

In a poem titled “after Allan Ginsberg” Mosab Abu Toha writes

I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed in a
tent
looking for water and diapers for kids;
destroyed by bombs;
a generation under the rubble
of their bombed houses;

I saw the best brains of my generation
protruding from their slashed heads. (Forest of Noise,
2024, 61)

Even poetry as heart wrenching as this cannot encompass the brutality, inhumanity and relentlessness with which Israel continues to wage its genocide against the people of Palestine, within and beyond the Gaza strip. Numbers have lost their scales. Days have lost their lengths. All calculation of the number of dead and wounded or the extent of physical destruction caused seems a never-ending extension of unfathomable phantasmagoria unleashed by a state apparatus that has disowned humanity. Whatever has been happening in Gaza is infernal enough to evaporate vocabularies. After Theodor Adorno, in an inconceivable twist of history, in the wake of this prolonged genocide, we too might ask, Is poetry possible after Gaza?

As Abu Toha himself exemplifies, it is. And in that lies also the answer to what shapes postcolonialism at this contemporary juncture and what makes it relevant. The struggle is not merely over means of representation, it is over the means of survival. The empire is not a thing of the past. It is embodied by the state of Israel and its international political and commercial backers which are so potent that even the United Nations has been reduced to the status of a beleaguered spectator which can only lament and send aid even as the aid seekers themselves are killed in their scores by the killing apparatus of Israel's army which has been launching assaults, including unprovoked ones, at various other regions across West Asia.

The same also holds true for Ukraine which has been at the receiving end of a war of annexation from the Russian army which is causing increasing damage across Ukrainian cities. These conflicts are indicative of a world which is tearing at the seams and the result is extensive human suffering brought about by autocratic individuals and institutions. The struggle for democracy, one of the cornerstones of anti-colonial aspirations, is therefore now more urgent than it has ever been since the end of the Second World War.

This is also true for countries like India which is not currently involved in any conventional war. Yet, the way in which ecological resources are either being recklessly devastated in the name of development or the way in which indigenous communities are being uprooted from their natural habitats, whether in central India or in the Andaman and Nicobar islands, or the way in which people across the country are being threatened with deportation or incarceration in detention centres, simply because of their faith or language, testify to the rapid erosion of democratic values, which is also evident from the prolonged custodial confinement of dissenters of various hues.

Yet, if one looks at the cultural representations which are expanding around us, one would be hard pressed to find examples that

foreground collective struggle against an unjust order, unless we talk of a band of superheroes in galactic fantasies or repressive state apparatuses taking on criminal cartels. Instead we find ourselves constantly deluded by gigantic spectacles of one kind or another and conveyor belts of submersible solipsism sprinkled with generous doses of consumerist ecstasy.

Of course this is not a struggle that can be won without complete unity of the suffering multitudes who, however, remain entangled in various shackles of exploitation on the one hand and indifference on the other. And more can only be won over to the right side of the struggle through discursive salvos that dismantle our passivity, tear apart the blinkers and energise us to build a future which can be just for the multitude and not disproportionately grand for a miniscule elite at the expense of the same multitude. This is something that can only be achieved, along with grounded activism, through literary texts that continue to speak the truth despite the shrill rhetoric of exploitative elites and those who continue to provide them with auxiliary support and by a criticism that will consistently subject obfuscations, obscurantism and obstacles spun by the profiteering powermongers to the acid test of material, as opposed to ideological, truth.

As we proceed towards the completion of the first decade of *Postcolonial Interventions*, we remain committed to such an enterprise through our journal so that the flame of righteousness remains alive despite the maelstrom of atrocities which continue to afflict our times. This journey is neither comfortable nor very objectively rewarding. In fact, there is a great deal of consternation, frustration and rejection that remains entangled with a project such as this which mostly functions because of the selfless assistance that is provided by a large network of people who continue to share their time, intellect and resources to ensure that the wheels keep on turning. As educational institutions come under greater political coercion, as spaces of dissent and interrogation are shrunk, as resources for academic enhancement

are depleted, as utilitarian mismanagement becomes the norm, maintaining such academic endeavours become all the more challenging. And of course there remains the usual pitfalls of professional jealousy, insecurity, non-cooperation and incompetence which are perhaps true for most professional domains. These and other systemic ailments can progressively turn each educator into merely a silent, a dehumanized appendage to a machine, unless there is solidarity through struggle and passionate commitment to one's convictions. These keep alive what Mahmoud Darwish called the incurable malady of hope which must keep flying even in the face of consummate, macabre negation from multiple quarters.

This is what makes support from various quarters all the more crucial. All our contributors, reviewers, advisors, well-wishers provide the foundation on the basis of which we can dream of scaling higher summits. To all of you we say thank you. We couldn't have done it without you. At times the emails have been abrupt, the texts frenetic and the calls irksome - but the gratitude remains constant, the trust remains sacrosanct.

We promise to go on, grow strong and sing the truth and name the liars without fear or compromise. While the dream-worlds of our desires may remain far, we will not waver or retreat or falter. Bless us, for the road is hard and the times are dark and ruinous. But we will remember to keep the lights on as long as we travel together.