

Hurry up, you anthem!
You know the place
You know the time
The might of things in us you know....

Never they went, never they reached. Their hearts are almonds in every street. The squares are more generous than the skies, short of covering them. Seas often forget them. They know North and South; they flew pigeons to the towers of their homes. They picked one of their martyrs as a star to lead them to the wilderness of infancy. The moment they say: We have arrived, their leader falls on the initial arch. You hero, leave us alone! Let's proceed to another end! Damn all beginnings! You here, shrouded with extensive beginnings, tell us: How often will our journey remain the beginning? You hero, lying on sheaths of barley, on beds of almonds, embalm your agonizing wound with dew, with the milk of sleepless nights, with lemon blossoms, with bleeding stone, with the anthem - our anthem, with a feather plucked from the phoenix. Land, like language, inherited is!

... The anthem of theirs, a stone rubbing the sun.
Good and full of humor they were

They never knew dance or music
'cept in funerals of passing comrades.
Women they loved like fruit, ideals and cats
Years they counted with the ages of their dead.
Traveling to seas of doubt they kept saying:
What did we do with the carnations to remain so far?
What did we do with the gulls
To inhabit ports and saline in winds so dry?
To all the time welcome and see off?
... They were as ever, as all rivers,
 far from steady,
Running everywhere,
A casual path may lead
 To some way out of exile
Knowing nothing of life but as it is given by life,
They never queried beyond fate and graves.
Why should they care about what's there after doomsday?
Why should they care about the kinship
 of Samuel or Ishaq to God?
This very hell is the hell itself.
They got used to planting
 myrtle in their shirts
 ivy in their camp yards.
They got used to preserving violets
 in both their songs and enclosed graveyards...
Plants remained fresh and alive
 Saturated with love
Yet, come back they did
 Before their sun had set
Come back they did
 To their very names,
 To the clarity of time when swallows depart...

Moments of exile are

Both times and places altering inhabitants.
They are evenings blocking blind windows.
They are arrivals on beaches in sail-less vessels.
They are birds too loudly praising their songs.
They are the home which has become a throne...
Which has reduced nature into a body...
Yet, come back they did from exile
 Who cares about horses left behind?
With their own hands they did smash
all their myths
and ran away to become free
 To think with their hearts.

Come back they did from the great land of myth
To remember days and words of theirs.
Come back they did to the usual in themselves
To the one who walks along the embankment
 Chewing his sweet idleness and his time
 with no fixed purpose
 Enjoying looking at roses just as
 ordinary people without much ado.
From the womb of the lemon blossom
 The lemon blossom is reborn
 Opening in darkness
The windows of the ancient houses
 To the endless horizon...
 To the family peace
... Come back they did
Enough time has passed
For the caravan to come back
 From its far-off Indian trip
Repairing the wheels, advance they did
 Before saying words.
Kindling the star of memory through
 the windows of Central Asia,
Come back they did;
did they in fact?
Come back they did
From the North of Damascus
Come back they did
As if from tiny islands in the boundless ocean.
Come back they did
From the endless conquests with innumerable captives.
Come back they did
As the minaret's shadow at sunset
 recoils from the voice of the muezzin
Paths never ridiculed them
 As stranger to stranger does
Both ebbing and flowing...
 both stagnant and running,
The river is their guide.
The willow banner has its own soothsayer
Who hangs it on what spills over
From the molten gold of the moon
They have their story.
Adam, the archetype of migration,
 regretted and wept.