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Toward Memory

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Toward Memory
Sara Abou Rashed

On his way out, the last colonial soldier exchanged his uniform
for a ballroom suit, handed the keys to a new warden,
who declared the dishonorable discharge noble,
the failed reign a historical win, a holy
independence in the land void
of people for the people
home at last.

In exile,
my living room
is mine because I paid for it,
stacked handmade tiles of our olive trees
as if a wall from where I stand to my Grandmother's
birthplace—a wall visible yet permeable, here and not here—
bars of a cell I inherited, rusty, and toward memory, repainted myself.