Efrat Galnoor

*The Road to Ein Harod* #5 / The Broken Time[[1]](#footnote-1)\*

I’ve got to know every mountain and every ridge and every tree and every lane and every man and every woman on the road to Ein Harod: because one who doesn’t know the road, which isn’t short but isn’t long either, won’t get there.

(Amos Kenan, *The Road to Ein Harod*, Am Oved, 1984, p. 81)

In September 2017, I began to walk from Tel Aviv to the Jezreel Valley, inspired by Amos Kenan’s book *The Road to Ein Harod.* The book portrays an apocalyptic story of an Israel that has undergone a military coup. Its Arab citizens have “disappeared,” many settlements have been destroyed, and the freedom of the remaining civilians is limited and confined. In this state of affairs, the protagonist makes an attempt to reach free Ein Harod.

On the road, Rafi, the protagonist of the book, encounters various characters through whom questions arise: Who is leading the way? What ideology is he guided by? How does he perceive and behave in the territory?

The journey to Ein Harod becomes increasingly extreme and hallucinary; yet throughout it’s anchored in the variegated landscapes of Israel. Thus the plot includes a dimension of profound contemplation of the country—its vegetation, its rocks, its settlements—evoking issues of ideology, history, politics, tradition, and customs.

The present journey takes place more than thirty years after the novel was first published. It, too, introduces us to diverse people and stories in which pain, trauma, and stubborn adherence to daily life are manifested. But above all, it elicits the incomprehensible complexity of the present where everything is tainted by history and conflicts.

Although the route of this journey is dictated by Kenan’s book, its content is rooted in the present—decentralized, fragmented, ever more complicated.

The content of the fifth stop in Umm el-Fahem is formed by the landscapes of Wadi Ara, and influenced by encounters with people from Kibbutz Metsar, Meiser village, the Mitzpe Ilan settlement, Barta’a, Umm Reihan, and, of course, Umm el-Fahem.

I am especially grateful to Dr. Ziad Mahamid, who acquainted me with Umm el-Fahem and its stories and, above all, became a true and active friend on my road to Ein Harod.

1. \* The title of the exhibition paraphrases that of Mahmoud Darwish’s book, *Words of the Broken Time,* Hebrew translation by Sasson Somekh (Keshev le-Shira, 2017). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)