



## Poetry of Rebellion

### The Life, Verse and Death of Nuh Ibrahim during the 1936-39 Revolt

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Perhaps no other Palestinian popular poet garnered the fame and popularity of Nuh Ibrahim.<sup>1</sup> Unlike other Palestinian poets from the twentieth century who wrote in Modern Standard Arabic [*fusha*] and published in newspapers and journals, Nuh Ibrahim recited and sang his poems in the colloquial dialect and was the poet of the common people, expressing what they experienced and felt. He was not a poet of the elite and he did not write poetry for social occasions or holidays. Instead Ibrahim is known for composing for the 1936-1939 Palestinian Revolt and to peasants working their grapevines, orchards and wheat fields. He spoke and wrote in everyday language, as a provocateur and broadcaster for the revolt, in which he also participated as a fighter. Perhaps his coherence as a popular poet results from his additional status as witness and martyr [*shahid wa shaheed*] to the events of modern Palestinian history.

Ibrahim was born in Haifa in 1913 in Wadi al-Nisnas neighborhood.<sup>2</sup> He lived with his family on a meager income; his father was killed when Ibrahim was a child.

A British Mandate checkpoint.

Ibrahim was not able to continue school and left during the fifth grade to begin work at a printing press. He was captivated by words, their power, and the arts of printing them, and found likeminded companions in his frequent visits to youth clubs, scout movements, and workers' unions. He also visited different Arab countries, including Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria, where he delivered fiery speeches against the British Mandate and Zionism.

Ibrahim's contemporaries attest that he joined the Izz Eddin al-Qassam movement, and was given the alias "Student of Qassam" [*tilmiz al-Qassam*], a name he cherished and which gave him great pride. When Qassam was killed on 19 November 1935, Ibrahim composed a poem entitled "O What A Loss, Izz Eddin", which was adopted and sung throughout Palestine.<sup>3</sup>

*Izz Eddin what a loss, a martyr for your people  
Who can deny your noble self, a martyr for all Palestine.*

*Izz Eddin rest in peace, and may your death be a lesson to all  
Ah ... we wish you'd remained, oh leader of the fighters.*

*You forsake self and wealth for the liberty of your land!  
When you faced an enemy, you fought with valor and pride.*

*You formed a troop for the fight until the land is liberated.  
Its goal is victory or martyrdom, and enthusiastic men you have gathered.*

*You gathered excellent men and with your wealth bought us arms.  
And you said onward to fight for victory to the homeland and religion*

*You gathered the finest of men and we pinned our hopes on you,  
But destiny, dear kin, intervened.*

*Betrayal played its role, and disaster befell us  
Blood flowed to the knee, but you didn't give in.*

*You yelled "God is Great", like an enraged lion  
But the outcome was divine destiny and God's desire.*

During the revolt, the British cast a wide net looking for fighters. Ibrahim was arrested in 1937 and was sent to the Akka [Acre] prison for five months. His imprisonment was a unique opportunity, in some ways, as it allowed him to write popular poetry and sing it to his fellow political prisoners. His most popular song was "Mr. Bailey", the anthem of political prisoners, both men and women, during the British Mandate.

*Your Honour Mr. Bailey, Representative of the Northern District  
Your rule is too harsh, when it should have been just.*

*You use a few reports, bizarre and fantastical,  
And you rule by deportations, exiling, and personal guarantees.*

*You decide that this one is a terrorist and that one is a gang member  
When all of it, by God, is concocted without any basis.*

*You govern us according to new fads, passing harsh judgments  
This one smuggling arms and that one multiple accusations!*

*You silence anyone from talking so that we can't disclose our certain innocence  
All of us complain, oppressed by this deception.*

*Now reading the Qur'an and praying have also become criminalized  
And your laws preventing crimes are really really tough.*

*You brought us from Haifa and Nazareth, Tiberius and Beisan  
Safad and Ijzim and al-Tireh, scholars, the old and young*

*By order of Your honour Mr. Bailey.*

*At long last you realized that the situation was dangerous  
And you learned of our innocence and that we had been oppressed.*

