

THE LOVE OF A WOMAN AND A NATION:

DESIRE, PROGRESS, AND REFORM IN SALĪM AL-BUSTĀNĪ'S *AL-HUYĀM FĪ JINĀN AL-SHĀM*

Stephen Sheehi¹

University of Utah

Through the effects of speech, the subject always realizes himself more in the other, but he is already pursuing there more than half of himself. He will simply find his desire ever more divided, pulverized, in the circumscribable metonymy of speech.

--Jacques Lacan, *Four Fundamentals of Psychoanalysis* (188)

127

INTRODUCTION

At the age of twenty-two, Salīm al-Bustānī (1848-84) serialized *al-Huyām fī Jinān al-Shām* (*Passion in the Damascene Gardens*) in his ground-breaking scientific-political-literary journal, *al-Jinān* (*The Gardens*).² This story could arguably be called the first attempt at a novel written in Arabic. The son of the renowned intellectual and encyclopedist Butrus al-Bustānī, Salīm was a prolific thinker. He was taught by legendary native literati and reformers such as Nasīf al-Yazījī (1800-71) and al-Shaykh Yūsuf al-Asīr (1815-90) at his father's "al-madrasah al-wataniyah" (National School), the first secular school in the Arab world. At fourteen, Salīm had become dragoman to the American consul in Beirut and, shortly afterwards, started to teach English and French at al-madrasah al-wataniyah. He wrote during his short life eight romances and historical novels, experimented with short stories, plays (which are now lost), and translated several, mostly pulp, French and English novels. In addition to his literary output, he penned innumerable articles on the current affairs of the Ottoman Empire and Europe, new discoveries, and biographies. As editor of *al-Jinān*, he opened every fortnightly issue with an editorial, entitled "*al-Iṣlāh*" (*Reform*), which touched on every imaginable aspect of social, cultural, political, and economic reform.³

Salim al-Bustānī's biography demonstrates not only a tireless littérateur and deep thinker but also the quintessence of *al-nahdah al-'arabiyyah* or the nineteenth century Arab renaissance. During this era, a new class of Arab intellectuals, literati, and reformers appeared, determined to re-think local and regional Arab identities and designate a place for their communities within a larger, even universal, historical and cultural context. These intellectuals originated from various religious, economic, and ideological backgrounds. However, they generally agreed that native Arab culture and society—both parochially and regionally—were in a state of *inhitāt* (decay). While they did not know each other, the renowned Egyptian al-Shaykh Rifā'a Rafī al-Tahtāwī (1801-73),⁴ the Tunisian reformer Khayr al-dīn al-Tūnīsī (d. 1890),⁵ and Salim's father Butrus (1819-82)⁶ had similarly concluded that the reason for the social and cultural stagnation (*jumūd*) in Egypt, Tunisia, and Syria, respectively, was that the Arabs had lost the "will" (*irādah*) and "desire" (*raghbah*) to acquire and master rational knowledge (*al-'ulūm wal-ma'ārif*). Therefore, they all agreed on a fundamental formula for social, cultural, and political renewal. If the Arabs could re-awaken their passion for knowledge and building schools, printing presses, and libraries to foster cultural mastery, then they would reproduce their "love of the nation" (*hubb al-watan*). This national love would create communal "affection and unity" (*ul-fah wa ittihād*) and usher in a new era of national "progress and civilization" (*tagaddum wa tamaddun*) (more about this in Sheehi 1997). Furthermore, they concurred that the method for the reform was to selectively borrow intellectual, cultural, and technical innovations from the West, while simultaneously resurrecting rationalist methodologies and democratic principles proper to the Arab-Islamic tradition. The basic paradigms of Butrus al-Bustānī, al-Tahtawī, and al-Tūnīsī were adopted by later twentieth century reformers and nationalists, among them Muhammad 'Abduh, Farah Antūn, Shakib Arslān, Muhammad Kurd 'Ali, and Tāhā Husayn.

Inherent in this formula, however, is a tension between the need to maintain Arab cultural authenticity and the necessity to assimilate Western positivist knowledge and social principles. The genesis of new narratives, genres, and styles in Arabic literature was a product of this tension. As the first Arabic romance, Salim's *al-Huyām* presents a narrative that struggles with the aforementioned reform paradigm.

