

Almira Hess - And As Far As What I Wanted & Other Poems



*Amira Hess. Ills.: Joseph
Sassoon Semah*

And As Far As What I Wanted

And as far as I wanted to further explain to you
what every sign says.

After all, surely you understand the way of colors,
the gilded light, the chlorophyll light,
the light of pain and the light of need and vigilant light
and the light of an arc in the sky
splitting through again to seed with drops of sun suddenly burning
the essence of yearning.

The light of the eyes of the dogs
shine loyalty in the dark to their masters.
The growing shadow of darkness placed late
in fading time.

How the radiant blackness disseminates its night
And how the arrows' whiteness smothers its light
How everything is lucid from so much pain.

- *Translated from the Hebrew by Yonina Borvick*

From And The Moon Drips Madness

There was a time
when I'd have said:
I won't defile myself
with this contemptible Orient,
I'll relegate my ancestral
home to oblivion,
my mother's owlish visage
weeping over the ruins,
my father's face like a cherub-
the Lord - graced him not.

And I also said:
The West, for instance,
Has no cares to its spirit,
well-done within, singed to the shrouds.
East and West I'll set out in a strong beat
for there is no ark
to bestir myself, if daughter
departs more spirit
to make eagles soar.

- *Translated from the Hebrew by Ammiel Alcalay*

Then Slake Him From

Then slake him from
A wineskin flowing and a wineskin of milk and a wineskin of loveliness
Kiss and weep, for the time of loving has come.
Woman-dust-earth seeped into the lust in his touch
Keen after him
Kiss his footprints
Do not bind his freedom.
Place him as a cock
Rising early, at sun's fire,
As a madman, his body screaming desire.

- *Translated from the Hebrew by Marsha Weinstein*

We're Children Of Atlantis

Remnants alighting from the
sea
immigrant
busts.

And there are brigades of cavalry
stumbling as they gallop.

The golden horse pulls down the priestly vestment
his face resplendent.

Month of May moon

I didn't see moons

months I didn't count days

I just saw blood and took my pulse.

The Lebanon cries out to the cedars of Goshen.

Judah cry not Judah

rotting further in the dust

your eyes veiled

in terror. Dread heaven

sent deloused

municipal decree - cry not Judah.

Don't weep chosen

over the babble in paradise no-land

the poetry of mint stirs

onion poetry of the rock and roll

savagery encircled by "uncles", dances

from the jungle calling TAM TAM TAM

Restore me Oh Lord to my sister's bosom

Set me upon the *gopher* wood

Oh Lord bring me back to the ark of Jeshurun
directly.

Turn my visage on a festive day to a vow of radiant
light good souls holding on to the world's foundation.

Inasmuch as the day breaks
I had been hoping night would fall
to continue sleeping as deeply as possible,
to gird up greater forgetting power to be forgotten
before you, inasmuch as the day breaks to get up
I wasn't oblivious already
because I wanted to go on to utter ruin
more and more,
but didn't have the strength
to ask myself
for e little more sleep without getting up in bed.

Wandering from world to world
Surely even my father would
speak at some point and say -
"All in all dwarf you
has face covered up in specs
wear minimal hat
go on
wear had to the max."

Between tone and slumber
now seems like a passage
from letter to letter
from a high octave *do*
to *sol* on another octave's scale,
coming down many thresholds
face to face within my very being which, after all,
only asked to be born and simply.

Hebrew's a nice language for revolvers one generation to the next
looking for a source out of their slumber
as they tarry upon the hook of retention.
Let it not found favor in my eyes
the realm of my garments overthrown
in the womb of holy scribes from Barazan,

I'm having a hard time finding a way out in origins
sometimes discovering my face by surprise
settling for tricks by the side of the road
crossing over another layer.

Yesterday I dreamt how the Nile rolled over its banks
and I saw the Delta inscribed upon the waters.
As I was still looking for other estuaries I suddenly
beheld interpretations on my palms
and between furrow and furrow
a white line of snow stood out
and the Delta was trampled by the running.
Afterwards the Nile made the warm blue
and if a cycle of time had been shifted
and Mount Ararat was dislodged from its place
barren wastelands stood out covered with lavender
their peaks slightly green.

An armored car behind me
an ancient carriage before me
veering to the right, and the color of mud the color of mine.

