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Poetry in Exile: an Interview with Iyad Hayatleh

In memory of Tessa Ransford, 1938–2015

Abstract

This interview with Iyad Hayatleh, a Palestinian-Syrian poet currently living in Glasgow, focuses on his and Tessa Ransford's bilingual anglo-phone/Arabic book *A Rug of a Thousand Colours: Poems Inspired by the Five Pillars of Islam by Two Contemporary Scottish Writers Each Translating the Other* (Luath, 2012). Our discussion focuses on the challenges and experience of writing the collection itself, particularly the act of translating between Arabic and English, and the similarities/differences discovered between Muslim and Christian practices. This interview also offers a more general exchange about Iyad's experience of Scotland as a Muslim refugee, his relationship with the concepts of home, identity, and exile, and the influence of renowned Islamic poets on his writing.

The poet Iyad Hayatleh was born and grew up in Yarmouk Camp, an unofficial refugee camp in Damascus made up mostly of Palestinians. Born to Palestinian parents who had to flee due to the Israeli occupation, Hayatleh has expressed a strong connection with both Palestine and with his birthplace, Syria. However, as we discussed in some depth when meeting in Glasgow, Hayatleh feels that neither of these places truly feel like a homeland. Growing up in a refugee camp, of course, comes with a perpetual sense of temporariness and a desire for a 'true' home somewhere else. Hayatleh moved to Glasgow in 2000 with his wife, who has since passed away, and his children. He has published in Arabic and given readings in places such as Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen.¹ In Scotland, he has given readings across the country at events such as the Edinburgh International Book Festival, and has published in both Arabic and English.² His first poetry collection, entitled *Beyond All Measure*, was published by Survivor's Press in 2007.

Much of Hayatleh's work focuses on the problems of exile, and particularly what it means to live in a state of 'double exile'. During our discussion, Hayatleh directed me towards his moving poem 'My New Homeland', published in both English and Arabic in a collection entitled *Scotia Nova Poems: For the Early Days of a Better Nation*. Dedicated to his late wife Lamees, an extract of the poem reads:

With the twin of my soul, I came here seeking sanctuary
for us birds with broken wings
Like two swallows we landed on an arm of a pine tree
and engraved our joined soul on her skin
With two roses in our garden the country of clouds
granted us a third promising one
In the bounty of her rainfall we grew up together
and the heather blossomed with us ³

Ending with the words 'This land is no longer an exile', the poem casts Scotland as a bountiful and promising land. Although distinctly different from the warmer and drier climes of Syria, it is, as the title suggests, a new homeland.

Moving from the topic of exile towards that of religion, the collection discussed in this interview, *A Rug of a Thousand Colours* (2012), presents Hayatleh's poems in parallel with those of Tessa Ransford, an established Scottish poet who passed away a few months after this interview took place.⁴ Although Tessa could not read or write in Arabic, Iyad was able to translate her poems into the language. As David Finkelstein explains in the collection's foreword, the poems not only offer individual perspectives on faith from both Islam and Christianity, but are also 'a point of meeting, an exchange of values across a linguistic turnstile' (p. 10).

Hayatleh's and Ransford's poems fit together in a way that demonstrates remarkable similarities between Christian and Muslim traditions and practices. By pairing up Muslim and Christian poems for a primarily British readership, some of the political baggage surrounding perceptions of Islam in the West is discarded in favour of the more personal and intimate aspects of faith. In 'Salah (Prayer)', Hayatleh writes:

Here

in the mosques of the land of frost
I met people who came from all over the world.
Like a rug of a thousand colours
we've been unfolded behind the Imam,
a flower from each garden, each has their own tongue
but there is only one language for prayer.⁵

This section of verse sums up what Hayatleh reiterates throughout the interview: that regardless of origins or roots, partaking in the act of worship – replicated in mosques around the world – can help to establish a new sense of home or belonging in an unfamiliar land. This interview took place on 27 June 2015 in Glasgow.

Hannah Kershaw: When did you start writing poetry?

Iyad Hayatleh: I first started writing poetry when I was in middle school in Syria, at the age of fourteen or fifteen. I was generally very interested in reading, but I was particularly interested in reading and reciting poetry, and learning it by heart. At school, we used to learn poems by heart, often every week or even every lesson. I first sent some of my poems to magazines when I was about twenty, and I took part in a poetry reading in Damascus when I was twenty-five. When I came to Scotland, I found that I had more time to concentrate on my poetry, and so I started to learn again about how to write, particularly standard Arabic poetry. I also joined Scottish PEN and started to work in collaboration with other poets who could translate my poetry from Arabic to English.

