Construction of identity in Suheir Hammad's *What I will*

Gibreel Sadeq Alaghbary[1,2]

[1] Department of English, Unaizah College of Sciences and Arts, Qassim University, Saudi Arabia

[2] Department of English Centre for Languages and Translation, Taiz University, Yemen

*Correspondence: E-mail: g.alaghbary@qu.edu.sa

Abstract

This paper offers insights into the conceptualization of identity in poetry. In particular, it seeks to examine the way the Palestinian-American female poet Suheir Hammad negotiates her textual identity in the poem *What I Will*. The study uses Mill's (1995) feminist stylistic theoretical framework in order to identify the identity Hammad constructs for herself in the poem, and the way this textually constructed identity plays out against her cultural heritage and ethnic origin. This objective is achieved by examining the way textual identity is carried by linguistic choices at the lexical, lexico-grammatical (phrase/sentence) and discourse levels. Analysis reveals a dichotomy constructed via personal pronouns between the speaker and her aggressor. This oppositional relationship is reinforced by the transitivity choices and triggers of presupposition. The speaker uses no gender-specific or sexist nouns and pronouns and no description of her appearance in the textual construction of her identity. Her identity is constructed in terms of attachment to her collective ethnic background, and resistance to, and detachment from, the oppression of her aggressor.

Keywords: Feminist stylistics, identity, Palestinian-American, poetry, Suheir Hammad

1. Introduction

Suheir Hammad was born in Amman in 1973, and she had lived in Beirut before she travelled to New York with her parents when she was five years old. As a child, Hammad grew up hearing stories about her homeland, Palestine, from her parents who told her about the hardships they encountered in Jordan, Lebanon and America after their displacement from Palestine. These experiences, along with life in New York, have shaped Hammad's awareness of her identity (Gallagher, 2010).

Investigating the construction of identity in Hammad's poetry requires a look back at the origins of the Palestinian collective identity crisis. In the aftermath of World War I, the Ottoman Empire was broken up into smaller territories that were assigned to the colonial powers that defeated the Ottomans. The Palestinians' homeland, which constitutes the preset-day state of Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories, was under British rule. In fulfillment of Britain's commitment to supporting the Zionist movement, British foreign secretary Arthur Belfour declared a mandate in 1917 that established in Palestine a national home for the Jewish people. The Belfour Declaration made no mention of Palestinians or Arabs but emphasized the need to protect the 'civil and religious rights of the non-Jewish communities'. At the time of the declaration, however, the Arab Muslims and Christians (or the 'non-Jewish communities') constituted a majority 89% of the population.

Sporadic violent scenes involving the Arabs and the Jews were quite common during the 1930s, with more Jews being transposed from Europe into the new homeland. The British authorities could not stop an Arab Revolt between 1936 and 1939. Late in 1939, World War II broke out and Britain joined the allied forces fighting Germany in a 6-year war that ended in 1945. After World War II, the demographic scene in Palestine was different. About one third of the population was Jews, most of whom were Jewish immigrants moving to settle in the new land. Communal violence continued and morphed into an open warfare in 1947.

In order to contain the conflict, the newly found United Nations proposed a partition plan, which was downright rejected by the large majority of Arabs who did not want to see their land partitioned. Waves of immigration over two decades could not ensure a significant part of the land with a solid Jewish majority. To achieve this target, the Jewish forces launched a military campaign in 1948 that resulted in the massacre of scores of Palestinians and the forced displacement of hundreds. Ethnic cleansing of Palestinian Arabs intensified, resulting in over 700,000 people fleeing

or being displaced, according to U.N. estimates. Houses were demolished, neighborhoods bulldozed, villages and towns renamed, and personal property confiscated. As a result, the Arab Palestinian character of a number of villages and towns disappeared, and Jewish inhabitants became a majority in many territories across the land.

In Arab Palestinian memory, this forced mass eviction of local inhabitants is called the Nakba – Arabic for catastrophe. This event marked the beginning of the Palestinian refugee crisis. According to U.N. reports, there are over 5 million Palestinian refugees living in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (n.d.) defines refugees, and their descendants, as people "whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict".

