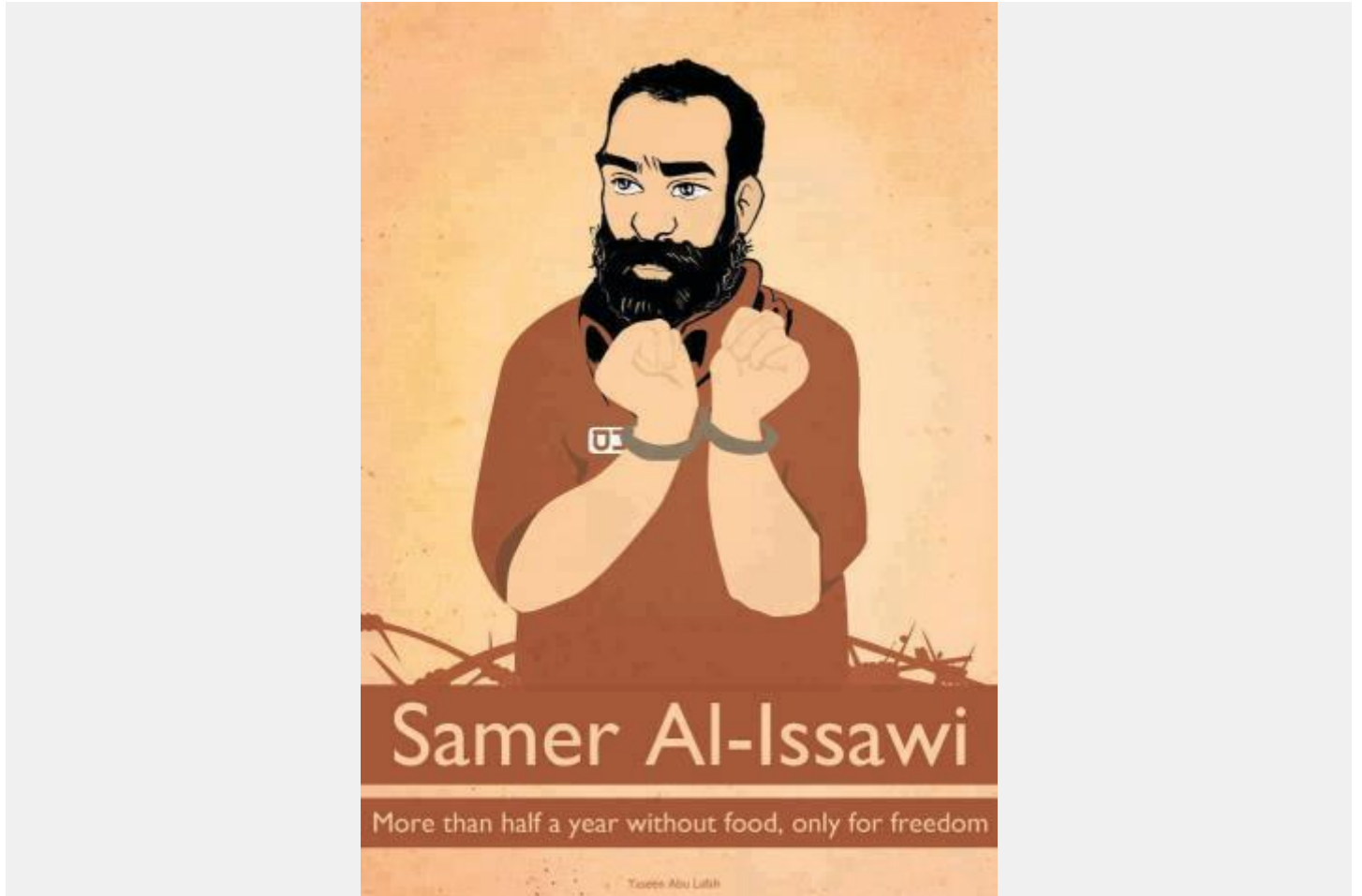


# Lettre d'un fantôme

12 avril 2013



A group of exceptional Israeli women started visiting Samer Issawi in Kaplan Hospital in Rehovot a few days ago. They are not being allowed into his room, but they open his door holding out flowers and call out words of encouragement until the guards drive them away.

Issawi has been on a hunger strike for the past eight months. His fate is stirring up the West Bank and boring Israel. He was released as part of the Gilad Shalit deal and returned to prison after the Israeli authorities claimed he broke his release terms.

In 2002 he was sentenced to 26 years in prison and now Israel wants to keep him in jail until his death, or the end of his prison term, whichever comes first.

On Tuesday Issawi wrote a letter to the Israelis. It is one of the most bloodcurdling documents I have ever read. From a sense of deep identification and shame, which is no less deep, I wish to use this stage to publish an abbreviated version of it.

« ... I've chosen to write to you : intellectuals, academics, writers, lawyers, journalists and activists in civilian Israeli society. I invite you to visit me in hospital and see me, a skeleton cuffed and bound to the bed. Three exhausted prison guards, who eat and drink beside my bed, surround me. The guards follow my suffering and weight loss. From time to time they glance at their watches and ask : How does this body still survive ? Israelis, I'm looking for an educated one among you who has passed the stage of the shadows and mirrors game. I want him to look at me as I lose my consciousness. Let him wipe the gunpowder from his pen, the shooting sounds from his mind, and see my face's features etched in his eyes. I will see him and he will see me. I will see how tense he is about the future and he will see me, a ghost clinging to his side and not leaving. »Perhaps you will be asked to write a romantic story about me. You will testify I was a creature of whom nothing remained but a skeleton, breathing and choking from hunger, losing consciousness now and then. And after your cold silence, my story will be an achievement to add to your resume. When your students will grow up they will believe the Palestinian died of hunger ... Then you can celebrate your cultural, moral supremacy with a death ritual.« »I am Samer al-Issawi, 'one of them Arabs' in your army's terms. That Jerusalemite you locked up for no good reason but that he decided to leave Jerusalem to the city's outskirts. I will be put on trial twice because the IDF and the Shin Bet security service rule your state and all the rest of society hides in a fortress ... to evade the explosion of my suspicious bones.

« I haven't heard a single one of you intervene or try to silence the voice of strengthening death, while you've all turned into grave diggers, military uniform wearers - the judge, the writer, the intellectual, the journalist, the merchant, the academic, the poet. And I cannot believe an entire society has become the wardens of my death and life, defenders of the settlers who persecute my dreams and trees. »Israelis, I'll die satisfied. I won't be driven off my land and homeland ... you won't enter my spirit that refuses to give in ... maybe now you'll understand that a sense of freedom is stronger than a sense of death. Don't listen to your generals and to the dusty myths. The defeated will not remain defeated and the victor will not remain victorious. History is not measured only in battles, massacres and prisons, but in stretching out a hand in peace, to yourselves and to the other.

« Israelis, I am Samer al-Issawi. Hear my voice, the voice of remaining time - mine and yours. Release yourselves from greedy power hunting. Don't forget those you have incarcerated in prison and camps, between the iron doors that imprison your consciousness. I'm not waiting for a prison guard to free me, I'm waiting for the one who frees you of my memory. »

This is the man Israel insists on keeping locked up and is leaving to die. Israel is indifferent and complacent, nobody opens his mouth, nobody protests but a handful of women, one of whom, Dafna Banai, passed this letter to me.

• Emplacement : [Vous êtes ici](#) : [Accueil](#) > [ARCHIVES](#) >

• Adresse de cet article : <https://plateforme-palestine.org/Lettre-d-un-fantome>