



Sharon and My Mother-in-Law: Ramallah Diaries

Suad Amiry

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“Perhaps one day I may forgive you for putting us under curfew for forty-two days, but I will never forgive you for making us live with my mother-in-law for what seemed, then, more like forty-two years.”

Irreverent, darkly funny, unexpected, and very unlike any other writing on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, *Sharon and My Mother-in-Law* describes Palestinian architect Suad Amiry’s experience of living in the Occupied Territories.

Based on diaries and e-mail correspondence that Amiry kept to maintain her sanity from 1981 to 2004, the book evokes, through a series of vignettes, the frustrations, cabin fever, and downright misery of daily life in the West Bank town of Ramallah, with its curfews, roadblocks, house-to-house searches, and violence. Amiry writes about the enormous difficulty of moving from one place to another, the torture of falling in love with someone from another town, the absurdity of her dog receiving a Jerusalem identity card when thousands of Palestinians could not do so, and the impossibility of acquiring a gas mask from the Israeli Civil Administration during the first Gulf War in 1991. There are also the challenges of shopping during curfew breaks, the trials of having her ninety-two-year-old mother-in-law living in her house during a forty-two-day curfew, and thoughts on Israel’s Separation Wall.

With a wickedly sharp ear for dialogue and a keen eye for the most telling details, Amiry gives us an original, ironic, and firsthand glimpse into the absurdity—and agony—of life in the Occupied Territories.

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