I still stumble to catch up with the steps taken before me
the niche has been breached
and sparkling water bathes my face.
And we were kind of an assembly of people
From the first generation unto the great-grandchildren.
My father was absent from this place
since he died while still alive,
and I didn't know if we gave birth,
if only my face was bathed,
if I'm the great-granddaughter,
If I'm a member of the tribe,
if my language is literal
if my lips speak the language of fresh twigs.
(That's how I remembered my anger
at their shutting their intent
to see the Aswan Dam

and the pyramids
from my eyes.)

And I still thought I governed myself that I had come for a little rest
without having to make much effort, except eating and drinking
bundles of lemons growing, pepper trees on the ceiling
I wanted to pick
so mother wouldn't get scared,
but she already took the initiative to go
to the other room, leading to the open field,
causing the sorrow in our hearts to arise anew.
She departs aware that she's going
and I'm aware of her departure.

I'm still disturbed by the form of the lemon that grew on the ceiling
Like a yellow candelabra
and behold, a light is lit in my window.
I didn't reign in the switches
presuming someone always kindles a light in my dreams.
Something turns topsy-turvy,
something runs amok,
the world is posed to change its face,
whether Persian lilac or sprouts of
orchid, whether an abundance of
rolling sandalwood beats
against my window and wakes me to tell
of the Nile's blueness even
more splendid than other blue.

- Translated from the Hebrew by Ammiel Alcalay

From The Information Eater

The time of the singing birds will become the depths of poverty

1.

And beyond the unknown
I will yet know we don't know everything
and the thing of totality

that's the black holes
that I burn after you
cloaked face ablaze

and reason for this suffering

2.

I banished the forsaken from myself
and tonight amongst horses neighing like jackals -
how come

3.

if it was possible to give
to the soul via the body
for me to burn unto you without this suffering
spirits in flight perishing to block
the totality of the holes
until we know not

4.

the cycles the cycles their surface like hornets
the cycles why symbiotic
to tell me not to leave the house
not to run about to and fro and to tell me
not knowing whither without where to go no place-

5.

I'm afraid of the library
and what's between its shelves to search in the letters
little birds pain the wings within me

6.

seems to me I'll have a saint's face
and find it had been used sometimes
and there were times I was a memorial flame
and flowers on someone's balcony
needing neither dung nor water
my face from which only a sunflower will emerge
without wasteland -

7.

and under this sun
normally will be bred if it can
without the grief of parental doctrine hit home lying in wait
from my two eyes and my mother's voice as it sings so like an infant pecking
away
and just think my breasts playthings sucked out from sucking
and what milk's left me to give the kids
within a space closed
quite hollowed out to nourish
where both our voices stop
in do re mi-

8.

and all this from that windowsill
I saw the dove brooding over time
and her rounded eyes embroiled lashes
the pulleys entangled within
pyres of melancholy
and longing for the openings out -

9.

and my mother asks: have you got flowers
in the garden
people want to see flower
and when there's a garden in the wastelands of sustenance
in the wilds of that jungle of yours
echoing
I want to see your hair
like a field
in that man's room
so I know you're my daughter -

10.

I am Amira
going in my own captivity
and I have a papa buried on the Mount of Olives

the silence of the hush within me we have in common
and the hair brushing on my neck
if I was his secret
if his silence reigns bound me
without release -

11.

And there is a revolution on my face
as if I had been suddenly formed
and from a shorn lamb I had come to the raiments of favor and grace
and clemency and great reverence before the grief of my existence
in the stratosphere
bottleneck of my soul.

12.

There are waters there are mighty waters
at salt's threshold.

13.

There are tremendous waters
my face is an ocean.

14.

And beneath your beauty if anything happens to me
I will see this night
and we shall gaze
ourselves above like a torch
and the eyes will shed tears in a blaze of fire.

For that's how we are the wind -

And I took upon myself the yoke of your love
to reckon ourselves within the midst of the cry

Until I'd not be able to have left that night
the depths of my shriek's range
that day my mother gave birth to me
instructing my soul that it be thus with me
flying between the dreams

and kindred contentions
given birth into nature's lap
for I was born attorn
and the sudden brilliance of the cord seemed real to me -

15.