*Now we hope you will not repeat it and that you will take time to think it over  
Memorize this call and you won't need further elaboration on the subject,  
Your honour Mr. Bailey.*

In this poem Ibrahim addresses the callousness of the British reaction to the Revolt, a callousness which both surprised the Palestinian population and also hardened its resolve to withstand and resist British rule. Interestingly, Ibrahim suggests that the British rule “should have been just” as if somehow he and others believed that the British would act with fairness. Once Ibrahim was released from prison, he joined fellow fighters in their revolt, all the while commenting on events by writing, publishing, and performing his poems. During this time his work became so popular that the British press censor issued a ban remonstrating against publication of Ibrahim’s poems:

*Based on my jurisdiction as censor of the press, and as established by the emergency laws, I, Owen Tweedy, warn against the printing or publishing of the book containing the collection of poems by Nuh Ibrahim which was printed outside Palestine, and which is also known as “The Song Collection of Nuh Ibrahim” [Majmu’at Anasheed Nuh Ibrahim], whether printed or published in the open or secretly.<sup>4</sup>*

Ibrahim's poetic career came to an end, however, when he was killed in an ill-matched battle with the British army on the 18th of October, 1938. He died on the peaks of Jabal al-Sani'a, which rise close to the village of Tamra. With him, three other fighters were killed: Muhammad Khader Qiblawi (23-years-old), Izz Eddin Khalaylah from Majd al-Kurum village, and a Syrian fighter going by the alias 'Abu Ra'ad'.

## **Nuh Ibrahim's Milieu**

During the British Mandate period of Palestinian history, the peasant population, whom Ibrahim travelled among and joined in arms with, was subjected to exacting economic and educational conditions. Peasants comprised the majority of the Palestinian population at this time, totalling 477,693 in 1922, approximately 70 percent of the total population.<sup>5</sup> John Hope Simpson reported to the Mandate authorities that nearly every village was drowning in debt. Peasants were weighed down by heavy levies, to a point where even the ten percent income tax had become unbearable.<sup>6</sup> Another official report added that the monthly income of a village household of six persons ranged between 20 and 30 pounds, while the bare necessities of life cost some 26 pounds. If the head of a household paid six pounds in direct and indirect tax and eight pounds in debt service, what was left was not enough to feed the family.<sup>7</sup>

Similarly, at the outset of the British Mandate period, Palestinian villagers inherited little in terms of educational infrastructure from the governing Ottoman Sultanate, and, until 1914, educational possibilities were limited to a few religious teachers and schools (*katatib*). The total number of schools in Palestine during the late Ottoman period did not exceed 95 elementary and three secondary schools, employing 234 teachers and teaching 8,228 pupils, of which only 1,480 were females.<sup>8</sup>

When the British army entered Palestine between 1917 and 1920, education was subjected to military rule. At this time a group of British academics working in Egypt were sent to Palestine to set up an academic structure. In 1919, a budget of 53,000 Egyptian pounds was earmarked by the military for educational purposes and subsequently raised to 78,000 pounds in 1920. After instating a civil government in Palestine, two educational systems emerged: one Arab and another Jewish (this later became a totally independent system).<sup>9</sup> The Arab system remained of a lower standard and was subjected to oversight by the British Mandatory Government, who worked little to develop it throughout British Mandate Palestine, especially in villages. By 1935, the total number of Arab schools in Palestine was 350 schools with 1,055 teachers and 42,765 students, of which there were 9,712 females.<sup>10</sup>

Such was the background for the work of a popular Palestinian poet during this period. With the majority unable to read the linguistically complex poetry of authors such as Ibrahim Tuqan, Nuh Ibrahim entered the stage as a poet for the common person, school children, and the often illiterate farmer and worker. Ibrahim's fame as poet

lasted only four years, between 1935 and 1938, the year of his death. During this time he garnered great acclaim, unparalleled by others. The period before 1935 shaped the underlying basis for Ibrahim's vision and work. His childhood witnessed the entrance of the British army into Palestine, the beginning of Zionist activities in the Galilee in Northern Palestine, the tempests of 1920 and 1922, and the political activities that were pervaded by turbulence and disintegration. He observed Izz Eddin al-Qassam's early attempts at recruiting fighters and forming armed cells in the Istiqlal mosque in Jaffa. During this time, on 17 June 1930, the Mandate government executed three Palestinian fighters: Atta al-Zir, Fouad Hijazi and Muhammad Jamjoum, an event which shook Palestinian society deeply.



