

- NATIONALITY RECOVERY LAW
WILL IT RESTORE SECTARIAN BALANCE?
- MOBILE PHONE REVENUES TO
MUNICIPALITIES: LBP 667 BILLION
- PARLIAMENT PRODUCTIVITY IN 2015
ONE LEGISLATIVE SESSION AND 38 LAWS

INFORMATION INTERNATIONAL

POLLS THE LEBANESE ON CURRENT ISSUES

CONCERNED
ABOUT
SECURITY



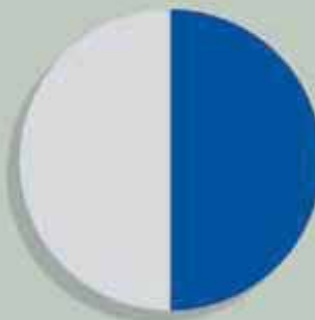
39%

ENCOURAGE
PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION FIRST



58%

SUPPORT THE
AMENDMENT OF
THE TAEF ACCORD



50%

WANT
MUNICIPAL
ELECTIONS



85%

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AL-SAYYAB IN MODERN POETRY

In a lecture published in the February issue of 1965 of *Les Conférences du Cénacle*, Adonis' wife and Syrian critic Khalida Said shared her views on the Iraqi poet Badr Shakir Al-Sayyab (1926-1964) and his phenomenal influence on the course of modern Arabic poetry. Below are some excerpts from her lecture:

“In the light of the word left behind by Badr Shakir Al-Sayyab, the word, which he wanted donned in a new attire, we are gathering here today. If we were to know that Al-Sayyab published in Lebanon, whether accidentally or deliberately, some of his finest poems, we will realize that our gathering under the Lebanese sky today takes a whole new meaning.

It is worth mentioning that the true novelty in Al-Sayyab's poetry is far from what is frequently circulated about his deviation from the conventional poetic form and his use of the trochee as a basis for the rhythm of the poem. Such a deviation does not constitute in and of itself a poetic value, even though it does have a historical significance that concerns critics of poetry and historians.

In his modernity, Al-Sayyab was not fixated on the outer form alone; he soon abandoned his ventures in this area and tapped into unprecedented spaces, creating a new world and emphasizing new purports, views and stances, foremost of which is his perception of poetry and the poet as he bears his new role. A new definition of the poet is needed in light of modern-day concepts, the concepts of revival and creativity. Al-Sayyab was thus considered a visionary poet inspiring values, sparking embers of rejection, identifying through his sensitivity with the problems of mankind and sketching in his inner self the features of the new realm. This is the reason he defined the poet in 1957 saying: “If I were to portray the modern poet, I would not have found anything closer to his image than the image engraved in my mind of Saint John whose eyes have been tormented with the prophetic vision of the seven sins engulfing the world like a giant octopus. Throughout the centuries, poets were nothing but models of Saint John.”

What drove Al-Sayyab to modernity? What is his new language and what are the values he represented in his poetry?

From a land riddled with ancient melancholy and deprivation, molded with poetry and history, and as an awareness of a nation and civilization rose, Al-Sayyab's



Badr Shakir Al-Sayyab

voice emerged. A spark of awakening brushed those spirits that had been burning under the ashes for centuries and began the liberation. We are experiencing the age of revolution in both form and substance. The land is fidgeting and everything above it is prone to turbulence, even the structures and principles of poetry. It so happens that the first to shake the old poetic meters and forms was a poet from Al-Basra, hometown of Al-Khalil Bin Ahmad (718-786), the forefather of these meters and forms. Yet, between the times of Al-Khalil and those of Al-Sayyab, a history of glory and innovations rolled on followed by another of woes and violation of human values. The spearheads of the Tatars brushed our faces downing us to the ground. We were later overtaken, at the peak of our slumber, by an era of liberation and modernity; the ground shook underneath our feet and, in our consciousness and the consciousness of poets more specifically, the world's stability swayed. Won't aesthetic views quiver as well? The poet stands between the remnants of the present and the mystery of the future; he ought to be a sign of life and survival in this calamitous age; from the bricks of the collapsing world, he ought to build a new land. Al-Sayyab will prove faithful to the role of the modern poet as he himself had envisaged and described. He will attempt to change the world, to reconstruct it anew, to bring it back to a certain order. He will search for the land of salvation, somewhere, someday. Thus he imagined his lost paradise in the mythical world, in the childhood of man, in innocence and spontaneity, going back to roots, to authenticity, to the early dispositions, to the first encounter between the man and the universe, effacing the vice of material civilization and subjugation and holding high the banner of the virgin soul. From this hazy mist, he will build his realm, for “there exists no poetry where no creativity exists.”

Yet, if poetry were indeed a dream rather than a reality as Heidegger also believed, how could our poet produce works between the reality that tormented his senses and the dream that bore poetry? For al-Sayyab, this production was not a strenuous task, for he was able to penetrate with his sensitivity all barriers and to permeate the farthest layers of the dream while embracing his reality...”

Dear readers,

The increasingly rapid pace of life and the ever-growing digital world have become a reality that is too evident to deny. In a bid to address the needs and challenges of our digital age, *The Monthly* is embarking on a bold new direction with a clear aim to reach out to the largest audience possible as well as to increase its digital presence. To that end, the print edition of the magazine, which has been in the market for over a decade now, will be delivered on a quarterly rather than a monthly basis as of early 2016, and more emphasis will be cast on the website (www.monthlymagazine.com) where new research topics will continue to be posted on a monthly basis and existing data and articles will be updated regularly.

The print edition's content will also undergo a change and will mostly focus on the opinion polls conducted by our research team and fieldworkers in addition to major topics of interest in both the public and the private sector. Other sections of the magazine such as "Lebanese Families", "Discover Lebanon" and "Myth or Fact" will still be available.

As change is the only constant in life, quite a few things will change in 2016, but the one thing that will remain unchanged is our firm commitment to delivering reliable news and information that you can count on.

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