

Depictions Of Arab World In The Arab-American Poet Naomi Shihab Nye's Select Poetry

Received 2025-05-20

Accepted 2025-10-20

Published 2025-12-30

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To cite this article: Kumar, Tribhuwan., Alharahsheh, Abdelrauof. (2026). Depictions Of Arab World In The Arab-American Poet Naomi Shihab Nye's Select Poetry. Ijaz Arabi: Journ El Saeid, al of Arabic Learning, 9 (1), 218-228, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18860 /ijazarabi.V9i1.39845>

Abstract

The study aims to determine how Arab-American authors Naomi Shihab Nye and Diana Abu-Jaber depict Arabs in their selected poems including "Half and Half", "Fuel", "Kindness", "19 Varieties of Gazelle", "The Sweet Arab, the Generous Arab", "For Mohammed Zeid of Gaza, 15 Years Old" and "An Ode to The Sweet Arab, the Generous Arab". Naomi Shihab Nye is an Arab-American poet residing in Texas, where she interacts with many diasporas. She has sustained a friendship with Palestine for fourteen years. Her empathy for her father, Aziz, acts as the impetus for her writing. Moreover, her mother, a displaced German, profoundly impacts the visionary dimension of her exile. The study uses a qualitative research method, specifically literary analysis within the framework of postcolonial and diaspora studies. The author depicts Arabs as humane, generous, peace-loving, and dignified people who suffer from political violence and displacement. They emphasize shared humanity, cultural richness, hospitality, and resilience, while challenging Western stereotypes that portray Arabs as violent or inferior. The study finishes with a compilation of topics that have affected Arab-Americans and shaped their cultural beliefs, including hybridity, multiculturalism, and identity deficiency. This research supports Arabic language learning by fostering cultural empathy and contextual understanding, enabling learners to engage with Arabic texts beyond stereotypes through authentic diasporic representations of Arab identity, values, and lived experience.

Keywords: Naomi Shihab Nye; Arab-American Literature; Diaspora; Arab World

INTRODUCTION

Post-colonial literature and Arab-American literature share numerous similarities. The validity and acceptance of the notions of change—social, psychological, and linguistic—mark the inception of Arab-American literature. To adjust to these changes, humans must exert significant purposeful effort to reject the status quo and tradition in favour of the new. They experience a conflict between the traditional and the contemporary, making it challenging to cultivate an alternative identity. The authors directly, and at times confrontationally, tackle these subjects through their poems and narratives. It encompasses more than merely acquiring a new language or adapting to a

novel surroundings or cultural practices. It is a profound displacement that is far more fundamental. For an Arab-American, it is a distressing experience of dislocation and alienation.

The protagonists must traverse a novel social realm between two realms, as well as a new literary domain between two cultures and often languages. The defining aspect of their works is "doubleness." Arab-American literature, akin to post-colonial diasporic works, encapsulates the dual constants of their experience: homeland and exile. Each work of diasporic literature seeks to reconcile these two extremes. These writings exhibit two movements: one chronological and one geographical. Meena Alexander puts it as, "writing in search of a homeland" (1993:4). Examining the past while anticipating the future is the temporal shift. As said by Pramod K. Nayar: "It produces nostalgia, memory, and reclamation as literary themes... [Here] the writer looks forward to the future, seeking new vistas, new chances. This produces themes of the ethics of work, survival, and cultural assimilation" (2008: 188).

The primary literary genre of the Arab world is poetry, which has yielded some of the most significant Arab-American voices. The nomadic tribes of antiquity memorised and recited poetry. These authors express a longing for a homeland they may have been forced to abandon, with a common theme being the sorrow for the forsaken desert campsite. The predominant works of Arab-American poets are characterised by their personal nature. They concentrate on race, ethnicity, and culture. On one hand, they identify as Americans. Nevertheless, they persist in associating themselves with their home country and want to retain that connection with pride. Arab-American writers in the twentieth century predominantly concentrated on poetry, with notable figures including Naomi Shihab Nye, Lawrence Joseph, D.H. Melhem, and Samuel Hazo.