Izz ed-Din al-Qassam. Source: *Before the Diaspora*, p. 111.

During this period, the Arab Executive Committee, headed by Musa Kazim al-Husseini, was weakened. Its loss of power lent attention to Izz ed-Din al-Qassam's movement. However, before this movement really developed as a viable entity, Qassam and some of his fighters were killed in the forest of Ya'bad on 19 November 1935. Ibrahim's poem about Qassam commemorates his sacrifice and public sentiment about the loss. This poem marks an important point in Ibrahim's career, as all of Ibrahim's ensuing compositions dealt with various political and social issues.

## Literary Style and Poetic Performance

Ibrahim wrote in two distinct styles of colloquial *zajal* poetry common in Palestine at this time, the conversational [*muhaawarah*] and the quatrain [*murabba*']. He never used any of the other forms, such as the '*attaba* or the *mayjana* or the *muthamman*. Using his two chosen styles, he communicated his opinions and ideas - the conversational [*muhaawara*] style was especially suited to his needs. Perhaps Ibrahim's most representative and recognized conversational poem was one in which an Arab debates a Zionist.<sup>11</sup> This poem is presented below, revealing both the poetic form and the content of such 'conversational' poems.

### *The Arab:*

*People, witness and see who is right.*

*Nations unified, and look what's become of Palestine?*

**The Zionist:**

*By my life and the life of Shalom, my rights are suppressed  
Misery has befallen me, a morning of misfortune, I have lost Palestine.*

**The Arab:**

*I am Arab, and when I die, throw me away,  
I'll erase the Zionist name, to protect my country Palestine  
From the malice of colonizers*

**The Zionist:**

*I am the Zionist, well-known, my role in this world is obvious,  
My wealth is in double-dealing and lies, I must own Palestine,  
I must own Palestine*

**The Arab:**

*You may own it tomorrow, and then you will find troubles and misery  
And encounter the angels of doom (Munkar and Nakeer) on Judgment day, you  
poor man.  
Until then you'd own Palestine*

**The Zionist:**

*Forget not the gift of wealth, betrayal and sham,  
With which I can buy the necks of men and perform the deeds of devils.  
Because I must own Palestine*

**The Arab:**

*Do your deeds arrogant man; in this world you are famous.  
I'm the eagle, you little bird, and you're escaping the talons  
And you want to own Palestine!*

**The Zionist:**

*I'll run away and won't fight, my girls will answer for me.  
Because of them, I won't be disappointed. I win 90 out of every 100.  
And I must own Palestine.*

**The Arab:**

*Spit on such men, blathering of such pride!  
I've lost hope in you, stuck in mud and tar.  
You've got to leave from here.*

**The Zionist:**

*Khabeebi<sup>12</sup>, listen to me, whatever you see before me,  
I want a national home for the Zionist of Palestine.  
And I will own Palestine.*

**The Arab:**

*By God, in your life you'll never see this. Instead you'll remained plucked,  
The work of the lion, you lamb, you'll meet the crows of doom.  
If you stay in Palestine*

**The Zionist:**

*The world has bored me, and I've been tossed out of its countries.  
And you too are chasing me to keep me out of Palestine.  
My ancestor's land since history's dawn*



