

# THE Markaz Review

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Welcome to TMR, Newsletter 13 • December 15, 2020

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## Hello Subscriber First Name!

Just last Friday the [New York Times](#) published a damning report that showed that **95% of the literature published in the United States since 1950 has been by white writers**: “Of the 7,124 books for which we identified the author’s race,” the authors wrote, “95 percent were written by white people.” In addition, the last time I checked only about 3% of the literature published in the US consists of translations. To compare, as of 2019 one of six books published in France were translations—roughly 15%.

In TMR’s fourth monthly issue, [Homage to Small and Independent Presses](#), every writer or artist is of Arab or Iranian heritage, and much of the writing has been translated from Arabic, Persian or French. **We thank the small and independent publishers** who agreed to participate in this issue, including Archipelago, Comma Press, Cornell University Press, Interlink, New Directions and the Prince Claus Fund/Garnet Publications, Tin House and Upset Press. The editors and publishers of these nonprofit presses are the risk-takers, the pioneers, the believers who seek literary and artistic talent beyond the pale.

And so the purpose and value of The Markaz Review becomes evident: rather than being akin to the missionaries of yore who brought the Gospel to the world's perceived backwaters, TMR brings the rest of the world to America's shores—or at least the Arab/Muslim world, which includes parts of Africa and Asia. We should all get to know each other!

Thanks for reading, sharing and [supporting TMR](#).

—Jordan Elgrably, editor.

[See the TMR N.4 Table of Contents here.](#)



[The Unbearable Affront of Colorism](#) by Banah Al Ghadbanah

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## WITH \$8 A MONTH, YOU CAN SUSTAIN THE MARKAZ REVIEW

*Wait a minute! What the heck can you get for just \$8 a month?*

A fancy Starbucks coffee? A falafel sandwich? Two bags of marbles?

We are in the running for major grants from **three prominent foundations** for 2021 funding—if I don't mention their names right now, it's because I don't want to jinx it!

In the meantime, our wonderful readers—**YOU I hope!**—can sustain The Markaz Review by simply making a [monthly contribution](#), starting at just \$8, the cost of a fancy coffee at Starbucks topped with whipped cream and sprinkles!!

*Your regular monthly donation will work wonders for us, believe it or not.* [Go here](#), it's easy, simple and fun to fill out the form and support TMR. You decide how much you want to contribute, the whole experience is absolutely DIY and user-friendly.

**[Here's what your monthly contribution will make possible:](#)**

- A monthly theme issue, for instance "Beirut," "Racism & Identity" or "Water" (our special literary/environment issue due out Jan 15)!
- Unexpected weekly columns in TMR Weekly, published Mondays!
- A monthly food and life column by Bethlehem's iconoclastic chef, Fadi Kattan!
- A monthly column on trailblazing SWANA women!
- We pay writers and artists so you're participating in a creative economy!

**[WE LOVE monthly contributors!](#)** We also love folks who include us in their estate planning or make a friendly year-end contribution. In any case, we appreciate you. We care about what you think. Never hesitate to send me your innermost thoughts about what we're doing, what we may be missing, what we could do better—and your heartfelt compliments are also welcome here!

To support us with a check, kindly write TMR in the memo line of your check and send your tax-deductible contribution payable to our fiscal sponsor, MPV, and mail to: MPV, 1626 Wilcox, Suite 702, Los Angeles CA 90028-6206.

Merci/masalama

Jordan

p.s. check out this new film column by Ammiel Alcalay:

## **[Threading the Needle: Najwa Najjar's "Between Heaven and Earth"](#)**

Ammiel Alcalay reviews writer/director Najwa Najjar's third feature film—"part road movie, part mystery, part thriller."

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# MOTHER OF ALL PIGS

*A Novel*

Malu  
Halasa



## TMR BookGroup is reading:

Most recently the BookGroup, open to all, read and discussed Ayad Akhtar's *Homeland Elegies*. For this month's conversation, readers have selected [Malu Halasa](#)'s novel *Mother of All Pigs* and will discuss it this Sunday, Dec. 20th. **Please note that the author is scheduled to join us.**

[Go here](#) or to join the group, send an email to [books@themarkaz.org](mailto:books@themarkaz.org).

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### TMR 5 Call for Submissions

**The theme for our Jan 2021 issue** (deadline 12/25 but query first) is WATER—water is our worldwide shared resource...Yet with climate change comes drought & rising sea levels. We at @TheMarkazReview seek queries for 'water' stories—literary, creative, environmental pieces, for our Jan. issue. Query the [editor@themarkaz.org](mailto:editor@themarkaz.org).

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