DOYALI ISLAM

SUSIYA

in the south hebron hills the slanted hills
recall old songs, and the women collect
them like rain. the men have two-syllable
names—'azzam, yūsuf, khaled, nasser—each
name (from their fathers and their grandfathers
before) a dark foot binding them to the
land. they tend sheep and honour the resistance
a windpipe gives a blade. when the machine
arrives with its yellow claw, the clan sings
thalāthīn nijmah—a love song
for the hills. khaled's throat is a dry well.
if he could split his tongue in two, he would
stake half in the earth and tend a singing
tree, a slim upward band of green with fresh