

Tawfiq Ziad

Tawfiq Ziad (1929–1994) was a Palestinian poet, writer, and political leader whose entire life was shaped by resistance to colonial oppression. Born in Nazareth under British rule and living through the Nakba of 1948, Ziad became a central cultural and political figure opposing the dispossession and marginalization of Palestinians inside the new Israeli state.

As a poet, he used simple, direct language to express the daily struggles of Palestinians living under military rule, land confiscation, and systemic discrimination. His poetry—especially the famous line “Here we shall remain”—became a rallying cry of steadfastness (*sumud*), celebrating survival, dignity, and collective resistance.

Politically, Ziad served for many years as the communist mayor of Nazareth, championing workers’ rights, cultural identity, and community self-determination. He played a leading role in organizing the 1976 Land Day protests, a seminal moment in Palestinian anti-colonial resistance within Israel, during which six Palestinians were killed by Israeli forces while protesting land seizures.

Throughout his life, Ziad viewed culture as inseparable from liberation. His art and politics were unified in the belief that Palestinians had not only the right to exist on their land, but the right to resist colonial domination through both political action and cultural affirmation.

He died in 1994 in a car accident while returning from welcoming Yasser Arafat to Jericho, symbolically linking his life’s work to the broader Palestinian national movement.