HK: Could you say a bit more about your time with Scottish PEN and Artists in Exile Glasgow?

IH: In 2003, one of my friends suggested that I join Scottish PEN. I sent them a few of my poems that had been translated into English with the help of a friend, and they accepted me. The first reading that I did with them was in November 2003 in Waterstones' bookshop in Glasgow, and then the following summer I was invited to take part in a Scottish PEN session at Edinburgh International

Book Festival. The director of Scottish PEN, who at the time was Simon Berry, approached me and he suggested that I do a poetry translation workshop with Artists in Exile Glasgow. The group was officially launched in April 2004 at the Arches in Glasgow, a famous theatre and culture venue. We did more and more events, and collaborated with Scottish PEN. Artists in Exile contained people from many different nationalities, and many of them were asylum seekers and refugees like I was at the time. For example, there was another man from Palestine, an Albanian, a couple from Italy, a girl from America, some Iranians, and some Scots. We had an office and venue which we used to have meetings and do activities, which we called 'the gallery', and we had support from Glasgow City Council. Some members of the group were visual artists, so there were always exhibitions going on at the gallery. The group wasn't only for poets or fiction writers, but also for theatre lovers, visual artists, and musicians. We were an intimate group and were very active around 2004 and 2005, but people got involved in other projects and so the group started to fade out. The gallery is closed but the sign is still there. I believe that for those few years, we did something beautiful.

HK: Why did you decide to come to Glasgow when you left Syria?

IH: Glasgow wasn't actually my choice! When I arrived in 2000 with my wife and children, we went to Oxford because I had relatives living there, and so was hoping to seek asylum there. However, the Home Office introduced a new law called the Dispersal Project, which aimed to disperse people outside of London and the South. After spending a few weeks in Oxford, the Home Office ordered me to go to Glasgow, otherwise I would lose my benefits and that could negatively impact my case. I remember telling my son's teacher that we were leaving Oxford and going to Glasgow, and she was terrified for me! She said it's very dark and they don't speak English! But when I first arrived in Glasgow I was happy to have a flat in a high-rise building near the centre, because it meant that we no longer had to stay in hostels and hotels. Day by day and step by step we started to feel that Glasgow was okay for us. It's a nice city; somehow quiet and somehow noisy. We would wander the streets and discover the city, making new friends and discovering new places. We even ventured into the outskirts! My sons were enrolled in schools, and my wife and I began to learn English. We started to love the city and found no reason to move when

we got 'leave to remain' status after six and a half years. I've become established as a writer here, am known by different people, and have lots of friends here. The children went through their schooling and eventually university here, and we even had another son born in Glasgow in 2003. I buried my wife here in 2013, something that I write about in 'My New Homeland'. We began to feel that we are, more or less, Glaswegians.

HK: You are Palestinian, but were born in Syria, and were exiled to Scotland in 2000. How do you feel the different processes of exile have influenced you?

IH: I think that being in exile influences all of my poems, because they all contain this sense of longing for something, pining for something, although I may not know what it is. Even if I write about another subject, I find myself driven to mention exile. In *A Rug of a Thousand Colours*, where the poems are about Islam, I am still writing about being exiled; being away from home. Things have changed a bit now, because earlier I still belonged to something. But now, my home in the refugee camp in Syria has been destroyed in the current Syrian War. I would say, if you agree that it is a war, that this war in Syria was launched against the Syrian people because they revolted four or five years before. This isn't a war between two teams or sides, it's a war between the people and the regime. So after my home in Syria was destroyed, my brothers' and sisters' houses destroyed, and the refugee camp itself where I wrote many poems destroyed, it is no longer the same refugee camp that I knew. About fifty per cent of the camp is demolished and the people displaced, some to other places in Damascus but some all over the world. No matter how strongly I work with my imagination, I can't conjure up the image of the refugee camp that I used to know. I have a strong belief that this refugee camp won't come back to its original position or its heyday. It will be totally eliminated, I think, and this is part of the agreement – between the Syrian regime and America and the United Nations and Israel and the Palestinian authority – to eliminate the case of Palestinian refugees and to destroy and disperse their centres, such as the refugee camps in Syria and Lebanon. The Yarmouk Refugee Camp used to be the biggest refugee camp for Palestinians. We used to call it the capital of the Palestinian diaspora! So now when I long for somewhere, I really don't know where. I can't imagine this place as my house and my streets. I can't imagine this image in real life anymore. I wasn't born in Palestine; my parents were, but