And how can one migrate to the inner
depths as over the surface of flesh and blood?
Go in and go out and scandal bangs me -

16.

I'll know and summon you
gather spirit to bind me to the altar
and place your eyes upon me to brand me and hunger for me
to ride
and make it if you want I'll spread
and if not I'll want it open
to come
time diving into buoyancy

- *Translated from the Hebrew by Ammiel Alcalay*

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Border Poets: Translating by Dialogues - Amira Hess

the black hand's palm
the black woman's voice
the old black woman's face,
afraid of a man

don't touch me — if you do
ragged weary Yemenis will gather inside me
in screaming want, trying to move their home's walls,
their dwelling caves, and fly here by magic carpet
I fight off Yemen, the desert south
and the rod of wrath - stay away
because — why me?

and I'm a room of my own body
gasping for breath inside my own turf,
let no strange man come touch me
to taste my skin. A wandering Jew
comes up to my oasis – cool water purifies –
as if immersed in white, I am shined
he polishes away my charcoal and Yemenis

I flee to the caves
and weep the seven days
and ten nights, then put on eye make-up
downing tears and pain
leaving only a void to be orphaned from me too
then I catch ringing laughter
from petals of flowers
and shake myself all
over to get my second wind

– *Translated from Hebrew by Helene Knox and Smadar Lavie*

Amira Hess was born in Baghdad, Iraq to an ancient rabbinical family. She was brought to Israel in 1951, at first living with her family in an immigrant transit camp, and later moving to Jerusalem, where she lives today. Hess worked as secretary in the Foreign Office and in the Government Press Office. Her first book, published in 1984, was awarded the Luria Prize. She received the Prime Minister's Prize in 2005 and the Amichai Prize for Poetry in 2015.

Source: <https://www.ithl.org.il/>

Books Published in Hebrew

POETRY

And the Moon is Dripping Madness, Am Oved, 1984 [Ve-Yareah Notef Shigaon]

Two Horses by the Light Line, Am Oved, 1987 [Shnei Susim al Kav Ha-Or]

The Information Eater, Bitan, 1993 [Bolea Ha-Informatzia]

Yovel, Carmel, 1998

Boulimia of the Soul, Helicon, 2007 [Ha-Bulimia Shel Ha-Neshama]

Tears Without Eyes to be Shed, Am Oved, 2014 [Kmo Bchi She-Ein Lo Einayim Lehibachot]

The Art Of Cooking - Chicken Schnitzel Recipe



The Schnitzel has been brought by the European Jews to Israel, and currently everyone enjoys it!

I visited many households in Israel, and at any time of the day or night one can enjoys a Chicken Schnitzel. The Israeli version of Schnitzel is recognizable because of the white sesame seeds which cover the meat.

True, it might not be the most exciting or unique dish out there, and yet, it is definitely a staple in Israel when compared to the hummus.

Ingredients:

2 to 4 chicken breasts depending on how much you want to make (one can substitute the chicken breasts with chicken thighs for a more juicy fatty version)

flour

2 or 3 eggs

breadcrumbs (panko breadcrumbs are nice for a pleasant crisp)

salt & pepper

paprika powder

sesame seeds

cayenne pepper (if you want it a bit more spicy)

lemon wedges

Preparing the chicken:

First, you should cut the chicken into thin flat slices; you can use a butterfly cutting technique to make them bigger and flatter.

When the flat pieces of chicken are ready, place them in between two sheets of plastic and with a mallet or a hammer give them a good pounding until they are even and flat – you should focus mainly on the thicker parts.

Next, you should prepare three bowls, fill the first bowl with flour, and in the second bowl place two eggs or three eggs and beat them.

As to the third bowl, you should fill it with bread crumbs, add sesame seeds, salt, pepper, and paprika – optionally, you can use cayenne pepper – mix all the ingredients together.

Now, season lightly the chicken with salt and pepper, dredge chicken in flour until the surface is completely covered and shake off the excess flour.

Next, dip the chicken in beaten eggs mixture and then roll it through the breadcrumbs to coat, and make sure the chicken is completely covered and then lightly shake off the excess breadcrumbs.

Repeat the process until all the chicken pieces are done.

Cook the chicken:

Add a healthy layer of cooking oil to a hot skillet, make sure it is not too hot, after all, you do not want the oil to be smoking.

