

## *Saadi Youssef*

### THE ROAD

Since the first bird,  
since dawn,  
I have walked the Oujda walls  
and my eyes are a woman's hand.

How many cities invite me to leave them  
and houses to be thrown out of them  
and faces to disavow me?  
I will remain a hostage.  
Do not stand in front of me  
do not stand . . .  
And do not describe the roads to the blind one  
or the spring,  
or the door of the tavern.

Do not describe . . .  
Line up in two rows for him when he passes by you,  
distanced from you  
befriended by a woman's wrist  
rising in a horizon not drawn by walls.

Damascus, 9/12/1992

*translated by Khaled Mattawa*