The legal status of Palestinian refugees differs in different host countries. According to Said (2003), Palestinian refugees living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip enjoy "the same legal rights as do the non-refugee Palestinian population" and are eligible for Jordanian passports and passports issued by the Palestinian Authority (p. 90). In either case, their travel is subject to approval by the Israeli government. Refugees in Jordan, on the other hand, "enjoy the benefits of full Jordanian citizenship, including the right to vote" (p. 90). Refugees who made their way to Jordan after 1967, however, "do not enjoy full citizenship in Jordan and cannot vote or hold jobs in the public sector ([original emphasis], p. 90). In Syria, refugees enjoy many of the rights as Syrian citizens but cannot vote in elections and are not eligible for Syrian citizenship. In Lebanon, Palestinian refugees are "classified as foreigners" and "may not work without a work permit" (p. 91). They cannot even own real property.

It is against this background that the Palestinian national collective identity is defined. Palestinian refugees, like Suheir Hammad, insist on their right to return to the areas where they, or their ancestors, were born. They identify themselves with the cultures of their places of origin, and, individually as well as collectively, revive those traditions in the different host countries. Israel, however, does not recognize the right of return. The population of Israel is about 8 million, including over a million Arabs. The return of Palestinian refugees is an existential threat to the Israeli state and identity.

The Palestinians refugees' resistance to the loss of land, and of identity by implication, takes on different forms. The present paper explores the way a female Palestinian refugee conceptualizes her identity in poetry. The poem to analyze *What I Will* (see Appendix 1) appears in Zaatar Diva, a collection of poems by Hammad published in 2005. The objective of the analysis is to relate the identity that is textually constructed in the poem to the speaker's ethnic identity, and explore the way linguistic choices inform the construction of textual identity.

2. Previous Studies

Suheir Hammad's poetry has been researched from the perspectives of feminist and ethnic identity. Brown (2010) argues that in the beginning of Suheir Hammad's career as a poet, her poems had a "sense of trying to find a connection with her heritage and also discovering her self identity", and that many of her poems had "a very political stance to them" (cited in Gallager, 2010, para. 14). In addition to the theme of self-discovery, Hammad's poetry concentrates on "sexism, violence and other challenges that women face" (Gallager, 2010, para. 15).

Fadda-Conrey (2007) offers an autobiographical examination of the works of Suheir Hammad, along with another Syrian female poet. The study examines the "discursive and autobiographical construction of an anti-essentialist Arabic American subjectivity rooted in the Arab American experience" (p. 155). Fadda-Conrey hypothesizes that although Hammad is living in the United States and identified as racially white, she speaks out from a "third world women's minority stance" (p. 156). Fadda-Conrey concludes that Hammad's poems foreground the "paradoxical and contradictory place that Arab American women, and by extension Arab American in general, are allotted within the United States", and that the poet, having experienced living in the United States, "discursively contests and undercuts the majority's preconceived notions of what constitutes Arabic American subjectivity, thus creating [her] own poetic versions of individual and collective Arab American identity" (p. 156).

Ball (2012) explores *What I Will* from a postcolonial feminist perspective. She states that the poem is "an expression of opposition to the U.S's many forms of imperialist intervention in the Middle East" (p. 150). Ball argues that Hammad engages in "playful linguistic dances around the motif of the 'war drum'", which is used metaphorically, along with other metaphors as 'drummed up war' in reference to the 'war on terror', 'invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan' (p. 151). According to Ball, Hammad's use of metaphors "displays an array of anti-imperialist sentiments" such as "standing in solidarity" and "identifying with the victimized populations of the Middle East" (p. 151). Ball, however, remarks that that there is "a strong feminist pacifism" in the poem (p. 151).

The exploration of ethnic identity is offered by Mohsen, Hashim and Asqalan (2016). The study focuses on the

analysis of "the representations of Hammad's double consciousness of Palestinianness and blackness and displaying the dual domination of women and nature embedded in the society of the homeland she left behind" (p. 33). Analysis of the collection of poems *Born Palestinian, Born Black* from the perspective of ecofeminism reveals that Hammad's "two-ness of being Palestinian and black which indicates the psycho-social tensions she experiences in the two social contexts- the homeland and the current society of exile" (p. 41). The study also concludes that Hammad views herself as an insider and an outsider, which suggests that "her identity fluctuates between the cultures and thus results in her double consciousness" and that her varied experiences have "transcended the limits of cultures and given birth to a new ecofeminist perspective that helps unify diversity" (p. 41).