Softly place the pieces of chicken into the hot oil.

Fry the schnitzels for 2 or 3 minutes on each side, until golden brown.

After frying the schnitzel, let it rest on paper towels for a couple of seconds.

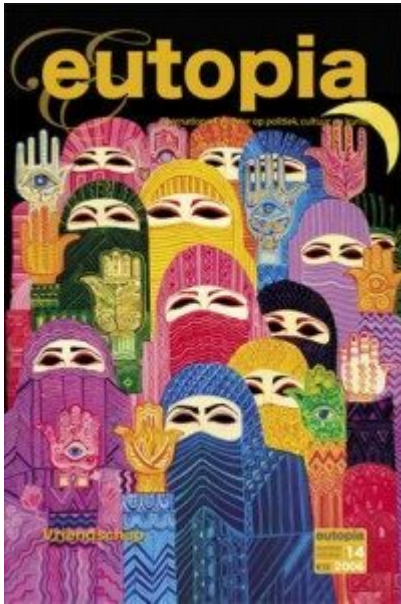
Chicken Schnitzel is a perfect dish for lunches, or in the evening!

Very enjoyable with a simple Israeli salad, and some pita bread with Hummus.

Serve with lemon wedges – remember, the squeeze lemon adds so much flavor to the schnitzel.

Eutopia Institute of Ideas ~ On

Middle East, Diversity & Democracy



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For its activities Eutopia draws on an extensive network of freelancers, both at home and abroad, including philosophers, scientists, writers, journalists, artists etc. Eutopia's good reputation is in fact partly based on its extensive network of contributors.

Eutopia is geared in particular – but not exclusively – towards dialog between North and South, as well as between Europe and the Islamic world. In addition, Eutopia aims to foster a concern for identity and intellectual development among young (migrant) individuals and to raise the quality of their input in European debates on social, cultural and political issues.

Eutopia concentrates on three core activities:

Eutopia E- Magazine: an international window on politics, culture and art.

Eutopia Live: lectures and workshops by and with artists and intellectuals; events and discussions about popular culture, film, literature and music.

Eutopia Academy: international exchange, conferences, networking and

consultancy for cultural institutions.

Eutopia's history and objectives

Eutopia, based in Amsterdam, was set up in 2002 by the sociologists Farhad Golyardi and Shervin Nekuee. Both Eutopia Magazine, of which so far twelve issues have appeared, and the Eutopia Live lectures and seminars have meanwhile found a niche of their own in Dutch cultural life. These activities are realized in collaboration with a great variety of local and nationwide institutions, including De Balie, De Unie, University of Amsterdam, Erasmus University Rotterdam, ISIM, Forum, Hivos, and the city of Amsterdam and the city of Rotterdam.

In general, Eutopia pursues closer collaboration with universities, governmental agencies and cultural institutions and foundations. Moreover, in the past few years, Eutopia has set up an extensive international network of scholars, authors, thinkers and artists in diaspora, many of whom are refugees. They provide major contributions to global intercultural dialogs and the formulation of new views about the dynamic of culture, identity and politics.

Eutopia aspires to develop into a more comprehensive interdisciplinary platform or institute that both nationally and internationally stimulates intercultural dialog in the areas of politics, science, culture and art. As such it fully follows in the prominent Dutch cultural tradition of politics and religious tolerance, which has spawned great thinkers such as Spinoza and Erasmus.

Eutopia is committed to promoting the debate on multicultural affairs in the Netherlands from a European and international perspective. What is the position of the Netherlands with respect to other European and immigration countries? Which social or cultural developments elsewhere have particular relevance for the Netherlands as an evolving multicultural society?

Go to: <https://eutopiainstitute.org>

David van Reybrouck - Revolusi. Indonesië en het ontstaan van de moderne wereld



David van Reybrouck. Ills.
Joseph Sassoon Semah

In Nederland wordt een groot onderzoek gedaan naar het koloniale verleden*. Kolonialisme als oud zeer moet worden erkend, vindt ook David Van Reybrouck in zijn recent verschenen boek *'Revolusi - Indonesië en het ontstaan van de moderne wereld'* waar hij vijf jaar intensief aan werkte. Het boek beslaat drie eeuwen, met veel aandacht voor de periode van de onafhankelijkheidsstrijd en dekolonisatie (1920-50).

