

Etel Adnan Poetess and Painter

«This is what I call tribal behaviour», she adds. «Identification with the group begins as a feeling of solidarity, but when they (the individuals of a group) are at war, the only solution is total eradication of the enemy, his wife and children.

«This is the most dangerous aspect in the Middle East», she declares.

«In the Lebanese civil war, the kidnappings conducted by both sides were unforgivable», she says. The victims of these abductions are used «as pawns, as objects, as small change. My opinion is that even if your cause is just, there are certain things that human nature should not do. You must stop somewhere».

«I think my book is about the moral and physical death of a city», she concludes. «It will take a long

time to feel innocent in Beirut».

The Lebanese poet and painter Etel Adnan was born in Beirut 59 years ago to a Muslim father and a Christian mother. She was educated at French schools in Beirut, then at the Sorbonne in Paris and at Berkeley and Harvard in the U.S.A. From 1958 to 1978 she taught philosophy at Dominican College in California. She currently lives between California and Paris, painting and writing poetry and prose in French and English. She has published six volumes of poetry and a novel, **Sitt Marie Rose**^(*), which tells the story of a Christian Lebanese woman who was the principal of a school for retarded women and supported the Palestinian cause.

In an interview with the MIDDLE EAST Magazine published in London (September 1983), Adnan says: «This is not a book which says who is right and who is wrong in that war - though I have my own opinion on that. I was trying to show how some cultural values which have their good side in time of peace can, in time of war, lead to genocide».

(*) **Sitt Marie Rose**, Post-Appolo Press, Sausalito, California (1982).