Literarily, while not his best novel, *al-Huyām* laid down many of the stock leitmotifs, character topoi, and a narrative structure common to subsequent Arabic romances and historical novels. For example, Nu'mām al-Qasatli (1854-1920) lifts characters and plot structure right out of Salim's novels and short stories. Later, Jurji Zaydān (1861-1914) published twenty-four historical novels and romances in his immensely popular journal *al-Hilāl*. While far more sophisticated and refined than Salim's literary opus, these novels deploy similar motifs, character sketches, and techniques, such as the denouement relying on concealment and disclosure of information, besieged valorous protagonists, and the reunion of a fractured family or lovers. Even alternative genres of prose fiction seemed to express the same concerns and techniques that Salim experimented with throughout his eight novels. For

example, the plots of the two quasi-maqāmah⁷ stories, 'Ali Mubārak's (1823-93) *Alam al-dīn*⁸ and Muhammad al-Muwaylihi's widely read *Hadīth 'Isā bin Hishām*,⁹ revolve around national tours, relating debates on the ability of Egyptians to "progress" and the value of Western customs and technologies in native life. It would be inaccurate to credit Salim's novels, particularly *al-Huyām*, with too much. Indeed, the experimentation with the maqāmah was popular in the 18th century and flourished by the fin de siècle, and the romance narrative was virtually jettisoned after 1910 with the emergence of Arabic romanticism. However, the leitmotifs, language, characters, and plot were indicative of the political, cultural, and intellectual struggles of Arab renaissance.

THE STRUGGLES OF A NATIVE SON

Al-Huyām fi Jinān al-Shām narrates the story of a progressive and educated native son, Suleimān Khalīl, who has returned from a long sojourn in Europe and has decided to tour Greater Syria. The tour allows Suleimān to insert lyrical passages about the beauty of Lebanon and to assess the cultural and social state of rural and urban Syria in general. On his way, the hero is charmed by a Damascene girl, Wardah, and the remainder of the story is a search for union with her. During his tour, Suleimān befriends a group of French tourists in Damascus, who commit themselves to visit the ruins of Palmyra, despite warnings about the treacherous road. The group is ambushed en route by an infamous Bedouin tribe, who demands a ransom for their lives. Suleimān and his companions debate whether to fight or pay the ransom. Junly, one of the two European women of the party, passionately refuses to succumb to extortion, saying "precious death is preferable to living under oppression and in slavery" (254).¹⁰ However, Monsieur Bellerose, the patriarch of the group, is reticent to engage the Bedouin in battle because he distrusts the group's Arab entourage. He states that:

Our guide and his men will leave us when things get dangerous because the manners of Eastern peoples (*shu 'ūb al-sharq*) are unpredictable and cowardly. They fear disasters, calamities, and hardships. This is because they have a natural disposition for apathy and laziness, and are used to oppression and slavery (*dhull wa 'ubūdiyyah*) (254).

During this pre-colonial period, Salim al-Bustānī was cognizant of the Western colonialist views towards Arabs.¹¹ The subtext of Junly's comments reinforces Mr. Bellerose's view that Arabs are cowardly, apathetic, passive and unconcerned with freedom. Suleimān, too, is aware of Western "prejudice." In the first pages of the story, his local guide tries to cheat him in consort with a disreputable innkeeper. In turn, Suleimān horsewhips the two to "teach them a lesson" before they swindle any European tourists. Mindful of the violence of his actions, Suleimān still finds no

other means to counter the conduct that would otherwise confirm the West's "prejudice that judges us as savage and barbarians" (28).

Bellerose's accusatory tone sounds throughout the text and finds its full resonance in the relationship between the protagonist and Dr. Boueff. Their discussions invariably debate Arab ability to "progress" beyond their "backwardness." Where the physician would present a disparaging analysis of Arab society, Suleimān would provide an explanation, apology, defense, or an outright counter-attack.

For example, Dr. Boueff having belittled Eastern medicine as little more than shamanism, Suleimān turns the table on him by exposing the self-serving intent of European doctors. He impugns European physicians for coming to and

residing in the East for long periods of time. Then, at the sunset of their lives, they return to their own country after earning much wealth. Now I say, "you [pl.] are the opportunists in this case while we are being taken advantage of. May we ask God to grant success to those native sons who have begun to learn medicine, first and foremost, as to relieve us of such arrogance, oppression, and opportunism... As for me, I prefer to die by a national treatment than to live by foreign medicine." (123)

130

Suleimān's censure is not one of parochial or national chauvinism but reflects the tension at the heart of the "modernizing project." If progress and adoption of modern knowledge entail the exploitation and humiliation of his compatriots, Suleimān believes that Arabs can do without it.