**The Arab:**

*Stop saying anything that occurs to you, it's as if you're asleep.*

*Palestine is the cradle of Islam, Jesus the Messiah, and the prophets.*

*Where to, poor man*

**The Zionist:**

*Impossible, I won't leave it and I will achieve my ends.*

*I may win or lose, I won't leave Palestine.*

*Palestine, I will own*

**The Arab:** *You have to go*

**The Zionist:** *I won't go*

**The Arab:** *Still there?*

**The Zionist:** *I fear none*

**The Arab:** *Stay and witness your end.*

**The Zionist:** *Do what may.*

**The Arab:** *Bam, Bam, Bam!*

**The Zionist:** *O my losses, my wealth, my capital, Palestine I have lost.*

This conversational poem addresses many of the discourses that were proffered by Palestinians and Zionists during this time - that the Jew's ancestors have had the land since the dawn of time, or the Arab response that it belongs to Christian and Muslim history, as well. Some other aspects play on misinformation and stereotypes. In addition, the Jew in the poem is portrayed as a European immigrant (through the use of "*khabeebi*" instead of "*habeebi*", a pronunciation which an Arab Jew would never use), revealing that it was Zionist immigration to and designs on the country, rather than the presence of Jews, which was the problem for Palestinians.

The quatrain (*murabba'*) rhythm most characterizes Ibrahim's poetry style (writing each poem sequence in four lines). In this form, three of the lines have the same rhyme, and one line is different. The sequence is formed with two lines using the same rhyming ending, the third using a different ending, and the fourth reverting back to the same rhyming ending as the first two. The quatrain must follow the "*ya halali wa ya mali*" meter and is usually recited quickly. An example of this type of composition by Nuh is this quatrain written after the establishment of the Arab Higher Committee.

*Repeat with me, Brothers, [ikhwan]*

*May God see our nation victorious, [awtan]*

*And with this higher Arab committee, [aliya]*

*Every one of us euphorious. [farhan]*

And the poet or the *zajjaal* (the poet writing *zajal* poetry), writes the second sequence using the rhyme ending of the third line from the previous sequence, which he or she keeps for the first three lines and then uses a fourth line following the rhyme ending of the first sequence.

*In this Higher Committee, [aliya]  
The pride of the Arab nation, [arabiya]  
Hatred of Zionism [sahyuniya]  
And a symbol of unity and faith [iman]*

In the rest of the sequences, the poet follows the above form (three rhyming lines and the fourth line following the rhyme of the first sequence).

*Our Higher Committee, renowned. [mashhura]  
Its efforts thanked, [mashkura]  
Its slogans famed. [mashhura]  
Protecting honour and homeland. [awtan]*

The subjects of Ibrahim's poems vary, and one work of his of great significance was a poem that addressed Lieutenant General John Dell, General Commander of the British Forces in Palestine and Eastern Jordan. Dell was posted to Palestine on 15 September 1936 to implement harsh procedures against the Palestinians who had started practicing civil disobedience and tax evasion as part of the revolt against British colonial rule. Dell was known for his familiarity and understanding of Arabs and used a variety of methods to accomplish his objectives peacefully. He excelled at manipulating dialogue between Arab revolutionaries, tribal leaders, sheikhs and the aristocracy.<sup>13</sup>

Another of Ibrahim's poems was composed to address the British reaction to the general strike that had been called for and the announcement of a general civil disobedience. Britain sent a Royal committee to investigate the growing civil disruptions and to hear the demands of Palestinians. Nuh composed a poem titled "Your Honour the Royal Commission".

*Your honour the Royal Commission, Keep this in mind:  
Maybe you can eliminate this problem and solve the matter in question  
In the beginning we boycotted you, to keep our honour  
But we came back and cooperated with you by order of our rulers.  
When impartiality you adopted, we presented our case.  
So, now eliminate this problem and solve the matter in question,  
Your honour the Royal Commission  
How many investigative committees we've seen, and we wonder at the necessity,  
Too many fiascos my lord, too many bricks hurled at us.  
We walk the path to arrive at our destination of choice  
So, now eliminate this problem and solve for us the matter in question  
Your honour the Royal Commission  
Palestine is the case, clear and bright as the sun  
Zionism stole it, and now wants to set up its rule  
And Arabs want their rights and their unmet demands  
So, now eliminate this problem and solve for us the matter in question*



*Your honour the Royal Commission  
Arabs are an honourable nation, renowned as such across the globe  
Beyond God it fears none, our souls sacrificed for Palestine  
And our enemies from honour are devoid, from gallantry removed  
So, now eliminate this problem and solve the matter in question,  
Your honour the Royal Commission*

On 7 July 1937 the Royal Commission published its findings in the form of a plan to partition Palestine into Jewish and Arab states. Ibrahim then composed a poem titled “The Plan for Dividing Palestine”.