when I was in the refugee camp in Syria it wasn't home for me. It was an exile. I was born twelve years after my parents left Palestine, so the sense of *al-Nakbah*, or 'the catastrophe' of 1948, was still very strong in the refugee camps. It was more or less another kind of exile. I couldn't recognise the difference between home and exile, or cross the borders between them. So when I came to Scotland I was in exile, and was longing for *another* exile back in Syria. But a refugee camp cannot be a home. I would say it is like the doorstep of a home, but where the door is closed. The matter has always been vague and ambiguous for me.

HK: Even though you've never actually lived in Palestine, do you associate it with 'home'?

IH: I went to Palestine for the first time last year, and that only happened because I managed to get a British passport. Syria was a home and an exile at the same time. I'd like Syria to be a home, but at the same time I have another home, which is Palestine. However after the Syrian Revolution, I felt that Syria was becoming a home because I felt a sense of belonging to the land. I belong to these people who are seeking liberty and freedom from the dictator Bashar al-Assad in Syria. I wouldn't say that there was a change in my identity, but perhaps I realised along with thousands of others that I have a unique identity. We are not Palestinian; we are not Syrian. We are Palestinian Syrian. I would say now that I'm a Scottish Palestinian Syrian! Fifteen years of living in Scotland can't count for nothing. And this has had a big impact on my writing, my future, my thinking.

HK: So then how would you describe yourself as a poet? Would you be a Palestinian poet? A Syrian poet? A Scottish poet? A Muslim poet? Or none/several of the above?

IH: When I send any poems or articles to Arabic magazines I sign my name as 'Palestinian Syrian poet'. Or a Palestinian Syrian poet living in Glasgow. I'd like to say Scottish, but I'm not writing in the English language. However, I have British nationality and a passport, and I voted for an independent Scotland, so I do feel Scottish. I don't like to be described as a Muslim writer, because whilst I am Muslim, I feel that this is something private between God and me. Whenever I go somewhere, I don't introduce myself as a Muslim. I'm a human first, and I have friends from other religions. I don't think any other poet here in

Scotland or in England would like to introduce himself or herself as a Christian writer. For example, people would say that if some specialist historians and writers were writing about Islam, they would describe themselves as Islamic writers. They wouldn't be called Muslim writers just because they are writing about Islam. Plus, I don't always write about Islam and I don't write any poems on the basis that I am Muslim. I write poems on the basis that I am myself: I am Iyad, a poet, a human, and I happen to live in Glasgow. And I don't know where to live next!

HK: Although you prefer not to define yourself as a Muslim poet, are there any Muslim fiction writers or poets who you feel have influenced your writing?

IH: When I was at school in Syria we used to study Arabic subjects, so we studied lots of poetry and many biographies from different periods in Arabic history. In primary school we used to learn nursery rhymes and poems written for children between the ages of ten and twelve. In middle and secondary school, we learnt about poets from the time before Islam, or as we say in Arabic, *jahiliyyah*, meaning the time of ignorance. We would then study poetry from the early period of Islam to the present day. So to be an Arabic poet, you have to learn these historic poems. They're by very famous poets from Arab history, like Al-Mutanabbi, for instance. He is one of the most famous and most poetic poets in the Arabic world. Many people agree. Al-Mutanabbi lived about a thousand years ago.

I remember when a Palestinian poet gave an edited book about Palestinian poetry to my grandfather, who was blind. This was in 1968 or 1969, and it had poems by Mahmoud Darwish, Samih al-Qasim, and Tawfiq Zayyad. This poet, who lived in Damascus, edited and gathered many poems by these poets, and other poems of maybe two or three less famous poets. He introduced these poets to the Arab world outside of Occupied Palestine, because at that time there was a boycott between both sides. This meant that the Palestinians in Occupied Palestine had little or no chance at all to publish their work and be known outside of their local area. This poet in Damascus, Yusuf al-Khatib, he gathered many poems and wrote an introduction to this very thick book called *Collected Poems of the Occupied Homeland* and gave it as a gift to my grandfather.⁶ Although he was blind, my grandfather was a very good speaker and somehow he was a poet as well. He wouldn't write poetry but he would improvise and

would say short poems all the time. When he died I was only ten years old, but I remember that in those ten years I spent with him, I learnt a lot from him. My grandfather started asking me to read these poems to him, and so I read to him from poetry collections of different periods even though I was only eight or nine years old. The language and the vocabulary used in the early poetry of the time is the same as today, but some of it is really dead and people don't use this older form of Arabic anymore. Some words were actually introduced at that time because of the environment, so for example people living in deserts had to use words from their surroundings.

