that madmen erect between themselves and the world*’ (Kanafani 21). Through a reconfiguration of the experience of the refugee, a new political moment emerges. Kanafani is retelling and re-establishing chronology in the novel ‘to confute the sense of time and temporality’ and allow literature to become an active participant in the process of writing history, ‘so that people would say [...] it happened a month after the day of the massacre’ (Kanafani 16). The story keeps moving between the transitory and sedentary, the sedentary being one of empty waiting as ‘the ticking of the clock relentlessly receded’ (21). The camp represents, David Farrier tells us, a ‘permanent space dedicated to the impermanence of its inhabitants [...]’ (Farrier, “The Other is the Neighbour” 411). The space of the camp remains one of spatial emptiness, in spite of the subcommunities recommending life within it. There is nothing left for the refugee, but a ‘motionless voyaging in place’, both ‘nomadic and rhizomatic without anchorage’ (Pile and Thrift, 235).

In *All That’s Left To You*, Maryam and Hamid’s desires remain inside the circle of the family for years. This could be read as experiencing desire within the roof of a safe zone (family), but also as a mere reflection of the social siege in the life of the dispossessed. Kanafani draws Maryam’s body as a reflection of the camp life. Losing her sense of the whole, Maryam is a beauty in distress. Vulnerable; yet enduring:

It was then that my wayward breasts would erupt and my hands, unaware, would slide down to my thighs. There wasn’t a single large mirror in the house in which I could look at all my body at once. All I could see was my face. When I moved the mirror, the images of my breasts, my belly, my thighs, would appear as a series of disconnected parts belonging to the disembodied figures of a girl. (*All* 11)

The vocalization of desire in *All That’s Left To You*, through Hamid’s for his mother, and Maryam’s towards Hamid (her brother) have their apolitical implications. Against the siege; against the nation state; against the social norm: ‘I stripped away thirty five years of my life piece by piece and year by year’ (Kanafani, *All* 12). Yet on the part of Maryam, even when she breaks the social codes (her affair with Zakaria), she has sex with him inside her brother’s bed, an indication perhaps of her partial separation from the restrictions inflicted upon her by the social codes. Maryam could neither fully exceed the physical boundaries of the camp, nor the social boundaries of the community in the camp.

When Hamid finally leaves in search for his mother, Maryam stays in the camp, ‘listening behind the door with the child growing all the while in her womb’ (Kanafani, *All* 4) to that mysterious pounding mounting from inside the earth informing her of Hamid’s steps, as ‘all traces of him wiped out, except for the incessant monotony of metallic strokes beating on the wall’ (Kanafani, *All* 8).

Nevertheless, desire remains a productive force in *All That’s Left To You*, and sexual fertility symbolized by Maryam and the desert, is emphasized throughout the novel. The concept of fertility in *All That’s Left To You* opposes the sterility in *Men in the Sun* in the union with the earth and the descent to the unconscious. It is ‘[p]utting the human body in direct relationship with the politics of space’ (Agier 32). Hamid plants his fingers in the earth’s flesh and presses himself against the ground as hard as he can:

There isn’t a steel blade in the world which wouldn’t be shattered if it were to graze your naked yellow breast [...] mine and theirs [...] All the steel blades of the world could never hack down one roof of your surface, but would shatter, one after the other, in the face of your firm harvest which grows bigger and bigger as a man strides farther and farther into your depth, step-by-step until he himself turns into a nameless, deep-rooted stem that thrives erect on your juices. (Kanafani, *All* 14)

In *All That’s Left To You*, intimacy with the landscape is a wounding proximity. It is the coming together that draws a part, marking a wounded existence. The violent landscape inscribes itself upon the bodies of those who come into contact with it, making it impossible for Hamid to inscribe a trace on the face of the desert.

In what follows, I shall try to explore a central issue of the Palestinian experience in general and the Palestinian refugee in particular—identity defined by deferral—by attempting to examine how Kanafani, through Hamid, suggests a movement from the permanent siege of the camp to the fluidity of the desert as an attempt to

alter the perception of the camp from a prison into a bridge. Of interest to me here is to explore answers to the following questions: How to cross the distance to memory and self? How to bridge the gap between subjectivity and existence? How to stitch the wounds of hyphenated subjectivities (absent-present; excluded-included) which are the reflection of segregation? Is it possible to achieve subjectivity prior to existence? And how to overcome the fragility of locality?