*You are thinking about a new solution that will not be implemented for sure!  
This partition plan we reject as an impossible failure  
We hear you are hell bent on dividing us.  
Take Jerusalem and Bethlehem? and Haifa be made an international city?  
And crowd Arabs in Amim<sup>14</sup>, and give the coastal lands to Zionism?  
This partition plan we reject as an impossible failure  
Have you read McMahon’s documents to Arabs in the name of Saxon  
Cancelling Balfour’s unfounded promise to Zion.  
Every one of you be informed, of what was and what will become  
This partition plan we reject as an impossible failure  
You are thinking about a new solution that will not be implemented for sure!  
This partition plan we reject as an impossible failure  
Nineteen years we’ve waited and now we’ve become endangered  
Palestine is holy ... from hundreds of years past  
Keep your conscience clean, provide justice to the oppressed  
This partition plan we reject as an impossible failure.  
Think hard and make a decision, we’re sick of waiting  
Perhaps the problem will be solved and the occupation ended.  
And we can start organizing our country and be free in our land.  
This partition plan we reject as an impossible failure  
No to the implementation of the partition plan  
Long live Palestine, Arab and free,  
and may the glorious Arab flag long fly over it*

Nuh Ibrahim had particular interest in the internal affairs of Palestinian activities and life. And the themes he uses in his poems are common to twentieth century Palestinian poetry: steadfastness, popular resistance, and nationalist unity regardless of religion and political affiliation. During the strike in 1936 which lasted for six months, beginning on 20 April 1936, Ibrahim wrote a poem to the sailors of Jaffa saluting their steadfastness.

*We salute the sailors, Muslim and Christian  
“The courageous sailors of Jaffa, men of substantial vigour”*

*We salute the sailors of Jaffa, men well-known for their dignity,  
They've shown determination during the long strike*

*They've halted all work and provide a model for Haifa  
They've made us proud, they walked in the first lines of defence.*

***Long live the sailors***

*They sacrificed much in this strike and faced hardships alike  
And were like all of us young and old,  
Six months of patience, and turning down profit aplenty  
And the proverb tells all: honour is for the poor*

***Long live the sailors***

***Three hoorays to the courageous Jaffa sailors***

***Hooray, Hooray, Hooray***

*Their principles are based in honour; their capital is gallantry and decency.  
They are known for their courage, vigour, and valour*

Another poem about national unity by Ibrahim was titled, "A Homeland for All". It was composed at a time when the British tried to make the situation appear as if there was disagreement between Muslim and Christian about resisting the British occupation.

*Christian and Muslim, their unity strong and resilient  
Creed or religion is for God, while a homeland is for us all*

*Do not say Christian and Muslim, we all are brothers of blood  
Whatever you say or do, Adam is our father and Eve our mother*

*Everyone of us understands, our unity is strong and resilient  
Creed or religion is for God, but a homeland is for us all*

Issues of honour and humanity also appear in a long poem titled "Say, long live Palestine and the valour of its *Mujahideen* (resistance fighters)". In this poem, Ibrahim eulogizes a case he describes as "bizarre". It is the story of Palestinian revolutionaries who defeat a British battalion, kill some, and injure and capture an important British officer, whom they treat for his injuries and set free. The officer is described as later turning into a supporter of the Palestinian revolt and its fighters. This selection from the poem shows the story-telling aspect of his orally recited poetry:

*A bizarre story, my listeners, it happened in Haifa in Palestine  
It's going to become the example for the honour of resistance fighters.*

*A documented event it is, in these turbulent days  
In a battle among battles, the fighters had won.*

*An important British officer with major injury to his shoulder  
He screamed and asked to be saved and was carried by the fighters*

*Their honour dictated saving him and they nursed him until he got well  
At the end they set him free, an example to the occupiers<sup>15</sup>*