I would say that the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish influenced me the most. He also lived in Palestine and left in the early 1970s, living in Beirut, Cyprus, Tunis, and Paris. He returned to Ramallah in Palestine and then died in America during an operation on his heart in 2008. I attended about three readings by him in Damascus in 1978, 1982, and 1997. I still like to listen to readings of his poetry; he was perhaps one of the most articulate poets that I've heard. I also attended readings by the Iraqi poet Muzaffar Al-Nawab a few times in Damascus. I first heard him reciting poetry from a cassette that my father got in 1973. In many of his poems he says rude things about Arab leaders, but his words are very tender, so tender they can make you cry. Because he is from Iraq, and Iraq has a sad heritage, there is a certain amount of sadness in his poems. He lived in exile all his life too. After spending time in jail, he was forced out of Iraq in the 1960s and lived in Damascus, Libya, and Lebanon. His way of delivering poetry is very touching, and many of his poems have been made into songs.

HK: What do you think of attempts to employ poetry for extremist purposes?

IH: I don't mind using poetry politically, and I believe that all poems are political. Some poems discuss politics directly when addressing their listeners, as if they're doing a political speech. I wouldn't say that's really poetry. Poetry should be engulfed in politics, but it should be discussed indirectly, through the words. This kind of poem would have a better chance of being remembered than one about politics read in front of an angry group, which could make them even more angry and lead to them doing unreasonable things. You could read a poem to soldiers going into battle to fire them up, but that's a bit like brainwashing. Eventually, nobody would even remember the poem.

You can talk about politics in different ways, like in the poems of Mahmoud Darwish and Muzaffar Al-Nawab. In my poems I talk about Palestine without mentioning the word Palestine. I even talk about and appreciate martyrs, such of those fighting against dictators in Syria or the occupation in Palestine. But I don't believe many wanted to be martyrs. They were fighting to live, and just so happened to be killed.

HK: Why did you and Tessa decide to structure A Rug of a Thousand Colours around the five pillars of Islam (shahada, salah, zakat, siyam, and hajj)?

IH: That was Tessa's idea. She grew up in India and spent the 1960s in Pakistan, so she has a connection with a Muslim country. Tessa is very open-minded and likes to learn about other cultures. She used to describe herself, when we went to poetry readings, as 'a follower of Jesus, untouched by the Church'. She is open to other religions and other cultures, and wanted to explore the differences and similarities between Christian and Muslim forms of worship.

HK: What similarities or differences did you come across?

IH: I knew a fair amount about Christianity before, as I've read about it, and I had Christian friends, both Palestinian and Syrian. We never noticed any differences between us, except that I go to the mosque and they go to church. In Syria on Christmas Day everybody celebrated, and we'd have Christian friends come to us to say 'happy Eid'. In our poems we discovered more similarities than differences. The differences were only evident in the places of pilgrimage. We go to Mecca and Christians used to go to Jerusalem, or Canterbury like in *The Canterbury Tales* that Tessa discusses.⁷ The aim of worship is the same: to be closer to the God. Prayers are also the same; the only difference is in the way that we perform prayer compared with Christians. In Islam we pray five times a day either in homes or mosques. We do a regular movement facing a certain direction, which is Al-ka'bah in Mecca in Saudi Arabia. We both have a time of fasting and a time of almsgiving. Tessa and I generally have the same idea about charity not only involving paying money, but helping other people. We have a saying from the Prophet Muhammad: 'even a smile is charity'. We didn't write the poems in response to each other, so I wrote from my own understanding and my own background and she wrote from hers. We are all humans and we are all similar, so the poems are similar.

HK: Did you come across any challenges during the process of translation?