The landscape, the camp and the subject, all, are catastrophe sites, as Farrier, in his article explains: 'The camp is not a location or a concept confined to its historical referents; rather, it is the ultimate expression of biopolitical space' and 'the materialisation of bare life' (Farrier 405-406). In *All That's Left To You*, Kanafani depicts the lives of Hamid and Maryam as a repetitive cycle of 'parenthesised trauma' (*Zalman* 68). All that's left for them in the camp are human leftovers. I would like, here, to discuss this in the light of Zygmunt Bauman's book *Wasted Lives* (2004), in which Bauman argues that refugees are perceived as 'waste humanity' of the postmodern world, and are therefore treated much like domestic waste and relocated in the current dumpster of humanity (camps). Hamid and Maryam both feel, while still alive both excluded and included inside their country, living in the twilight zone between life and death. These forms of necropolitical power, as Achille Mbembe sees it in the Palestinian situation, creates 'death worlds, new and unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of the *living dead*' (Mbembe 40)

The nation-state defines refugees as disposable human beings, 'sealed off in tightly closed containers' (Bauman 85); in 'new ghettos' (Bauman 81). Bauman explains how this state of exclusion and inclusion of the refugees causes them to 'embody- visibly, tangibly, in the flesh- the inarticulate yet hurtful and painful presentiment of their own disposability' (56). This feeling of 'disposability' on the side of the refugee, results in a feeling of insecurity, the same feeling that leads Maryam to succumb to Zakariah's seduction, who would still treat her as a human waste and marry her only to hide their 'dark and shameful secret of all production' (Bauman 27). Even Zakariah's constant effort to convince Maryam of aborting her baby, could be seen in the light of Bauman's views, as the baby is also considered to be disposable in such miserable human circumstances. The treatment of the refugees as human waste, has left its shadows on the state of the camp, where everything is characterized by disorder and chaos.

In *Returning to Haifa* (1968) where we have a married couple returning to Haifa after June 1967 for a one day visit to their house and to search for their son whom they have lost amidst the chaos of the defeat of 1948 when the British authorities collaborated with the Jewish terrorist organization the Haganah in clearing civilians out of Haifa into other shores. Returning to confront their loss, they find that Haifa remains as a topography placed on the map, but the memory of it is obliterated by the expulsion of its people and the remapping of the city. Said tells his wife: 'I know it, this is Haifa, but it doesn't know me' (100). The couple turn to find their city claimed by people from all around the globe and their son adopted by a Jewish Polish family that took over their house. His son, Dov, who now serves in the Israeli army, refuses to accept his natural parents. Even the memory of the one place left (their house and their son) is taken away; nothing is left to Said and his wife but a feeling of bitter loss. Said's first impression of Haifa was that the city did not change much, as the dialogue between him and his wife shows: 'We could have made it better'. Said goes on in his state of denial: 'Why do you think the Israelis let us now visit Haifa?' Because they are humane? No. This is part of the war. They want to tell us: Please come in and see for yourselves how we are more civilized than you are. You must accept to become our servants, to admire us. But you saw for yourself. Nothing had changed in Haifa. We could have made it much better' (Kanafani 344). Yet, in a moment of bitter awareness Said tells his wife: 'I am searching for the true Palestine which is more than a memory, more than a child. I am searching beneath the rubble. But look what I found, nothing but more rubble'. (Kanafani 411-12) Territory, in *Returning To Haifa*, is read by the occupation as text, it is erased and rewritten anew. Nevertheless, traces of the original text, the city of Haifa prior to the occupation, remain a witness to the process of new order that has taken place. This could also be seen as a transition of text into another language, where the new text could never be the original except and only holds a trace of it. Deconstructive theory is helpful in the postcolonial reading of territory. Here we have a deterritorialisation of the city of Haifa and a reterritorialization of it which still bears witness to the new reality layered over the old. The silences in the site of place bears resemblance to the silences and gaps in the text, it is a trace of the unrepresented but which reality is undeniable.