Another of his poems deals with women and the sacrifices they make for the homeland. Praising the mother who gives her son to battle, he writes a very long poem reciting what he tells us is a true story of a woman who “makes us proud” in the village of ‘Asira, in Jabal Nablus. The mother and son live alone and have no money - her only capital is her son, her bed, and a few gold bracelets. She sells her bed and gold to buy a gun for her son so that he can go and fight. But he returns terrified of what he has seen and having fled the fighting. Looking through a hole in the door he sees his mother praying and saying the following:

*You must say God give us victory, and push away the West's treachery  
Don't let down the nation of Arabs, of Muslims and Christians*

*My son is free, the son of glory, volunteered for the fight  
To save country, offering himself a martyr*

*My son is Arab of honourable offspring, death he does not fear...*

The son, hearing these words from his mother, decides to return:

*Her son is now embarrassed, of his escape regretful  
He has returned to the fight, O brothers, ready to go*

*He takes the most dangerous positions, fearless of cannons  
He attacks and defends in the front lines of fire*

*Attacked, unfazed and courageous, and defended like a hero  
Until he was martyred, O kin, in the shadow of the Arab flag*

*The battle ended, O free ones, and the revolutionaries have won  
It is as destiny intended, this young man was sacrificed*

*They bring his corpse, and tell his mother  
People have started consoling her, so terrible a tradition*

*His free daring mother, stood tall and content  
She shouted “I am proud” to all of the women*

*For the liberty of my homeland, my son has died and was martyred  
I wish I had another son, I'd offer him as a gift also*

*Listen, O people of mission, especially the women of this nation  
You all should love this woman, mother of dignity and zeal*

*She who sacrificed her son, to save her nation  
Learn from her and adopt her higher principles*

*Translate this tale into all living languages  
Write a story from it, for Western nations to read*

*Recite "Al Fatiha" for the martyrs, they've sacrificed their souls  
And thus are the women as are all Arab women.*

Nuh Ibrahim also paid tribute and sang to Arab kings and presidents, pleading and cajoling them to act on Palestine, in particular to King Ghazi of Iraq. One of his poems, "O Kings of Muslims" is well representative of this type of poetry.

*We have none but God and you all, O Kings of Muslims,  
Pull up your sleeves to save Palestine  
Palestine is so tortured, so many martyrs and homes destroyed  
By God it makes one cry to see what has become and what danger looms above  
Palestine, it's a difficult situation  
We have none but God and you all, O Kings of Muslims. Pull up your sleeves to  
save Palestine*

*Your Highness Ibn Saud, protector of Mecca, if you saw what is going on, you  
would cry.  
Make the Western oppressor understand what you intend, we know your loyalty  
and what you have done.  
We have none but God and you all, O Kings of Muslims. Pull up your sleeves to  
save Palestine*

*Your Highness Imam Yahya Hameed Eddin, renowned for your protection of  
Muslims  
The swords of Islam are your famed sons, raise your voice for the oppressed  
We have none but God and you all, O Kings of Muslims. Pull up your sleeves to  
save Palestine*

*Our great hope, your highness King Ghazi the first, pride of young men,  
successor of Faisal the hero  
And the people of Iraq on our behalf, so often have borne, at their hands we  
hope to resolve our cause  
We have none but God and you all, O Kings of Muslims. Pull up your sleeves to  
save Palestine*

*Your highness, head of the Hashemite clan, Abdullah Ben Al-Hussein, father of the nation  
Protector of the Dome and the Aqsa from this invasion, prince of Transjordan,  
father of the mission  
We have none but God and you all, O Kings of Muslims. Pull up your sleeves to save Palestine*

*The Arab countries will save us, and will not delay in supporting to our cause  
Jordan, Syria and all Arabs are our brothers. Even the Indians asked for our victory  
We have none but God and you all, O Kings of Muslims. Pull up your sleeves to save Palestine*

The poems selected for this study show that Ibrahim's poems, despite the large number of compositions and their popularity with the masses, in fact address fairly simple issues without sophisticated language or analysis, no matter their target: the British (especially the one to Mr. Dell), sailors, or the Arab presidents and kings. It is worthy of mention that Dell oversaw the implementation of the military administration, which worked in close conjunction with the Zionists, during the Revolt. It seems incongruous, then, that Nuh Ibrahim could have praised him for a just solution within an overall policy of repression.