The present study is an extension of the research interest in the exploration of identity in Hammad's poetry. It focuses on the linguistic construction of feminist identity in Hammad's poem *What I Will* using Mill's (1995) Feminist Stylistics as a theoretical and analytical framework, and relates the textually constructed identity to Hammad's ethnic Palestinian origin and collective identity.

3. Method

This section introduces the theory informing the analytical approach for the study. It also presents the study research questions.

3.1 Theoretical and Analytical Framework

Suheir Hammad has been described in the literature as an eminent and strong feminist poet (e.g., Leonce & Gallagher, 2010). The present study aims to explore the construction of (the feminist) identity in Hammad's poetry. For this reason, the theoretical and analytical framework used in the study is the feminist stylistics model set out in Mills (1995).

Feminist Stylistics aims at accounting for the way in which gender concerns are linguistically encoded in texts" (Montoro, 2014, p. 346) and at changing "the way that women and men think about the language that they use and the way that others represent women and men in language". In order to achieve this objective, feminist stylisticians set out to investigate "the role that language plays in creating, sustaining and/or perpetuating unequal gender relations and discrimination against women and gay, lesbian and transgendered people" (Mills & Mullany, 2011, cited in Montoro, 2014, p. 250)

The approach is rooted in the theoretical framework of Fowler and Kress' (1979) critical linguistics which views language as a means for representing, constructing and mediating ideology (Simpson, 1993). The job of a critical linguist is to uncover the underlying ideologies of texts, literary or nonliterary, with the assistance of the analytical tools proposed by Hallidayian functional linguistics including modality, transitivity, cohesion and coherence, presupposition, etc. (Halliday, 1985). Similarly, Mills' feminist stylistics views language as a carrier of ideology and its analytical tools (e.g. transitivity) are derived from Halliday. In Mills' view, the meanings of texts are the products of an interaction between the contexts of production and reception.

Mills' (1995) proposes three levels of analysis: lexical, lexico-grammatical, and discoursal. Analysing lexical features includes unraveling the sexist use of generic pronouns (e.g. using 'he' to refer to both *he* and *she*) and generic nouns (e.g. using 'man' as a prefix or suffix to refer to both genders), naming, the semantic derogation of women, address terms (e.g. taking a husband's name after marriage), gender-specific conventions (e.g. master vs. mistress), endearments, diminutives (e.g. bird, chick, doll, baby, sugar, honey, etc.) taboo, collocation and lexical gaps (i.e. only formal and offensive names for women's genitals). Although the concentration on words seems as if meaning resides within words, Mills argues that analysis on the lexical level is significant if the words analysed have a history in sex-biased usage, i.e. if they "lead the hearer to interpret them in particular ways". Otherwise, "words make sense only in relation to their context". One example, given by Mills, is of the word 'girl' which "is not sexist when it is used to describe females of under 16 years old, but it is sexist when used of females over that age" (p. 98).

Analysis of phrases/sentences includes interpretations of "ready-made phrases, that is, phrases which seem preconstructed and the patterns of background knowledge which give them meaning; jokes and humour; and transitivity choices" (Mills, 1995, p. 98). On the basis of Brown and Yule's (1983) approach to interpret meanings of phrases, Mills (1995) proposes that interpreting phrases and syntactic structures involves three processes. The first process involves working out authorial intention, the second using general knowledge about the world and about the situation to work out the intended meaning, and the third involves determining the inferences which need to be made. These processes are called implication, presupposition and inference, respectively. On a clausal level, Mills also draws attention to the significant use of Halliday's (1985) analytical tool of transitivity in uncovering the ideological slants of characters in texts. According to Mills, the study of transitivity is concerned with "how actions are

represented: what kind of actions appear in a text, who does them and to whom they are done" (p. 111). By analyzing transitivity patterns, we discern the author's world-view in terms of whether happenings are represented as material action processes, verbalization processes that involve using language but no action, mental processes which refer to "what happens within human beings" (Jeffries, 2010, p. 42), and relational processes which represent "the static or stable relationships between Carrier and Attributes, rather than any changes or dynamic actions" (Jeffries, 2010, p. 43). This makes it possible to "make more general statements about the way that characters view their position in the world and their relation to others" (Mills, 1995, p. 112).

