

Mahmud Dervis

131317

## D

MADDE YAYIMLANDIKTAN  
SONRA GELEN DOKÜMAN

## Darwīsh, Maḥmūd

**Maḥmūd Darwīsh** (1941–2008) was the most prominent of modern Palestinian poets and one of the major protagonists of modern Arabic literature. With his political poems he gave an internationally renowned voice to the Palestinian people and has often been called the “poet of resistance” (*shāʿir al-muqāwama*). Like other Palestinians of his generation, Darwīsh lived through different periods of exile and loss and his writings and biography reflect the plurality of the Palestinian condition after 1948. In the 1980s, Darwīsh’s works became part of the canon of world literature, his words and ideas resonating among readers, writers, and scholars internationally. His late poetry especially transcends the context of the Palestinian–Israeli conflict, turning universal states of oppression and displacement into metaphoric worlds of sadness and tragedy, but also of beauty and human dignity.

Darwīsh was born in the Galilean village al-Birwa on 13 March 1941. His village was destroyed by Israeli troops during the *nakba* (“catastrophe”) of 1948 and his family fled to Lebanon, returning clandestinely

a year later. Despite Israeli repression and his family’s precarious status as internal refugees, his family succeeded in staying “on the land.” After completing high school in Kafr Yāsif, Darwīsh worked as a journalist for the Israeli Communist Party. During his employment, he published his second poetry collection, *Awraq al-zaytūn* (“Olive leaves,” 1964), and several of his poems were published in the avant-garde journal *Shiʿr* (Beirut) during the 1960s, and two anthologies (*Kanafānī* 1966, 1968), making him known across borders. In 1970 he left Haifa for Moscow and then Cairo, where he became acquainted with prominent Egyptian writers. In 1972 he settled in Beirut, founding his own literary journal, *al-Karmil*, in 1981. Some of his early poems, like *Ritā wa-l-bunduqiyya* (“Rita and the rifle”) and *Ilā ummī* (“To my mother”), put to music by singers such as the Lebanese artist Marcel Khalife, became famous across the Arab world. In the summer of 1982 an Israeli invasion forced him to leave the Lebanese capital; after short sojourns in Cyprus and Tunis he settled in Paris, where he stayed for over a decade from 1984 to 1995. His prose work with the para-