Ironically, Suleimān then expresses a desire to study medicine. He asks Dr. Boueff to accept him as an apprentice. This request is not unconditional, saying "I am dependent on you to teach me but only for a price" (125). The relationship between Suleimān and Boueff parallels that between Arabs and Europeans. The relationship cannot be one of unvarnished antagonism just as it must not be one of blind imitation. Therefore, the association takes the form of a begrudging apprenticeship (126). His insistence on paying a fee, however, undercuts Boueff's authoritative position, severing the Doctor's monopoly of specialized knowledge. Like the commodity in an exchange-economy, the fee commodifies "knowledge" and allows the protagonist to possess it with no encumbering bonds of gratitude or debt.

The struggle for propriety and mastery of knowledge is allegorical to the relationship between East and West. For example, the protagonist carries on a crusade against the evils of smoking. The degree and passion to which Suleimān attacks the habit suggests his long-time concern for it as a social and medical issue. Suleimān rebukes the Doctor for his chronic habit, especially because the man of medicine should know its harm (122-23). Smoking offers the protagonist an opportunity to confront Dr. Boueff on an issue where the hero holds the social and scientific high ground.¹² In fact, Salīm was the earliest Arab reformer to attack smoking, which became emblematic for the uncritical import of Western ways for intellectuals such as 'Abd Allāh al-Nadīm, Muhammad 'Abduh, Rashīd Ridā, and al-Manfalūtī.¹³ Within the narrative, the incident permits Salīm to demonstrate Suleimān's intellectual competency

and to represent him as a critical and autonomous Arab son involved in an unequal power relationship with Boueff.

The "mentorship" hardly conceals the antagonism between the two. Suleimān finds himself defending his compatriots against an onslaught of Western indictments. For example, under the apprenticeship of the Doctor, Suleimān accompanies him on a call, coincidentally, to the house of the heroine, Wardah, who had been poked in the eye by a twig. After he had suggested a short cut to the patient's house, the Doctor compliments the hero for appreciating the value of time. Boueff continues to say that Arabs are ordinarily lethargic and inefficient. Suleimān concurs and explains that he learned to manage time during his sojourn in Europe. However, he attributes his countrymen's indolence to the warm climate of the Middle East and efficiency of the West to its temperate climate (124). Al-Bustānī's exemplary protagonist recognizes European "civility" as the standard for normative and productive behaviour. However, this admission does not preclude defending the reasons why Arabs may fall short of this standard.

131

This is the predicament of the enlightened native Suleimān, who finds himself between the captious remarks of his French friends and the unacceptable behaviour of his country folks. For example, the traveling party arrives in Palmyra and visits the village shaykh. In welcoming them, the shaykh rudely orders his wife to bring their guests water. Reminiscent of Suleimān's censure of his guide and the innkeeper at the beginning of *al-Huyām*, the protagonist reprimands the shaykh's poor treatment of his wife, saying "he who is generous to his wife is generous to himself" (222). He insists that the mistreatment of women is an acquired behaviour, handed down from father to son, and is a major impediment to raise native children so that they have character and refinement. However, on an optimistic note, Suleimān asserts that the attitudes towards women in Syria have improved:

I know many people of the East who are contemptuous of women, but since I returned from Europe (*al-bilād al-afrānīyah*) I have not heard of anything of this sort in Beirut, Damascus (*al-Shām*), or any other Syrian city. (222)

The protagonist's statements reflect the centrality of women's rights in the social platform of Arab reformers.¹⁴ In fact, while Qāsim Amīn (1863-1908) is credited as the intellectual founder of the movement for Arab women's rights, Salīm and his father were writing on women's education and emancipation well before the publication of *Tahrīr al-Mara'ah* (*Woman's Emancipation*). In the case of *al-Huyām*, Suleimān's assertions have a two-pronged discursive effect. He acknowledges native shortcomings regarding the rights of women and through his admonishment actually brings about change. Simultaneously, he affirms the progress of native urbanity, shoring up Arab culture and society against his traveling companions' accusations that "progress" and Arab culture are incompatible.

This self-consciousness and cultural monitoring is plainly on the surface of the text and Suleimān's behaviour. We see his awareness of the Europeans' judgemental

gaze as they beckon him back to their table. As Suleimān sits down, Junly inquires into his and the Shaykh's discussion. He intentionally misrepresents their conversation, replying:

I did not want to tell Junly about anything that would demonstrate our backwardness (*'alā ta khurīnā fil-adab*) in the realm of culture. For culture is the most basic foundation for society and source for this generations' enlightenment (*tahdhib al-jil*). So I preferred to lie in response, saying to her, "we were talking about some of the causes for cultural refinement (*tahdhib*)" (222).

