



Ghassan Kanafani: In Our Memory

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By As'ad AbuKhalil - Thu, 2012-07-12 17:48- ANGRY CORNER

You would not know it. If you navigate in all the English language blogs, websites and newspapers dealing with the Middle East, you would not have known that Arabs in cyberspace around the world are commemorating the anniversary of the terrorist murder of Ghassan Kanafani at the hands of Israeli terrorists in Beirut. He was murdered in cold-blood by an explosive device under his car, which also killed his niece. Facebook pictures carried his portrait and lines from his writings were being circulated. Western media had other concerns: they were busy covering a buffoonish Sunni cleric in Sidon, all in the hope of elevating his stature to compete with Hassan Nasrallah.

Ghassan Kanafani never carried a gun, even though he was entitled to carry more than one given that it was Gun Zionism that took over his homeland. Ghassan Kanafani was a writer, artist and a dreamer. He also was a lover: his love letters to Ghada Samman were some of the best love letters one can read – interestingly Ghada only released his letters to her but not hers to him.

Kanafani was a major figure in the Kuwaiti and Lebanese press and his articles were published under a pseudonym in *al-Hawadith* magazine, among others. Kanafani was gifted in the media and his political posters were one of the best in the 20th century.

Israeli terrorists have killed scores of our writers, scholars, scientists, poets, artists, in addition to scores more of our leaders and commanders. Israel pioneered the art and practice of terrorism and it can be said to be the real inspiration for al-Qaeda.

If Ghassan Kanafani was not a Palestinian, his story would have been told in movies, plays, and novels. Instead, Israeli terrorists are portrayed as dreamers and humanitarians, while our dreamers and artists are turned into terrorists. Golda Meir who has blood of many Arab children on her hands is portrayed in American popular culture as some doting grandmother with feminist inclinations – while in fact she was not only a terrorist but an enemy of the women's movement as well.

Tags

Tags: [resistance \(/tags/resistance\)](#), [Poetry \(/tags/poetry\)](#), [Palestine \(/tags/palestine\)](#), [literature \(/tags/literature\)](#), [kanafani \(/tags/kanafani\)](#), [israeli terrorism \(/tags/israeli-terrorism\)](#)

Ghassan Kanafani represents all the passion of Palestinian struggle. Israeli terrorists are threatened by every act of Palestinian defiance – whether in arms or in words. In April 1973, Ehud Barak led a command of terrorists who killed Palestinian poet Kamal Nasser, another man who never held a gun in his hand. But Israeli calculations are flawed: they kill one Palestinian (or one Arab) after another on the assumption that his death would kill the dream or extinguish the flame, or end the project. Israeli calculations are so foolish that they seem to be premised on the notion that Palestinian mothers can't give birth anymore.

I grew up hearing stories about Ghassan Kanafani. He was a close friend of my uncle Naji, who knew him from the Movement of Arab Nationalists. And when Kanafani was murdered, George Habash said, "he took my half with him."

For some reason, I always missed Kanafani. My school bus when I was a boy, passed daily in front of the *al-Hadaf* magazine offices. Here was the truly pioneering revolutionary magazine that was founded by Ghassan Kanafani. I still have some of the early issue. I touch them carefully knowing that they were designed and produced and written by this talented man.

The West does not know of our scientists or artists or writers. They only know of our "terrorists". In the US, I often ask college students around the country if they have heard of Bin Laden. They all have, of course. I then ask them to name any Palestinian or Arab poet or writer or scientists. None can (in the UK, the experiment produces different results and the college students there are certainly more knowledgeable).

Mahmoud Darwish was only covered in the Western media when he wrote a poem that offended Israelis. The *New York Times* only then covered him and provided a translation of the "offensive" poem. Darwish merely asked the invaders to leave his lands.

Year after year, we prove that we have not forgotten Ghassan Kanafani, and that we have not forgiven his killers. Year after year, we look at his pictures and stare at his eyes and know that something big happened when Kanafani was killed.

Year after year, we re-read his word and insist on the continuity of the project that he represented. Israelis habitually cover up their war crimes and massacres by lies, fabrications and distortions. They lied to the world and claimed that Ghassan Kanafani wrote his novels and painted his posters with a gun. Yet, his pen and brush proved to be stronger than the Israel gun that killed him.

Comments

Submitted by bushtheliberator (not verified) on Mon, 2012-07-16 01:08.

I doubt that very many of the Israeli Jews killed by Arabs had nearly so illustrious a career as the dear departed Kanifani.... but I'm sure that their deaths were just as tragic. Thirteen centuries of this pox, and there's never enough blood to slake that thirst for domination.

Submitted by lidia (not verified) on Fri, 2012-07-20 16:27.

Zionists colonizers of Palestine aka "Israel Jews" are the same as "Rhodesia" whites. I am sure Rhodesia White colonizers blamed their native victims for the some crimes as Zionists, not sure, though, what name-calling they had used.

Submitted by bushtheliberator (not verified) on Sat, 2012-07-21 06:23.

The Jews have escaped dhimmihood ,and have prospered in their himeland. You may never get over it, but you're not able to do much about it. either. Christians are a much softer target ;maybe you should direct your frustration toward them,instead
But be warned, some Christians aren;t defenseless.

Submitted by lidia (not verified) on Sat, 2012-07-21 12:42.

Zionists Jews came from Europe and are colonizers of Palestine. All else is racist Zionists propaganda. Of course, Zionists colonizers were the best friends of White racists in South Africa. Where are those White colonies in Africa, I wonder?

Submitted by Farah (not verified) on Sat, 2012-07-14 13:44.

Beautiful. Thank you.

Submitted by w (not verified) on Sat, 2012-07-14 01:35.

A shame that al-Akhbar's tribute to Kanafani should be by such a terrible writer who can barely string together two sentences. Does no one bother to edit Abukhalil?

Submitted by Jim Holstun (not verified) on Fri, 2012-07-13 17:41.

Kanafani was not an anticolonial bourgeois nationalist (like Edward Said), but a anticolonial revolutionary communist, with a brilliant and penetrating critique of betrayal by the ruling class of Palestinian notables in his history of the 36-39 war (which is a prophetic critique of the PA), also in his depiction of the Palestinians as the Persian Gulf proletariat in Men in the Sun, exploited by Israeli ethnic cleansers, the Palestinian ruling class, and the Gulf States.

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