Naomi Shihab Nye, an Arab-American poet and essayist, was born in St. Louis to a Palestinian father and an American mother. She has authored numerous works and garnered a dedicated following among both Arab-American and mainstream American audiences, encompassing children and adults. Nye was nominated for the Pushcart Prize in 1982 and 1984. She has also received the Voertman Poetry Prize from the Texas Institute of Letters on two occasions: in 1980 for "Different Ways to Pray" and in 1982 for "Hugging the Jukebox." In 1988, W.S. Merwin chose her to be the recipient of the Lavan Award from the Academy of American Poets. In the same year, she was also a co-winner of the Charity Randall Citation for Spoken Poetry from the International Poetry Forum, along with Galway Kinnell.

Naomi Shihab elucidates Arab history and culture while advocating for transformation. Nye is a prominent Arab-American author, born to a Palestinian Muslim father and an American Christian mother. She asserts that her Arab-American identity "is merely another aspect of being human; it should neither be preserved, denied, evaded, nor idealised." Nye prioritises the diversity of experience and the necessity for change by creating platforms for Arab and Arab-American viewpoints to be articulated in language accessible to the wider American populace, rather than relying on sentimental reclamation.

Nye's writing is a synthesis of various cultural contexts and sources, including the American Southwest where she lives and the many places she has traveled, while being profoundly shaped by her Arab origin. Saddeka Arebi, a scholar from Saudi Arabia, has made notable contributions to the assertion of a unique and affirmative space for Arab women writers. She has referenced a significant Islamic principle of "middleness" or

Wasat, concluding that occupying a central position “does not have to mean ‘between-ness,’ being torn or on shaky ground, but can be a firm and advantageous position from which one can see both sides more clearly” (Arebi 1994, xi). Nye has derived a sense of empowerment from the concept of “middleness,” which is apparent in her work. Nye, at a young age, cultivated the belief that her “difference” constituted “always a strength,” unlike some Arab Americans who encounter disintegration due to their bicultural identities. “You were entirely emancipated” (Nye 2000).

The writings of Arab- American poetess Naomi Shihab Nye are distinguished by the interrelated themes of home and exile. She does not substantially impact the visionary dimension of her exile and sense of belonging throughout her 14-year residence in Palestine. Nye seems to be separate from the Arab diaspora in Texas. Nye does not react similarly to individuals residing in Texas, where she interacts with other diasporas. She opposes the Zionist worldview that Israel enforces in Palestine. Her poetry exemplifies universal peace and tolerance, allowing all persons, irrespective of their beliefs, to find a place to dwell without limitations. How can she creatively reconstruct an identity and a space that recognizes her presence as a Palestinian and an Arab? To what degree does she effectively express the feelings of exile and loss in her poetry?

Abdul Jan Mohamed (1990) utilizes the phrase “specular border intellectual” to characterize a person who possesses knowledge of two cultures yet is incapable or disinclined to feel “at home” in either society (97). This individual exposed the cultures to analytical examination instead of amalgamating them. This feeling of alienation parallels this concept. Edward Said, the late Palestinian American academic, expressed that he perceived himself as belonging to both the Arab and Western worlds, “without being completely of either one or the other” (Said 1993, xxvi). Nye’s poetry often evokes a feeling of isolation. In the poem “Over the Fence,” she explores the dislocation experienced by those with bicultural or multicultural backgrounds. The poem is organized as a conversation between two neighbors over the fence that divides their properties and lives. Nye longs for the stability associated with residing her entire life in one town, or even in a single home, as her neighbor has done. The neighbor, however, views Nye’s life as considerably more exhilarating than her own, which is marked by the tedium of her husband’s absence, the incessant routine of cleaning dirty dishes, and the feeling that “the world clicks shut/like a little dead door” (Nye 1986, 69). The plants on Nye’s side of the fence seem more exquisite, as the purple iris “float their silken heads.” The neighbor adjacent to her views her rose as “a stick forever” (Nye 1986, 69). Nye, however, firmly rejects the notion of being exalted due to her sophistication, asserting that she would accept “one tongue if it fit me.” She does not consider herself more privileged than her neighbor. “I contend that no individual is fortunate.” She states, “We have faces, they age,” highlighting their mutual humanity (Nye 1986, 69).