IH: The Arabic language is perhaps the richest language in the world. There are so many words and phrases that are difficult to translate into English. The Arabic language is ancient, and this history is always in the back of my head. There's a story or an image behind every word. I think it's the same in English. In general, translation is very difficult. What makes it even more difficult is that I'm taking religious words that don't have an equivalent in English. In Islam we have ninety-nine names for God, or Allah, for example, and there isn't always a direct translation into English. There are people who have translated the Qur'an before, so I can use some of those English names, but it's difficult for an English reader to understand. It didn't put us off, though, because ultimately we are trying to make these words more familiar to the English reader, to make them question themselves and perhaps find out more about Islam. Translating Tessa's poems from English to Arabic was difficult because she doesn't know Arabic and so can't approve them. All the effort was on my shoulders to do a faithful translation, but she did show it to an English person who also knows Arabic and they approved. I'm not a translator, so I had to put in a lot of effort. But I think it's important for poetry to be translated by poets because they can adapt the language and make it poetic.

HK: You say in your introduction to A Rug of a Thousand Colours that you wanted to 'provide for the Western reader an image of Islam that differs from the one presented by the media'. What images of Islam do you observe in the media, and what counter-image were you hoping to create through A Rug of a Thousand Colours?

IH: The media always tries to show an ugly image of Islam. It's all about politics and who controls the media. Which government, which groups, which parties? Unfortunately, in the media they always associate Islam and Muslims with suicide bombers and massacres. I don't deny that this is happening, but those actions don't reflect the true Islam. People think that Arabs always have conspiracy theories and think there is a conspiracy against Islam, and I'd say that this is actually right. The bombing of a mosque in Kuwait and the mass shooting at Port El Kantaoui in Tunisia happened only yesterday and in the name of Islam, but I don't think that a pure Muslim would do this. They must have been brainwashed by other people who are trying to keep conflicts going.

When we see these stories in the media, and it's a Muslim who has committed the crime, the media always mention that fact. They then try and explore how Islam led them to this crime. If the guy weren't Muslim, they'd say that the reasons were psychological.

HK: And the media often uses the word 'terrorist' very quickly, before the events are even known about in any detail.

IH: Yes, exactly. *A Rug of a Thousand Colours* says that we are just like you. We love life. We have fathers, mothers, kids, wives. We have sad times. We have happy times. As you go to the church to pray, we go to the mosque to pray. You do fasting; we do fasting. You pay money to charity; we pay money to charity. You go on a pilgrimage; we go on a pilgrimage. In Britain and the West, people aren't always Christian. A lot of them have no religion, and even these people are the same as us. Although I don't think that anyone has *no* religion, or is cutting all strings with religion. People often have to refer back to a religious concept to understand something, as so many traditions came from religion.

HK: What were your experiences with the reception of A Rug of a Thousand Colours among Muslims in Scotland and further afield, but also among non-Muslims in Scotland and further afield? Your 'Introduction' speaks of anxieties about whether some Muslim readers might see the book as an 'insult to the holiness of this religion', but also about your hope of furthering intercultural understanding and presenting a more positive image of Islam to a non-Muslim public. Have these fears and hopes come true?

IH: We definitely had a positive reception. To be honest, I didn't do this collection because of wanting people to treat me in a positive way, as a Muslim. But this project was, as we say in Arabic, 'something for history', or 'something to say the word of truth'. To speak truth to history. I believe this book is maybe the first kind of poetry dialogue between two poets from two different nations and two different religions. People in Scotland received it well, and Tessa and I had lots of readings in places such as Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Dundee, and St Andrews. Most people seemed to appreciate the project and wanted to find out more about it. There are several reviews online, and Lauren Pyott from Edinburgh wrote a very positive and fair review. I think some Muslims don't like to mix talking about the sacred with talking about personal feelings,

or to tailor your personal story to a holy issue. I did worry about this before we did the project, but after publishing some of the poems on my Facebook page, I saw that they had been received very well. A Palestinian poet who asked for a copy of the collection said on many occasions that these poems are really something new and that the whole project is something to be proud of, particularly doing a project with an established Scottish poet like Tessa about controversial issues in the West.

HK: In a different minority context, W. E. B. Du Bois spoke of a 'double consciousness' to describe the psyche of Black (or African-)Americans as harbouring two identities. Do you think this also applies to minorities in Scotland, for example diasporic Arab Muslims?