Similarly, the Arab leaders were not entirely supportive of the Palestinian revolt, so it is also difficult to consider them - as the poem "O Kings of Muslims" would have the reader do - as a united ally of the Palestinians working hard to save Palestine. The dialogue in his Arab-Zionist conversation poem indicates Ibrahim's absolute naivety and shallowness in comprehending Zionism and the depth of the Zionist project in Palestine. None of these factors, however, undermined Ibrahim's wide popularity, nor did they spoil the essence and sincere love his people felt for him, as their repetition of his poetry in a variety of forums reveals.

Some of the reasons for Ibrahim's popular appeal lie in the following characteristics of his writing and person. Ibrahim's early engagement with the Revolt, as a poet, provocateur, and fighter brought him great acclaim and credibility. Second, the simplicity and directness of his words won him great acceptance among the village masses who, at that time, made up the majority of the population in Palestine. Ibrahim employed stories and anecdotes in his poetry, which allowed him to be understood and appreciated by common people. He also made great use of new media, recording his work on records and broadcasting his poetry on Arab radio stations. Finally, Ibrahim's martyrdom at the age of 25, at his height as a poet, personified the spirit of sacrifice he praised in his poems.

Ibrahim's poems and songs formed an important orally-transmitted force for inspiration during the 1936-39 Revolt, and his martyrdom became an example for

others to live and die by. His legacy continues to live on through the actions of the Tamra village council who formed a committee to revive Ibrahim's legacy and in 1986 built a monument in his honour.

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### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> This article originally appeared in Arabic in the Proceedings of the 9<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Ibrahim Abu-Lughod Institute of International Studies at Birzeit University entitled *Between the Archival Forest and the Anecdotal Trees: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Palestinian Social History*, July 2004. Translation from the Arabic by Bilal Hijjawi, with additional translation and editing by Rochelle Davis.

<sup>2</sup> *Al-Mawsu' al-Filastiniya [The Palestinian Encyclopedia]*. (Damascus, 1984) 229.

<sup>3</sup> All poems are excerpted from the Nuh Ibrahim Poem Collections, National Library of Jerusalem, Hebrew University.

<sup>4</sup> Note that this is not the English version of the warning, but rather a translation from the Arabic. *Yawmiyat Akram Zuaitir: al-Haraka al-Wataniya al-Filastiniya 1935-1939 [Daily Journal of Akram Zuaitir, the Palestinian National Movement 1935-1939]* (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies) 50.

<sup>5</sup> *Esco Foundation for Palestine: A Study of Jewish, Arab and British Politics Vol 2* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1949) 1-8.

<sup>6</sup> The Hope-Simpson Report, *Palestine, Report on Immigration, Land Settlement and Development*, Sir John Hope Simpson, Command Paper No. 3686, His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1930.

<sup>7</sup> Johnson Crosby Commission, page 42, as quoted in Adil Jabir, *British Mandate Laws and the Establishment of a Jewish National Homeland in Palestine* (Baghdad: Center for Palestinian Studies) 371.

<sup>8</sup> Bayan Nuwayhid al-Hout, *Palestine, Cause, Nation & Civilization* (Beirut: Dar Al Istiqlal, 1991) 414.

<sup>9</sup> *Al-Mawsu' al-Filastiniya [The Palestinian Encyclopedia]*. Volume 3 (1990) 37.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

<sup>11</sup> Nuh Ibrahim, *Palestine Resistance Poem Collection* (Jaffa: Khamis Printing Press).

<sup>12</sup> Khabeebi is making fun of the Ashkenazi Jewish immigrants' inability to say the letter 'Ha'. It would, in Arabic, be 'habeebi' or 'dear one' or 'beloved'.

<sup>13</sup> The poem in Arabic is provided in the Arabic version of this article (p. 65). We eliminated its translation here for the sake of brevity.

<sup>14</sup> It is unclear what "Amim" is, although it could just refer to a place, one area of Palestine, in which the British were trying to relocate the Arab population.

<sup>15</sup> These are just the first ten lines of the poem. It continues on for another 18 lines and it tells about the officer's reaction and ends with "this story ... translate it for the Westerners" (p. 70).