Moreover, Said (1978) interrogated and contested oriental studies, denouncing political and cultural imperialism. He contended that Western Orientalists, authors and professors studying the “Orient” or “the East,” have distorted the representation of the Orient in a way that reinforces the West’s supremacy over the East. Nonetheless, Said’s claims against Orientalism have motivated many scholars to conduct a more rigorous analysis of their representations of other cultures and the ways in which they inadvertently communicate complex geopolitical meanings in their writings (Mather, 2020; Kumar, 2012). Bayani (2020) and Kumar (2020) contend that Orientalism is the most effective

means for the West to achieve self-awareness, while simultaneously denoting the West's examination of the East.

According to Harb (2012), these stereotypical representations significantly motivated diasporic Arab writers to articulate their viewpoints and counteract Arab preconceptions. As a result, these Arab authors living in the diaspora commenced depicting Arabs in a more positive light. Nonetheless, some diasporic Arab authors persist in reinforcing these Arab stereotypes by depicting Arabs unfavorably in their writings.

Allani (2017) defines "hybridity" as an individual who is "trapped" between two distinct entities or civilizations. Ultimately, this entrapment culminates in a conflated or diminished identity, as the individual acquires a second perspective or dual consciousness reflective of the society or environment in which they exist. An individual from a specific country and culture contains unique practices, dialects, religions, and other attributes that distinguish them as members of that culture and ultimately differentiate them from other cultures (Jabeen et al., 2022). Thus, when a person migrates from their homeland to a different country, they experience a spectrum of emotions (Zohdi, 2017). This culminates in their arrival to a site that Bhabha (1994) designates as a "third space." This space is defined by a "sense of home" and belonging (p. 23). The term "hybridity" denotes the amalgamation of Eastern and Western cultures. It generally pertains to colonial subjects from Asia or Africa who have sought to attain a healthy balance between Eastern and Western cultural influences in postcolonial and colonial literature (Singh, 2009).

A study by Alqahtani(2024) explores Arab-American poets' engagement with identity, hybridity, and marginalization in the post-9/11 era. Shwein, Hussein Nasir, Raihanah M. M., and Firuz Akhtar Lubis(2025)focused on narrative fiction, this recent article addresses Arab-American identity dynamics relevant to diasporic literature studies. Jerbi (2023)did a contemporary overview of Arab-American literature, including discussion of contributions by Naomi Shihab Nye and others. The recent spatial criticism by Mukattash (2025) examines how Nye's poetry transcends geographic and cultural boundaries. Alkahtib(2025)focused on themes of homesickness and displacement in Naomi Shihab Nye's poetry within the context of Arab-American experience.

METHOD

In order to carry out the investigation, the researchers make use of a qualitative research approach. The purpose of this exercise is to investigate literary works in order to identify the strategies that authors use to stress cultural and identity-related considerations. The researcher is primarily concerned with the process of analyzing works of literature (Mahmood et al., 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Nye has effectively integrated Arab politics and culture into the United States in a profoundly humanistic manner. She has authored multiple children's books and two young adult novels, *Habibi* (1997) and *Going, Going* (2005). Nye has played a pivotal role in advocating for Arab writers and artists through many anthologies, including *The Space between our Footsteps: Poems and Paintings from the Middle East* (1998). Her most significant works of poetry include *Different Ways to Pray* (1980), *Yellow Glove* (1986), *Fuel* (1998), and *You & Yours* (2005).