In her book, *Purity and Exile*, (1995a) Malkki tells us that there is a certain process the refugee goes through in order to attain a certain authenticity of 'refugeeness.' By this, Malkki means the image the refugee should attain in order to be defined as a refugee; a helpless, speechless victim (223). This imposes a certain amount of vulnerability on the refugee who is now expected to submit to his reality in the camp; 'living in a dead zone.' Kanafani resists this stereotypical perception of the refugee through his characters in *Men in the Sun* and *All That's Left To You*.

In *All That's Left To You*, Kanafani suggests that this same vulnerability of the dispossessed is throbbing and enduring, as he works to transform the image of the refugee from the mute victim in *Men in the*

Sun to that of historical actor. In *All That's Left To You*, the exterior of the novel; the limitation of 'bare life', is not brought to the interior of the text. Everything is throbbing. Something new is on its way to the height; a silent promise growing: 'suddenly, it began throbbing in my womb: a slight movement that flowed through my body for the first time in some recess, unknown and infinite. That small stirring was like the tremor of a bird imprisoned within hands serenely closed' (30).

Hamid and Maryam, both in their own way, resist the attempts at homogenizing the image of the refugee as either the speechless victim or as the manipulative and threatening individuals—to the nation-state—whose movement must be strictly monitored. Both are also resistant to the negligence of their human potential. Hamid does not accept labels, he breaks the siege of the camp regardless of the danger he throws himself into by changing the image of 'refugeeness'. The moment of breaking the siege of circular time in the camp, for Hamid, was the moment of opening up to possibilities. Hamid's journey is not a move away from the centre; it is not an escape from it; rather, it is a going back to the site of loss. For '*It wasn't time that he really raced against, but his own loss*' (Kanafani 12). Hamid is now heading towards memory embodied by the mother as 'a distance no one in sixteen years had succeeded in crossing' (Kanafani 3). The consciousness of exile in *All That's Left To You*, is this intense awareness of absence; the existential irony for the refugee, 'where the lived present is characterized by a longing for an absent meaning' (Zalman *Nation* 31). Here, the political theme of return is expressed in the voice of a lover yearning for his beloved. The passion for return to the mother in *All*, comes as a result of a moment of dense awareness, through which a sense of being long hindered by deracination is finally recuperated as Hamid is 'anchored to his home in Gaza by a ball of thread. For sixteen years they'd enveloped him with these constricting strands and now he was unravelling the ball, letting himself roll into the night' (2). The thread connecting Hamid to Gaza is an expansion of the body as opposed to the contraction of the body in the camp. Yet at the same time, Hamid's journey, as Zalman tells us, is 'far from being a step outside of this cycle, it is a step into it' (Zalman 70). Hamid was heading towards memory of loss and deracination.

By distancing himself to only come closer to his being, Hamid was deterritorializing himself by renouncing, by going elsewhere. Thirsty for a freedom defined by its opposite, that is its lack, Hamid breaks the siege of the camp and its frozen time and de-limits his body. Hamid's distancing from Gaza is a separation binding him to memory. He pursues his extension as a human being going against the limitation of 'bare life', through 'a new imagination of dismemberment; a dream of being *everywhere*' (Pile and Thrift 212), to reunite with the landscape. Writing of place involves a relation to bodies, for '[b]odies are the places of existence' (Jean-Luc qtd. in Sacks 16). A distance opens up between the text and limited bodies, reaching across the distance; one is left in the impossible place or out-of-place that remains. 'The force of separation' of de-limiting the body, is 'a separation that binds' (Sacks, 'Language Places' 241). The night journey to the mother is a displacement that is inscribed through intimacy 'into the fragmented pieces which bind and cut to form' (Sacks 257). By inscribing the wound upon the body of the text, Kanafani is presenting the story as a 'formula' (Ranciere, *The Flesh of Words* 155); as performance. Hamid is in a Deleuzian sense, is an 'emblem of becoming', within which the writer condenses 'as in a coat of arms, all the qualities of the work' (Ranciere 156).

