

Literatures and Cultures of the Islamic World

Edited by Hamid Dabashi

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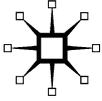
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FEMINISM AND AVANT-GARDE AESTHETICS IN THE LEVANTINE NOVEL

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Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 2016 978-1-137-54870-2

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First published 2016 by
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Palgrave Macmillan in the US is a division of Nature America, Inc., One New York Plaza, Suite 4500, New York, NY 10004-1562.

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ISBN: 978-1-349-71489-6
E-PDF ISBN: 978-1-137-54591-6
DOI: 10.1057/9781137545916

Distribution in the UK, Europe and the rest of the world is by Palgrave Macmillan®, a division of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Hanna, Kifah, 1977– author.

Title: Feminism and avant-garde aesthetics in the Levantine novel / Kifah Hanna.

Description: New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. | Series: Literatures and cultures of the Islamic world | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2015034903 |

Subjects: LCSH: Arabic literature—Women authors—History and criticism. | Women authors, Arab—Arab countries—History. | Feminist fiction, Arabic—History and criticism. | Middle Eastern fiction—History and criticism. | Avant-garde (Aesthetics)—Middle East. | Feminism in literature. | Existentialism in literature. | Surrealism in literature. | Sammān, Ghādah—Criticism and interpretation. | Khalifah, Saḥar—Criticism and interpretation. | Barakāt, Hudā—Criticism and interpretation. | BISAC: LITERARY CRITICISM / General. | LITERARY CRITICISM / Feminist. | LITERARY CRITICISM / Middle Eastern. | LITERARY CRITICISM / Women Authors.

Classification: LCC PJ7525.2 .H365 2016 | DDC 892.7/099287—dc23 LC record available at <http://lcn.loc.gov/2015034903>

A catalogue record for the book is available from the British Library.

For my parents with much love, respect, and gratitude

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Note from the Series Editor

The Islamic world is home to a vast body of literary production in multiple languages over the last 1,400 years. To be sure, long before the advent of Islam, multiple sites of significant literary and cultural productions existed from India to Iran to the Fertile Crescent to North Africa. After the advent of Islam in the mid-seventh century CE, Arabic, Persian, Urdu, and Turkish authors in particular produced some of the most glorious manifestations of world literature. From prose to poetry, modern to medieval, elitist to popular, oral to literary, this body of literature is in much need of a wide range of renewed scholarly investigation and lucid presentation.

The purpose of this series is to take advantage of the most recent advances in literary studies, textual hermeneutics, critical theory, feminism, postcolonialism, and comparative literature to bring the spectrum of literatures and cultures of the Islamic world to a wider audience and appreciation. Usually the study of these literatures and cultures is divided between classical and modern periods. A central objective of this series is to cross over this artificial and inapplicable bifurcation and abandon the anxiety of periodization altogether. Much of what we understand today from this rich body of literary and cultural production is still under the influence of old-fashioned orientalism or post-World War II area studies perspectives. Our hope is to bring together a body of scholarship that connects the vast arena of literary and cultural production in the Islamic world without the prejudices of outmoded perspectives. Toward this end, we are committed to pathbreaking strategies of reading that collectively renew our awareness of the literary cosmopolitanism and cultural criticism in which these works of creative imagination were conceived in the first place.

HAMID DABASHI

Acknowledgments

The foundation for this book was laid during my postgraduate studies at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. My enriching exchanges with Yasir Suleiman, Laleh Khalili, and John Chalcraft, among other faculty at the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, were paramount in veering me toward Levantine literature. I am eternally indebted to Sarah Dunnigan of the English Department at Edinburgh University for ushering me into feminist studies during my MSc degree. Her Feminist Literary Theory course in Spring 2003 was a significant and lasting introduction to the field. Sarah's constancy, her invaluable advice and graceful patience supported me through the writing process of my PhD thesis and inspired me to expand my horizons thereafter.

During my years at the University of Edinburgh I had the pleasure of working, even briefly, under the supervision of Elisabeth Kendall whose encouragement and inspiration were largely responsible for igniting my research on this topic. I was also privileged to work with Kamran Rastegar whose constructive editing and valuable guidance continued beyond my PhD years. His comments and advice on early drafts of this book were essential to the final finish.