Shihab characterizes herself as a "wandering poet" and claims that her poetry is influenced by her childhood memories and experiences. Nye scrupulously selects her subjects and themes from the sphere of quotidian existence. Tragedy and sadness refine her mature outlook in her works. She explores a diverse array of themes, environments, and circumstances in her poems. She seeks to forge a link between contrasting or remote elements. In contrast, these links function as channels for readers to evaluate their stability, enabling them to perceive the rich poetic landscapes. Nye's poetry is consistently marked by the employment of lucid language.

Her primary concerns encompass identity hybridity, morals and ethics, the quest, interconnections among varied populations, components of everyday life, the natural environment, and cultural and experiential disparities. She utilizes culinary elements and flavors from both the West and East to highlight her viewpoint. The theme of the quest is apparent in Nye's poetry. Through the examination of poetic character and the utilization of mundane materials, she seeks to reveal her elusive, amalgamated identity in her poems. She exposes those artifacts to unveil the essence of ethnic identity and the veracity of yearning for a particular place or community.

Naomi Shihab Nye contests the concept of a fixed, immutable self in her poetry, asserting that selfhood is a dynamic process of evolution and acquisition of knowledge. She examines the complexities of fragmented identity in the poem "Half and Half". The poem concludes with a compelling depiction of inclusivity: "A woman opens a window – here and here and here- She is making a soup from what she had left/in the bowl, the shriveled garlic and bent beans./ She is leaving nothing out" (19, *Varieties*, 97).

The poem transitions from a whimsical examination of the possibilities offered by her father's folktales of being a "true Arab" to a deeply concerning investigation of the responsibilities and repercussions of this identity. In the context of political tragedy, what constitutes a "true Arab"?

Nye poses the query, "What does a true Arab do now?" at the poem's conclusion. (137). The terrible resonance of this final inquiry is precisely due to her inability to respond. Nye illustrates that the gift of legacy is also a threat, as it often leads to the reification of notions of "true" identity into the rigid boundaries of absolutes, which in turn leads to violence. She argues that the care and concern that an individual demonstrates for another is more significant than their ethnic identity. Nye's poetry creates platforms for the expression of Arab and Arab-American experience without resorting to nostalgic reclamation by acknowledging the multiplicity of experience and the necessity for change.

"Fuel," a poem by Naomi, is a true work of art. This collection of poems finds meaning in a world where we are so tired of pointless things. "Fuel" covers a wide range of topics, including the Jews and Palestinians in the Middle East, small ferns and missing books, and families living along the Southern Texas border. Rachel Bareboat remarks, "Nye is one of those writers who makes me want to read, and makes me want to live, and makes me want to write. What more can I say? Fuel is exactly what it claims to be: Something to take in and to consume, something that will impel you forward" (2007).

Nye's poetry profoundly influenced perceptions during the 9/11 disaster due to her remarkable ability to articulate the weight of concepts that exceed ordinary comprehension. In those bleak weeks, her poetry acquired enhanced cultural significance. Her poem "Kindness" exemplifies spiritual practice. Observations by Royer Housden (2006), "In this rendering yet redemptive poem "Kindness", Nye reaches down to the

roots of our humanity which lie in the great heart where we all cry together.” In the poem, the picture becomes clear when she says:

“Before you know what kindness really is
You must lose things,
Feeling the future dissolve in a moment
Like salt in a weakened broth.” (Nye, 1998)

Nye is arguably the most renowned poet of Palestinian and American heritage. Her poetry explores diverse themes, including mortality, friendship, parenthood, and identity. She considers herself fortunate to have gained from the dual perspective irregularity in her parenting and holds an extraordinarily favourable view of her bicultural heritage. According to Kevin S. Hile (1996): “being bicultural, she writes, allowed her to maintain some sensibility, ‘otherness’ or ‘detachment’. Throughout her work, Nye challenges rigid boundaries, identification, calling attention instead to the multiple and often overlapping categories that constitute identity, including gender, ethnic origin, religion and geography”.