IH: I don't feel any conflict within myself from having multiple identities. Being Scottish, Palestinian, and Syrian enriches my being, enriches my experience. It's not something I chose, it happened to me accidentally. But I'm proud to be all three because the experience has added to my writing, added to my way of thinking, and made me more open to the world. Being here in Scotland and learning English means I've also learnt more about Scottish and English history and culture.

HK: What do you think of the rise of Scottish nationalism in recent years, of the growth of Scottish National Party support, and of the question of independence or at least more autonomy within the UK? And do you feel that this rise of Scottish nationalism has any impact on how questions of multiculturalism and diversity are treated?

IH: I was totally pro-independence, and I am still. I will vote for independence again if there is another referendum. I don't see Scottish nationalism as being like English nationalism or the French right wing. I see them as being proud of their nationality, and this makes them more open to other people. I think this is because they have had conflict with England. Some Scottish people have said to me, once they know I'm Palestinian, that in the way my people are occupied by Israel, they feel occupied by Britain. I think that because they feel oppressed by another nation, this makes them more open-minded about people from other cultures who are in a similar situation. I think that the people who believe in the SNP are a lot more open-minded than people who believe

in the UK Independence Party. I haven't experienced any kind of racism here. I've heard about problems here and things happening in the street, but these problems are caused by people who have a certain way of thinking, and they act this way against both the local and the stranger.

HK: You have lived in Scotland since 2000. Do you think the post-9/11 upsurge of Islamophobia in Britain has somewhat subsided in recent years, or do you think it is still as bad as it ever was?

IH: In Scotland, I didn't feel that after 9/11 there was much of an issue for Muslims as there didn't seem to be a particularly strong reaction. I read that there are about 40,000 Muslims in Glasgow, and many of them have thriving businesses like shops or cafes, or they work in offices. I think the communities here live together well and have a good understanding of one another's privacy. People seem to respect each other and their traditions, which doesn't only happen with Muslims but with Hindus too. There was a sort of logo here years ago that said 'Different Pasts, One Future'. Really, I see people working towards the same aims. Scotland is a nice country, really. England is a nice country too!

HK: Can you tell us what you are working on at present?

IH: I never really have a project in mind, I just like to keep writing, writing against ugliness in the world. I struggled to have my poetry published in Arabic back in Syria because I didn't have enough money, but I'm quite happy publishing poems online or in magazines. I don't know what will happen, but I do need to find a way to publish poetry in English without Tessa. I've written some poems about my visit to Palestine, and Tessa encouraged me to apply for funding to make a book collection, but I haven't done it because I don't like to plan ahead too much. I like it when the poetry comes naturally after reflecting on the subject, on my personal feelings, and I don't have to force myself to write. If I'm attached to something it gives me too much stress. As poets say, leave the poems to write themselves!

Notes

- 1 Scottish Poetry Library, 'Poet Biography: Iyad Hayatleh', www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk/poetry/poets/iyad-hayatleh, accessed 18 December 2015.
- 2 Scottish Book Trust, 'Iyad Hayatleh', www.scottishbooktrust.com/profile-author/105415, accessed 18 December 2015.
- 3 Iyad Hayatleh, 'My New Homeland', *Scotia Nova Poems: For the Early Days of a Better Nation*, ed. Alistair Findlay and Tessa Ransford (Edinburgh: Luath, 2014), pp. 32–36 (p. 34).
- 4 Tessa Ransford and Iyad Hayatleh, *A Rug of a Thousand Colours* (Edinburgh: Luath, 2012). Originally, the collaboration of these two poets goes back to translation workshops organised by the Glasgow-based group Artists in Exile; Scottish PEN also played a role in these initiatives. The editors would like to thank Anne C. Clarke, another poet involved in these workshops, who (at Tessa Ransford's kind request) supplied us with additional background information during our research. Tessa Ransford also asked us to include a note of thanks expressing her gratitude to Iyad Hayatleh's late wife, Lamees, for her hospitality, and to his cousin Osama Hayatleh for kindly translating the introductions and afterword.
- 5 *A Rug of a Thousand Colours*, p. 48.
- 6 Yusuf al-Khatib, *Collected Poems of the Occupied Homeland (Diwan al-watan al-mubtall)* (Damascus: Dar Filastin, 1968).
- 7 See Tessa Ransford's poem 'Pilgrimage', *A Rug of a Thousand Colours*, pp. 76–81.

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