At the discourse level, Mills takes into account the construction of characters in texts and media, the roles female characters play, and the description and fragmentation of the female body, i.e., how female characters are talked about via their anatomical elements. The larger scale that Mills works on is the analysis of the structure of a narrative in terms of point of view and focalization, and schemata. Representing women as having problems and in need of advice and the 'before and after' structure are another two common discursive frameworks that might be gendered and passed on as common sense knowledge.

3.2 Research Questions

The paper attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What identity does Hammad construct for herself in the text?

2. How do the linguistic features of the text sustain this construction?

3. How does the identity constructed play out against Hammad's cultural heritage and ethnic origin?

4. Analysis and Results

This section covers the analysis of choices at the lexical (words), lexico-grammatical (phrases and sentences) and discourse levels. Linguistic choices at each level will be examined for the way they help construct textual identity in the poem.

4.1. Lexical Level

In this section, I examine examples of sexist language such as gender-specific pronouns, generic nouns, address terms and negative description of females.

There is a high incidence of pronouns in this short poem. There are 48 pronouns (42 personal, 2 indefinite and 4 demonstrative pronouns), constituting 24% of the total word count in the poem. This deliberate lexical arrangement serves to highlight the theme of identity in the poem. It underscores a dichotomy between the first person *I, my* (mentioned 25 times) and the second person *you, your* (mentioned 13 times). In this oppositional frame, the speaker defines herself in terms of assuredness and opposition to the identity and actions of the other. It is worth noting that the speaker does not use any gender-specific or sexist pronouns in the textual construction of her identity.

Nominals sustain the construction of identity in terms of opposition to the addressee. Apart from the pronominal noun phrases, the poem contains 25 noun phrases out of which 23 are split between the speaker and the addressee. The speaker identifies herself with nouns that have positive, or neutral, semantic prosody *soul, bones, skin, beloved, own drum, name, rhythm, heartbeat, breath, chanting* and *humming*. The addressee, by contrast, is associated with nouns with negative semantic prosody *war drum, beating, drummed up war, dead, murder,* and *suicide*. The nouns the speaker identifies with belong to the semantic fields of the human body, love, dance and music, while the nouns the addressee is identifed with share the semantic fields of violence and war. This oppositional frame serves to align the speaker with life and the addressee with death. Again, the speaker uses no gender-specific or sexist nouns in the textual construction of her identity and instead extends the identification in terms of assurance and resistance.

4.2. Lexico-grammatical Level

In this section, I examine the way transitivity choices represent a view of the world and the roles of men and women in it, and the way phrases and syntactic structures presuppose and implicate ideological evaluation of this world-view and the participants in it.

The speaker's association with life in peace and her addressee with violence is carried on by presuppositions: existential and logical. The text is permeated with statements of rejection to existentially presupposed attempts to manipulate the speaker *I will not dance to your war drum, I will not lend my soul to your war drum, I will not lend my bones to your war drum, I will not dance to your beating, I will not hate for you*, etc. The speaker's decision to *craft my own drum* also presupposes previous manipulation. But the speaker will not tolerate this; she *will dance and resist and dance and persist* in an attempt to assert her love for life in peace and rejection to intimidation and

violence.

Logical presupposition reinforces the dichotomy. The factive verb *know* in *I know intimately that skin you are hitting* asserts intimacy by the speaker with fellow citizens and presupposes violence on the part of the addressee, and the factive verb *forget* in *I will not forget where I come from* logically presupposes attempts to dislocate the speaker from her homeland. Other logical presuppositions are triggered by the comparative adjective *louder* in the last two sentences of the poem *this heartbeat is louder than death* and *your war drum ain't louder than this breath*. In the first sentence, the loudness of the speaker's heartbeat, which is an expression of resistance, is logically presupposed, and serves to intensify the life vs. death arguments. In the second sentence, the sound of the speaker's breath is loud enough to subdue the addressee's war drums.