Naomi Shihab Nye's "19 Varieties of Gazelle" is a one-of-a-kind treasure. The voice of the poems in this collection may be one of the most sincere statements of dignity and peace in today's literary world, and perhaps even beyond the literary world and into society as a whole. Despite the fact that she wrote in response to the events of September 11, 2001, much of her earlier work demonstrates that she has a deep respect for all people. The majority of her artwork is ageless, and it has the same effect today as it would have had years ago. Poetry of this nature is guaranteed to be remembered and referenced for many years in the future.

Naomi adeptly examines overarching themes in "19 Varieties of Gazelle," mostly focussing on the volatile Middle East. Reading the anthology "19 Varieties of Gazelle" facilitates the development of unambiguous self-expression. More importantly, how to articulate what is essential—something that may already be inherent in everyone—in a manner that elicits satisfaction. The predominant theme of this collection's poems is the Middle East issue. Naomi's connection with gipsies is explored in the exquisite poetry "Spark," while her bond with the language she never completely comprehended is examined in "Arabic." "Holy Land" focusses on her grandmother and transforms a personal experience into beautiful melody, while "Staying Close" swiftly establishes credibility with its aesthetically stunning opening line: "Wore small caps of snow." (Nye, "Staying Close", 2002)

Naomi seems to be attempting to provide insight into her family's existence to portray Arabs in their whole humanity and to vividly highlight Arab culture, especially Palestinian culture.

I'm not interested in
who suffered the most
I'm interested in
people getting over it. (Nye, "Jerusalem", 2002)

The poems in Nye's collection "19 Varieties of Gazelle" frequently seek to provide comfort by presenting a wider perspective at the end of the poem in order to connect pain to greater stability. In both her poetry and her heartfelt letter "To Any Would-Be Terrorists," Nye makes the case that anger is not the answer. She uses personal stories to show that we are all human and that we should stop hurting each other. Nye thinks that knowledge will lead to empathy. In reality, Nye employs the closing method in her poems

to discover a ray of comfort or universality in the difficult situations she describes in the Middle East. Even still, the characters in Nye's depiction of a lunch in a park in a town that has been decimated by war are able to raise a glass to 'you' with elegance:

“.....who believe true love can find you
amidst this atlas of tears.....
People moved here, believing
and someone with sky and birds in his heart
said this would be a good place for a park.”
(Nye, “To Any Would-Be Terrorists”, 2002)

The poetry “The Sweet Arab, the Generous Arab” begins with the phrase “Since no one else is mentioning you sufficiently.” Shihab emphasizes the lack of Arab presence in most literary discourse by initiating with this statement. Thus, the author expresses her intention to rectify the lack and enumerates the appealing characteristics and culture-preserving customs of Arabs. This line signifies that the poet crafted this poem as an homage to the Arab populace. It examines the characteristics of Arabic culture, such as its hospitality, generosity, amiable disposition, and the custom of handshaking: “the Arab who extends his hand... who will not allow you to pass... without a welcoming word.” The phrase “The refugee inviting us in for a Coke” presents a dilemma. A refugee is an individual without of housing and land; nonetheless, in this context, the refugee extends an invitation to the speaker to his “tiny shop,” contrary to what one might expect. He is a refugee, yet he exhibits no reservations in showcasing his hospitable approach in his “small shop.” This illustrates the refugee's readiness to offer hospitality while enduring hardships and hurdles. He invites them to partake in a “coke” from a “clean glass” placed on a table within a decrepit hut.