I would like to express my special gratitude to Zayde Antrim of Trinity College whose precious support, untiring mentorship, and priceless friendship guided me through the darkest of moments, both in my career and personal life. I am indebted to her. Zayde's comments on various drafts of this book and her advice on several points during the research, writing, as well as the production process were pivotal to the completion of this book. Her influence is reflected not only in the title but also in many sentences contained within the script.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Vijay Prashad and Anne Lambright of Trinity College, not only for reading and commenting on portions of the manuscript but also for their instrumental friendship and mentorship over the years.

This book may not have been made manifest had I not had the precious opportunity of a Junior Faculty Leave at Trinity College in the academic year of 2012–2013. I am thankful to the Dean of Faculty at the time, Rena Fraden, for her encouragement and accommodation. I am also thankful to my colleagues at the Department of Language and Culture Studies for their support. I am especially grateful to Carol Any for her continuous encouragement, support, and mentorship.

I wish to acknowledge my deepest and most sincere gratitude to Karim Mattar of the University of Colorado Boulder for his tireless support, especially during the final phase of writing the manuscript. I will be forever thankful for his extensive efforts in polishing the final draft of the manuscript and for his insight, commentary, and advice during various stages of the writing process.

Although the path of this book began during my postgraduate studies, the trajectory of my thinking and writing has evolved and matured over the years. The final form is in a significant part, inspired by stimulating exchanges with numerous colleagues at several professional meetings. I am greatly appreciative to Hamid Dabashi for his priceless support and precious advice. I am thankful to Marilyn Booth, Ken Seigneurie, and Richard Serrano for their earnest feedback at the 1st Honeyman Conference in September 2012. Likewise, Tarek El-Ariss offered helpful insights at various Middle East Studies Association (MESA) meetings, in addition to his commentary on a portion of the manuscript draft. I remain deeply grateful to the inspiration that is Huda Barakat, whose effervescent kindness and creativity have been an endless source of effectual enthusiasm since I met her in March 2005 at The European Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (EACLALS) conference in Malta.

The journey of research and writing would have been intolerable had it not been for the immense love and support of my friends in Syria, the United Kingdom, and various parts of Europe, Australia, and the United States; you, who are too many to name, I am thankful for your love and encouragement. As I penned the words in New York City, the sincere and genuine friendship of Dina Hanna and Raniya Kassem brightened my days with laughter and sisterhood. I am deeply grateful for the friendship of Barbara Karger and Michael Preston; thank you for offering me a home away from home. Your warmth and generosity of spirit have brightened so many of my days. My deepest gratitude goes to George Youseph; words fail to express my appreciation for your invaluable friendship and sincere encouragement throughout the years.

I started writing this book at the height of the crisis in my beloved homeland, Syria. The theme of war has, all of a sudden, hit home with every word and every notion. At the break of each dawn, images of destruction and devastation haunted me, making each step forward in the writing process an excruciating task. It is the infinite and unwavering love of my family—who as of this moment still reside in Syria—that comforts my aching spirit and repeatedly teaches me the beauty of perseverance and dignified survival. My sister Reem and my brothers, Thaer and Bassel, have been springs of endless love, sincere compassion, and continuous encouragement. Their light-hearted humor carried me through the hardest stages of this work and the most nostalgic moments of my days away from home.

To Laila Ibrahim and Aziz Hanna, my beloved parents, who planted in us the appreciation of and passion for the written word, the harmonious tune, beauty in all its shapes and forms, and most importantly the audacity and graciousness in pursuing our passions. It is my aspiration that this work will serve as a tribute to you—for the inspiration I gained from you; for your affectionate embracing of my intellectual and literary curiosity; your everlasting support of my endless desire for freedom and independence; your belief in me through the most obscure moments in my career and personal life; and most importantly for the warmth of your unconditional love and tender embrace. For this and so much more, I am grateful and honored far beyond expression.

Note on Transliteration

Transliteration of Arabic in this book has been carried out in accordance with the guidelines of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES). The letter ‘ayn is transliterated as [‘] and the *hamza* is transliterated as [’].