Indonesië, het op drie na grootste land van de wereld, was het eerste dat na de Tweede Wereldoorlog, zijn onafhankelijkheid uitriep. Twee dagen na de Japanse capitulatie in augustus 1945 barstte een strijd los die meer was dan een conflict met de kolonisator Nederland. Op 17 augustus 1945 riep Soekarno de Onafhankelijkheid uit. Het was wereldgeschiedenis, het begin van de wereldwijde dekolonisatie. Pas in 1949 liet Nederland na veel strijd Indonesië gaan. Indonesië werd een voorbeeld voor andere koloniën, die in snel tempo ook onafhankelijk werden.

Tien jaar later organiseerde Soekarno, de eerste president van het land, de Asia-Afrika-conferentie van Bandung, het eerste mondiale congres zonder het Westen. Het werd een waterscheiding in de internationale politiek. In 1965 werd Soekarno afgezet en vervangen door de Soeharto. En kwam een einde aan de vrijheid in Indonesië. "Eigenlijk zijn we nooit onafhankelijk geworden", concludeert Van Reybrouck.

In *Revolusi* verwerpt David Van Reybrouck het bekende nationale perspectief van de Indonesische vrijheidstrijd. Bij de Indonesische onafhankelijkheidstrijd waren meer partijen dan Nederland en Indonesië betrokken: Japan speelde een belangrijke rol met de bezetting van Indonesië, Groot-Brittannië, dat troepen stuurde, en de Verenigde Staten.

Naast het verrichten van research in archieven, interviewde hij vele plaatselijke jongeren waarmee de revolutie begon (inmiddels 90-plussers) die de grondslag legden voor een nieuwe wereld, de allerlaatste getuigen, die hij vond in Indonesische rusthuizen, op het platteland en op verafgelegen eilanden. Om de internationale dimensie te begrijpen, trok hij tevens naar Japanse miljoensteden, Nepalese bergdorpjes en Nederlandse buitenwijken.

De grote politieke ontwikkelingen verweeft Van Reybrouck met de vaak heftige herinneringen van hen die erbij waren. Zoals bij de in Nederland als Bersiap-periode bekende tijd, toen de Nederlandse troepen in 1945 terugkeerden en een golf van geweld begon. In Indonesië hoorde het geweld bij de omwenteling van de orde.

Hij laat honderden stemmen horen, die eerder niet werden gehoord.

Zo ontmoette hij Djajeng Pratomo, die in een rusthuis in Callantsoog zijn laatste jaren doorbrengt. Hij werd geboren in 1914, het jaar dat het koloniale rijk werd voltooid en als Indonesiër betrokken bij het verzet tegen nazi-Duitsland.

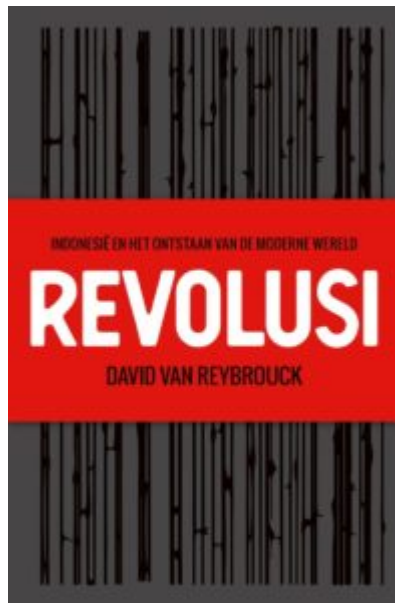
Een ander geïnterviewde geeft inzicht in het leven in ballingschap in Boven-Digul, Nieuw-Guinea, ver weg van Java en Sumatra. Deze onafhankelijkheidstrijdsters werden onder vernederende omstandigheden geïnterneerd. 'Nederland faciliteerde een soort Goelag voor ongewensten', aldus Van Reybrouck.

Anderen getuigen over de verschrikkelijke honger en van Aziaten die in opdracht van Nederland met andere Aziaten moesten vechten. De oude mensen herinneren zich deze trauma's nog steeds, hebben scherpe herinneringen aan deze periode.

In deze tastbare herinneringen schuilt zijn geschiedenis.