“We drink, and you bow your head.” While bending one's head is regarded as a sign of inferiority in Arabic culture, it is regarded as a sign of politeness in Western culture. The Arab refugee bows his head, demonstrating his rejection of his own culture in favor of assimilating into the host nation, even though it brings him shame. Naomi's statement, “Please forgive everyone who has not honored your name,” alludes to the American viewpoint on Arabs and refugees. She is pleading with Americans to treat refugees with more decency and respect because they are exhibiting a willingness to work hard and assimilate into their community without expressing any displeasure. The speaker declares in the first line of the next stanza that Arabs are gentle people who “would not kill a mouse, a bird,” and who “feels sad sometimes, even cracking an egg.” In this sense, the egg represents the creation of life. Arab is reluctant to eliminate anything that has the potential to become life, even if it is only an embryo. The question, “Who erects two stones on top of one another to serve as a monument?” demonstrates the Arabs' simple approach to dealing with loss. It is customary in the Arab world to honor the dead by placing “two stones on top of one another” on their tombs. He then “kept the pieces, carried them to a new corner” for a new grave, referring to the growing number of dead from wars, “rubble and blast,” which was the main cause of their exodus from their home countries and their subsequent status as refugees in other nations. The Arab seeks to live in safety with his father and his grandparents' brothers. “This little lost cousin who wished only to see the Ferris wheel in his lifetime, ride it high into the air.” Ferris is a representation of height, aspiration, perfection, and hope. This illustrates how straightforward Arab children's dreams were, even though they were unfulfilled and unachievable. Another meaning of the term “Ferris wheel” is freedom, which is a basic

human right but which Arabs seem unable to understand. The "gaping days," which support their social, spiritual, and economic growth, satisfy their way of life. Still, immigrants could not buy tickets to go throughout the neighborhood.

The poem "For Mohammed Zeid of Gaza, 15 Years Old" is dedicated to "Mohammed Zeid," a fifteen-year-old boy who was struck by a "stray bullet" during the raging conflict in his hometown. It pertains to Zeid's passing. Shihab contends that the military's portrayal of Zeid's death is a significant departure from the truth. She maintains that the projectile that struck Mohammed was not "stray," did not originate from "friendly fire," and was not the result of "innocent intentions." She questions how individuals are able to rationalize such atrocities by adopting paradoxical terms, such as "friendly fire," "stray," and "fluff of pollen happy hopes," which encompass the true nature of the Palestinian people's situation.

Shihab anthropomorphizes the bullet to illustrate that the Israeli attacks on the Palestinians are not innocuous and that the bullet itself is devoid of guilt. Shihab's aim in this poem is to create an exculpatory tone that clarifies Mohammed's gunfire. The poet utilizes the paradoxical phrase "stray bullet" in the opening line: "There is no stray bullet, sirs." The speaker is discussing with a group of members the shooting of Mohammed, which they have characterized as a "friendly fire" incident. She persists in asserting that this bullet is not "akin to a distressed cat hiding beneath a bush," but instead constitutes a premeditated act resulting in the demise of a child. The infant's only offense was being a Palestinian under Israeli rule (the other vs the self). Shihab reiterates that "the bullet cannot be a pecan... no pollen fluff, no modest pebble at our feet, so please do not treat it gently." The opening stanzas juxtapose gunshots with innocuous or gentle things. The projectile is likened to a "distressed feline," characterized by its innocence, disorientation, and neglect. Furthermore, it is like to a puppy "navigating midnight streets." "Pecan plunking" is an onomatopoeic phrase denoting a missile that fails to penetrate. Euphony is seen in "fluff of pollen"; a bullet possesses a delicacy like to pollen resting on the roadway. The poet seeks to convey that no bullet is a "stray bullet" and that no discharge is figuratively unintentional. She maintains her claim that the lives and deaths of Palestinians hold no importance for Israelis.