Analysis of transitivity patterns bears out the construction of identity in terms of life and resistance. The poem is constituted mainly in terms of action. Of the forty transitivity processes that make up the poem, thirty are material action intentional processes. Table 1 below provides a description of the transitivity processes in the poem.

Table 1. A description of the transitivity processes

No	Verbal Element	Transitivity Patterns	Semantic Roles
1	I will not dance to your war drum	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated
2	I will not lend my soul	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated
3	I will not lend my bones	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated
4	I will not dance to your beating	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated
5	I know that beat	Mental Process	Sensor (female speaker)
6	It is lifeless	Relational Process	Carrier (beat)
7	I know ... that skin	Mental Process	Sensor (female speaker)
8	You're hitting that skin	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (you) affected Female Body Part
9	It was once alive	Relational Process	Carrier (skin)
10	It was hunted	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (you) affected Female Body Part
11	It was stolen	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (you) affected Female Body Part
12	It was stretched	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (you) affected Female Body Part
13	I will not dance to your drummed up war	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated
14	I will not pop	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated
15	I will not spin peak for you	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated
16	I will not hate for you	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated
17	I will not hate you	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated
18	I will not kill for you	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated
19	I will not die for you	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated

20	I will not mourn the dead	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated
21	I will not side with you	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated
22	I will not dance to bombs	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated
23	Everyone else is dancing	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (everyone else)
24	Everyone can be wrong	Relational Process	Carrier (everyone else)
25	Life is a right not collateral or casual	Relational Process	Carrier (life)
26	I will not forget	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated
27	I came from	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker)
28	I will craft my own drum	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker)
29	I will gather my beloved near	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker)
30	Our chanting will be dancing	Relational Process	Carrier (chanting)
31	Our humming will be drumming	Relational Process	Carrier (humming)
32	I will not be played	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (Unknown) Negated
33	I will not lend my name/rhythm to your beat	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker) Negated
34	I will dance	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker)
35	I will resist	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker)
36	I will dance	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker)
37	I will persist	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker)
38	I will dance	Material Process (Intention)	Agent (female speaker)
39	This heartbeat is louder than death	Relational Process	Carrier (this heartbeat)
40	Your war drum ain't louder than this breath	Relational Process	Carrier (your war drum)

As shown in the table, the addressee is constucted as an agressor. S/he appears in eight material action processes where s/he is the agent that affects the speaker's body parts *that skin you are hitting, [that skin] was hunted, [that skin] was stolen, [that skin] was stretched.* The female speaker, by contrast, figures as agent of action but her actions neither target anyone nor cause any harm. She appears in eight material action processes *I will craft my own drum, I will gather my beloved, I will dance, I will resist, I will* dance*, I will persist, I will dance,where I came from.* In these processes, the speaker is constructed as gathering her beloved and dancing. The speaker also appears in sixteen other material action processes where the action is negated *I will not dance to your war drum, I will not lend my soul, I will not lend my bones, I will not dance to your beating, I will not hate for you, I will not hate you, I will not kill for you*, etc. The speaker is resisting. She is definant to violent behavior, refuses to compromise her rights and declines to aligh with acts of hatred and killing. Instead, she defines herself in opposition to aggression and violence. The fact that the female speaker appears in a total of 24 material action processes constructs her as "actively in control of the environment, making decisions and taking actions" (Mills, 1995, p. 112).

4.3. Discourse Level

In this section, I analyze the discoursal construction of women in the poem by examining whether the female character is described in terms of her personality traits or in terms of the fragmentation of her body parts.