Het gaat over gewone mensen – in plaats van West-Europese mannen van een bepaalde leeftijd – die getuigen, en dat biedt een veelheid aan perspectieven en verhalen. Onderdrukkers en onderdrukten, Indonesische oud-strijders, bejaarde Gurkha's, tot troostmeisjes.

Van Reybrouck schrijft de orale geschiedenissen op, zonder verwijten en dat maakt het des te indringender. Als er iemand verantwoordelijk is dan zijn dat de Nederlandse politieke leiders.



David Van Reybrouck hoopt dat het boek wordt gelezen, want licht werpen op de geschiedenis in de hoop dat ze erkend wordt, de pijn herkend wordt, kan een weg zijn naar genezing. En door deze pijn te herkennen biedt het boek hoop de hedendaagse problemen zoals het geweld dat we de planeet aan doen, op te lossen. Het boek functioneert als 'achteruitkijkspiegel'.

Van Reybrouck:

'Mijmeren tijdens het kabbelen: zelfs als we met het kolonialisme uit het verleden ooit helemaal in het reine zijn gekomen, hebben we nog steeds niets gedaan aan de dramatische manier waarop we nu de toekomst koloniseren. De mensheid neemt de komende eeuw in met dezelfde meedogenloosheid waarmee in vroeger tijden werelddelen werden toegeëigend. Kolonialisme is niet langer iets territoriaals maar temporeels; het ergste ligt misschien niet achter ons, maar vóór ons. Wij gedragen ons als de kolonisatoren van de toekomstige generaties, wij ontnemen hun hun vrijheid, hun gezondheid, misschien zelfs hun leven.'

Indonesië en het ontstaan van de moderne wereld. De Bezige Bij, Amsterdam, 2020. ISBN 9789403183404

David van Reybrouck (1971) is cultuurhistoricus, archeoloog en schrijver. Zijn grootse succes was *Congo. Een geschiedenis*. In zijn essays *Pleidooi voor populisme* (2008) en *Tegen verkiezingen* (2013) pleit Van Reybrouck voor nieuwe vormen van democratie.

* zie: <https://www.ind45-50.org>)

Zie ook:
<http://rozenbergquarterly.com/david-van-reybrouck-zink-2016-met-mohamed-el-bachiri-en-een-jihad-van-liefde-2017/>

Linda Bouws – St. Metropool Internationale Kunstprojecten

Tal Nitzan ~ I remember Etty Hillesum & The third child



Tal Nitzan. Ills.: Joseph Sassoon Semah

I remember Etty Hillesum

Did she still whisper
“Why anticipate trouble”
when transported from Westerbork
to Auschwitz in Wagon Number 12,
“They should be exterminated like fleas,

those petty fears of the future"
as her future rushed towards her
to exterminate her?
Maybe I should pause, retreat
or at least recite
"Why anticipate joy"
as I hurry past the yellow squares of life
that once were far and sealed
and tonight open towards me
to let me in and out as I wish
while a silly hope for happiness
sways like a jug, too large,
on my head

"An interrupted life", the diaries of Etty Hillesum, 1941-1943
Translation: Tal Nitzan & Vivian Eden

The third child

I'm your unknown child.
I'm the negative
between your two blue-eyed children
who radiate against my darkness.
I'm your forgotten, your vanished, I'm your
kicked away.
I kneel - while they close their eyes

and reach out their hands for the gift -
as if begging for the blow
that will not come.
I feed on the cocoa trail they leave,
on the rustle of wrappings.
I shrink at night into the corner
of their beds, where tiny stuffed animals
encircle them
like shelter against evil,
lurking for the nocturnal ritual,
when you step on my toes unseeing,

and bend to smoothe their plump blankets.

When you close your eyes

(green like mine!)

I'll creep under your eyelids and murmur:

"Mommy".

If you try to banish the nightmare of my face

you'll find out, shamefully,

you don't even know my name.

Translation: Tal Nitzan & Vivian Eden

Tal Nitzan was born in Jaffa, Israel, and has lived in Argentina, Colombia, and U.S.A. (NY). She currently lives in Tel Aviv.

She is an awardwinning poet, writer, translator of Hispanic literature and editor.

Tal Nitzan published numerous poetry books.

<https://www.facebook.com/IsraelinNY/>