In Kanafani, Hamid is an emblem of becoming, he is the individual fluid body *choosing* to delimit itself and resist the siege. Hamid is connected to his nation, yet he represents a promise of a new subject. Hamid as a stateless human being represents what Agamben calls the 'whatever-being', the figure of the politicized subject, who will be the first figure of the 'Coming Community' (Agamben, *The Coming Community* 107). And in a Deleuzian sense, he is the differentiated subject, who embodies difference not *from* the state, but *by* the codes and norms inflicted upon him by the state. Agamben defines the politicized subject as a 'state of exception', where 'an exception is what cannot be included in the whole of which it is a member and cannot be a member of the whole in which it is always already excluded' (Agamben, *Homo Sacer* 25). This state of existential deferral causes the emergence of a new subject naming this difference. In his journey towards his mother, Hamid is the 'monadic nomad', the BWO (body without organs); a 'full body *to come*; it endures without even existing *as such*' (Pile and Thrift 212). The political subject is deterritorialized without limitations, a being that is always on the lines of flight. (Deleuze, 1994; 1992) For Agamben, such a being is demonstrated most eloquently in the figure of the refugee, who is 'perhaps the only thinkable figure for the people of our time [...] in which one may see [...] the forms and limits of a coming political community' (*Means without End* 16). Agamben explains:

the constitution of the human species into a body politic comes into being through a fundamental split and that in the concept of *people* we can easily recognize the conceptual pair identified earlier as the defining category of the original political structure: naked life (*people*) and political existence (*People*), exclusion and inclusion, *zoe* and *bios*. Hence the contradictions and aporias that such a concept creates every time that it is invoked and brought into play on the political stage. It is what always already is, as well as what has yet to be realized; it is the pure source of identity and yet it has to redefine and purify itself continuously according to exclusion, language, blood, and territory. (32)

In his novelty, the 'whatever being' is an orphan subject, nothing comes before it. The same can be said of the 'coming community' of 'whatever beings' of orphans. Perhaps this is the reason Hamid and Maryam are

orphans. They both are ruptured from the past. The text itself could be seen as an orphan text, as its language holds the promise of the emergence of a new political (or biopolitical?) literary text and its rupture from its precedent. The orphan text holds 'the promise of a people to come. This political stake is inscribed in the very project of literature' (Ranciere 157). In *All That's Left To You*, Hamid, connected by a ball of thread to his homeland, is not tracing memory; rather, he is mapping a promise of a new awareness.

Hamid never reaches his destination, there is a diversion of route as Hamid '*once again took a false path, heading in a straight line towards the South*' (Kanafani 12). This new direction puts Hamid face to face with an Israeli soldier who has lost his way in the desert. In the final act in *All That's Left To You* Kanafani is setting the compass right for the refugees to confront their loss. Hamid, after a long struggle with his fears, succeeds to finally confront and disarm the soldier from his weapon. The collective voice is heard towards the end of the novel as Hamid decides to head back home.

In *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963), Frantz Fanon writes that 'in certain emotional conditions the presence of an obstacle accentuates the tendency toward motion' (Fanon 53). The word *Jaffa*, is the only word Hamid could understand in the soldier's identity card, the city Hamid and his family were dispossessed from in 1948 (Kanafani 46). Thus, Jaffa instigates an emotional response. Other than this word (Jaffa), there is nothing but silence between Hamid and the Israeli soldier. In *The Flesh of Words*, Jacques Ranciere writes that the new language of literature is characterized by its rupture from all hierarchical representations, he says that 'where there is no longer an external law, there is an inner law [...] it is the pure power of language, when it turns away from its representational and communicative use, to turn towards its own being' (Ranciere 148). Ranciere contends that this new language works by 'creating another language within language [...] carrying language to the limits of silence and music' (Ranciere 156). Silence is a new language Kanafani deploys in the final scene of *All That's Left To You*. It is the language of the camp, of confined lives and torn tongues, it is the language of siege and of 'bio-segregation' rendering any kind of human communication, impossible. This is the language of the new literature, born from within the state of siege.