Shihab asserts in the statement "we live among stray thoughts" that humans struggle to differentiate between fact and illusion due to the spurious rationalizations of the perpetrators and the complicity of Israelis in trivializing this atrocity. Their commitments waver, and their sentiments fluctuate. Numerous individuals encounter sensations of uncertainty and solitude due to their differing viewpoints on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They inhabit their dwellings "among bits and pieces," reflecting the "meandering nature of language." Nevertheless, this bullet was not benign... No bullet is innocent, incidental, or faultless; every shot discharged is purposefully aimed to inflict fatality. Shihab continually affirms that the boy's death was not accidental. Thus, it is a grave issue; the bullet that penetrated his chest was intentional. Shihab can elucidate the veracity of the crime by the presentation of evidence and logical analysis. The bullet "harbored no goodwill," was "never an ally of life," and "should not be afforded immunity by euphemistically referring to it as friendly fire." Error cannot be eradicated. The projectile extinguishes human life.

Shihab's contradictory expression of disdain for this imbalanced confrontation between armed and unarmed personnel is "friendly fire." "Soft saying" can trivialize inquiries of significant concern. Is it feasible to mitigate the harshness of abrasive things

only through gentleness? Why do folks overlook the murder of the Other (Mohammed) and seek to obfuscate the crime with euphemistic terminology (e.g., "friendly fire," "hairless puppy bullet," "worried cat")? Death entails substantial consequences, irrespective of its accidental nature. What is the rationale for attributing an excessive degree of importance to our actions? The irony and oxymoron in the above cited phrase are evident: the bullet in question is not "the friend of life." In what manner may death coexist harmoniously with life? Significant tensions exist between mortality and existence. It is reasonable to conclude that a bullet causes death rather than acts as a companion. Furthermore, what constitutes "friendly fire"? Fire engenders disorder and destruction. None of these factors can promote individual well-being; bullets create death and harm. Consequently, there is no justification for presenting it in a more fanciful fashion. She restates his name to underscore the victim and the ramifications of the violence. "Mohammed deserves the truth." Shihab's homage to Mohammed Zeid of Gaza trivializes the normalization of violence and death, presenting it as insensate. This poem is explicitly directed towards Mohammed Zeid. Nevertheless, Mohammed is a prevalent name, therefore symbolically representing the manner in which regular individuals are killed in Gaza. In conclusion, Shihab contends that the military's depiction of Mohammed Zeid's death is "significantly inaccurate." She is resolute that the gunfire that hit Mohammed was not accidental. She interrogates the justification for the belief in and acceptance of contradictory phrases, such as "stray bullets" and "friendly fire," as a means of rationalizing the violence occurring in Palestine. Nye asserts that individuals justify such illegal behavior by asserting it was unintended, despite the reality that "the bullet was never the friend of life and should not be afforded immunity."

CONCLUSION

Nye seeks to create a realm of serenity through her poems, where the denizens of the Middle East can cohabit free from tensions and conflicts. She perceives the world through the lens of her own experience: a realm where all diasporas coexist harmoniously, akin to the United States in which she lives. In her view, America is a tapestry of cultures and nationalities. Notwithstanding Nye's Palestinian history, hardly fourteen (14) of her one hundred fifty-five (155) poems, published over three volumes, pertain to her father's native nation. The remaining poems pertain to the Hispanic Southwest, her place of residence, and Latin America, where she has predominantly traveled. Nye's exile is not defined by nostalgia and homesickness. She does not feel a sense of dislocation, as she feels at home in any environment, despite her mixed heritage. The residence of her father, a site significant to three monotheistic religions, might inspire the creation of her own universe, characterized by a foundation of harmony among individuals. Nye's poem, an ode to "The Sweet Arab, the Generous Arab," implores the reader to "forgive past grievances for those who have not extolled your virtues." She depicts the "Arabs I know, excessively generous, warmly amiable, and possessing the same desire for a stable daily existence as innumerable others worldwide." Who relocated the pieces to another position after placing them in a box? For individuals for whom the concepts "rubble" and "blast" are perpetually relevant.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This project is supported via funding from Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University project number (PSAU/2026/R/1447).

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