There is only one voice in the poem. It is the female voice. The female speaker is described in terms of her action, defiance and resistance. She is not described in terms of her appearance. The female body is not fragmented. The body parts of the speaker that are mentioned in the poem are *soul, bones, heartbeat* and *breath*. These parts are not described in sensual terms but serve instead to denote a personality type. The speaker will not lend her soul or bones to war drums, and her heartbeat and breath are louder than the war drums of her aggressor. There is no evaluation of the body parts and they are used to underscore the mood of resistance.

The female speaker's self-assuredness is further carried by modality. The modal *will* appears in two forms: negative and positive. It is repeated thirteen times in the negative and four times in the positive form. When negated, the modal indicates that the actions that are *not* to be taken are attributed to the will and determination of the speaker who *will not dance to your war drum, will not lend my soul to your war, will not kill for you, will not lend my name,* and *will not side with you.* When affirmed, it shows the degree of volitional commitment the speaker has towards the actions she chooses to take. The speaker promises to *craft* her *own drum*, to *dance and resist and dance and persist and dance,* and to collectively chant, dance, hum and drum with others. These modal structures do not only demonstrate the speaker's confident and assertive attitude towards the truth of the propositions presented, they also indicate her knowledge. This knowledge also manifests in the use of the verb a sentiendi *know* twice *I know that beat* and *I know that skin you are hitting.* And evaluative adjectives such as *louder* (twice) are also employed to underscore the speaker's positive evaluation of herself *this heartbeat is louder than death* and degradation of her aggressor in *your war drum ain't louder than this breath* and in *it is lifeless.*

5. Conclusions

The objective of this study has been to examine the way the Palestinian-American female poet Suheir Hammad negotiates her textual identity in the poem *What I Will*. Analysis has revealed that the poet does not define herself in feminist terms but instead constructs a textual identity that is defined in terms of resistance and in relation to her ethnic roots.

Analysis at the lexical level reveals a high incidence of first person and second person pronouns, creating an oppositional relationship between the speaker and her aggressor. This dichotomy is reinforced by the analysis of the noun phrases, which are split in half between the speaker and her aggressor. The speaker identifies herself with nouns that have positive prosody, and her aggressor with war and death.

The speaker's assertion of her identity in defiance to her aggressor is sustained by the analysis at the lexico-grammatical level. The poem starts with a series of eighteen negated material action processes whose agent is the speaker. The constructed textual identity takes the form of resistance, which gradually moves towards assertion at the end of the poem, where the speaker figures in eight material action processes in which she asserts her love for life in peace. Analysis of the other processes bears out the textual construction of the speaker's identity. The two mental processes *I know that beat* and *I know that skin you are hitting* affirm the speaker's self-assured attitude towards herself and her aggressor. The other eight relational processes serve to champion the speaker's way of life *Our chanting will be dancing, Our humming will be drumming* and to enhance the mood of defiance and resistance *This heartbeat is louder than death, Your war drum ain't louder than this breath.*

At the discourse level, the speaker does not describe herself in terms of her body parts but instead in terms of her personality traits. She emphasizes her resistance to manipulation, knowledge of her cultural heritage, attachment to her land, and her own way of life in opposition to that of her aggressor. The female speaker, in conclusion, identifies herself in terms of peacefulness and in opposition to violence, and in terms of attachment to her ethnic origin and detachment from the oppressive practices that dislocated her in the first place.

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Appendix A.

What I will

I will not

dance to your war

drum. I will

not lend my soul nor

my bones to your war

drum. I will

not dance to your

beating. I know that beat.

It is lifeless. I know

intimately that skin

you are hitting. It

was alive once

hunted stolen

stretched. I will

not dance to your drummed

up war. I will not pop

spin beak for you. I

will not hate for you or

even hate you. I will

not kill for you. Especially

I will not die

for you. I will not mourn

the dead with murder nor

suicide. I will not side

with you nor dance to bombs

because everyone else is

dancing. Everyone can be

wrong. Life is a right not

collateral or casual. I

will not forget where

I come from. I

will craft my own drum. Gather my beloved

near and our chanting

will be dancing. Our

humming will be drumming. I

will not be played. I

will not lend my name

nor my rhythm to your

beat. I will dance

and resist and dance and

persist and dance. This heartbeat is louder than

death. Your war drum ain't

louder than this breath.