Because settler colonialism in Palestine inflicts oppression, exploitation, and terror, while at the same time 'ghettoizing' the native, settler colonialism, is its own destruction, in the sense that it keeps accumulating a counter inner force inside the natives, a force that will sooner or later turn back on its source. Fanon tells us: 'His [the colonizer] preoccupation with security makes him remind the native out loud that there he alone is master. The settler keeps alive in the native an anger which he deprives of outlet; the native is trapped in the tight links of the chains of colonialism' (Fanon 53-54). When confrontation takes place between Hamid and the soldier, it eliminates the distance. To wreck the colonial world is henceforward a mental picture of action. Decolonization takes place, Fanon argues, suddenly '[w]ithout any period of transition, there is a total, complete, and absolute substitution' of the old (Fanon 35).

Here, decolonization is both internal and external. It takes place inside Hamid as he decides to confront his loss, and externally as he handcuffs the soldier after disarming him. Fanon adds that this radical transformation 'which characterizes at the outset all decolonization' results 'in a whole social structure being changed from the bottom up'. This radical transformation is, according to Fanon, 'willed, called for, demanded. The need for this change exists in its crude state, impetuous and compelling, in the consciousness and in the lives of the men and women who are colonized' (Fanon 36). Simultaneously, Maryam decides to keep her child (Hamid), and she kills Zakariah. Hence, the moment Hamid announces the death of his fear is the moment of a new life given to the child in Maryam's womb. Maryam and Hamid enforce their will to survive by the end of the novel.

Confrontation breaks out of geography of entrapment, metamorphosing bodies, diminishing the distance between here and there, self and other. The movement from helplessness to enforcing will, this is the act of crossing in Kanafani; the formula of confrontation. Thus time, in the life of the refugee moves from 'death zone' to a new dimension of active movement. Decolonization, Fanon tells us 'cannot come as a result of magical practices, nor of a natural shock, nor of a friendly understanding.' The reason for this, Fanon adds, is that decolonization 'which sets out to change the order of the world, is, obviously, a program of complete disorder' (Fanon 36). In *All That's Left To You* internal structure reinforces an external political one. Internal collapses resonate with the besieged testimonies of 'bruised populations'. Linking the two structures and breaking the linearity of telling by means of repetition of symbolic images, results in 'cumulative thematic implications' (Harb 77), leading to the rebirth of new consciousness in 'a single burst'. This is 'the power of de-liaison that is itself united' (Ranciere 156). Kanafani's narrative, according to Harlow, offers 'a critical reintegration of the past at the same time as opening up interpretive possibilities affecting the historical determinations of the future' (54).

Possibilities in *All That's Left To You*, are not drawn from the infinity of the desert; not from the external, for even the external is chained by memories of loss; but rather from the internal constant collapses, from fragility itself, from the imperfections in the life of the dispossessed and from points along the way that are limited in their very fluidity. Ranciere argues that '[t]he new power of literature takes hold, [...], just where the

mind becomes disorganized, where its world splits, where thought bursts into atoms that are in unity with atoms of matter' (Ranciere 149). Interchanging the implicit and the explicit in a conscious design, and shifting between location and voices makes the events in *All That's Left To You*, grow from one another to draft a literary palimpsest of unspeakable Palestinian stories.

In writing about refugee camps, texts are touched by the siege to which it addresses itself and words are under the pressure of limitation. Writing becomes a measurement of the distance between the text and the camp. It becomes both an act of resistance to the existential siege and a literary resistance of a text besieged by its borders. This is Kanafani's attempt at carrying on the literary 'formula'; the literary 'task of translating practice into the realm of written theory.' (Darraj qtd. in Harlow 67) Kanafani declares this rupture of literature from the hierarchical system of representation and 'leads the casual world of representation, to its catastrophe' (Ranciere 147). Writing *as* the fetus in the womb of shame; *as* subject out of ruins, creates another language within language tying the internal and the external, the refugee and the exiled through the distance and across the border of the novel by a separation that binds. In *All That's Left To You*, body and land are 'the flesh of words', as they all echo one another and constantly intermingle throughout the novella in a reflexive way. Kanafani sheds the light on collective and interdependent relations to body and space. But beyond this he also foresees a separate effect of narrative which occurs through the act, or performance, of story-telling itself, and how voice and space fuse and converge in the creation of a new collective awareness.

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