132

Despite his identification with "Western civilization" and cultural progress, Suleimān refuses to disclose the actual conversation to his European friends for fear of confirming their stereotypes and prejudices. Treatment of women's rights in *al-Huyām* is one more instance of how an "enlightened" Arab struggles with the paradox of native reform. Caught between the need to cultivate a progressive "mentality" (*'aql*) and the necessity to recognize and address contemporary Arab shortcomings, the native's self-awareness also recognizes his culture's vulnerability to the Western judgement.

Suleimān's apologies are not awkward but a sign of his conviction and enlightenment. He is an exemplary subject, who establishes his positive character through action, in contrast to the negative example of Dr. Boueff. The physician, although educated, is a weak-willed unabashed coward. For example, contrary to Monsieur Bellerose's reservations regarding the native retinue, Suleimān and his countrymen distinguish themselves in the battle with the Bedouin. In contrast, Dr. Boueff presses the group to pay the ransom and avoid the conflict; he attends to the wounded rather than take part in the battle. The Doctor's cowardice repels his love-interest, Junly, and suggests that "progress" involves not only the mastery of scientific knowledge but also a code of behaviour, in this case, that similar to the classical Arab *muruwah* or the manly chivalry. The effect of the contrast between virtuous native and educated but cowardly European wrenches away any hereditary propriety of rationalist, "modern" knowledge from the West and reconfigures the criteria for what "progress" actually entails.

We should not be concerned whether or not Salīm intentionally created Dr. Boueff as a model of *'ilm* (knowledge) without *akhlāq* (morals). Undoubtedly, the Doctor functions as a caricature of the self-serving European, who despite his "advancement," is a negative example of "modernity". The importance of an allegorical reading is in its relational effect. The Doctor's lack of valor makes visible Suleimān's brave successes. Dr. Boueff's willingness to sacrifice freedom and dignity for safety exactly contradicts and therefore accentuates Junly's credo that life is not worth living under oppression. Furthermore, Dr. Boueff's actions resemble Monsieur Bellerose's preconceptions of Arab infidelity, thus reversing and ironizing the West's cultural stereotypes that Suleimān strives so hard to combat. Emphases on intellect and virtue bestow authority on the Eastern subject that permits the enlightened native to enter into an otherwise unequal, yet necessary pedagogical and therefore power, relationship with the West.

FROM DESIRE TO LOVE

Specular desire is the initial impetus for much of *al-Huyām*'s plot. Suleimān's search for and reunion with Wardah begins with his watching her in a Damascene garden, where he is immediately enamored of her beauty and refinement. The Eve-like representation of Wardah, stressing her purity, is reinforced by the hero's subsequent dream of her. During his first actual meeting with her, acting as Dr. Boueff's assistant, Suleimān is virtually dumb-struck. At her house in Damascus, he only manages to whisper to her, "I wish it were my eye that was injured not yours" (126). They exchange no other words until they are "reunited" in the Bedouin camp where they are coincidentally both held captive. Even there, direct conversation takes place in a dark tent, where visibility is faint (250). Most of their communication transpires when Wardah is disguised or otherwise unrecognizable. Another example is their conversation when Suleimān is sick and imprisoned and Wardah disguises herself as a boy to see him (722).

133

Arabic literature of the nineteenth century has been faulted for the lack of genuine dialogue. (For an example, see Badawi 1985, 132.) In *al-Huyām*, the absence of dialogue has a poignant effect; that is, the absence of direct, unencumbered speech between the protagonists and the prominence of Suleimān's specular desire illustrates Wardah's passivity. This passivity enhances Wardah's desirability as a love-object.

Throughout the novel, Wardah is a recipient of sexual advances. In the Damascene Park, she and her friends are approached by a man on the prowl. Later, captured by Bedouins, the heroine is desired and threatened by the son of the tribal chieftain, Amīr Sa'īd. After failing to escape with Suleimān, when Amīr Sa'īd, who was betrothed to her, threatens to kill her, she humbly replies, "I am yours to do what you wish" (444). Clearly, her virtue and courage are demonstrated by her passive response.

Like *Candide*'s Cunégonde, Wardah is desired, coveted, and passed between men, which, in fact, drives the plot itself. However, Cunégonde's sexual activity and ability to continually regenerate her virginity, if not her life, implies active, albeit dubious, agency on her part. Contrarily, Wardah's virtue is never implicated, despite suggestions that she might have been molested by the pirates who abducted her after her escape from the Bedouin camp. Suleimān himself, after boarding the pirate ship, fears that he "would find and see her in a state that he would otherwise prefer not to see her in" (509). Likewise, on that ship, Wardah's sole activity is crying and wishing for death until Suleimān saves her.

The passivity as an essential attribute of female sexuality emerges quite explicitly in *al-Huyām*'s narrative. Suleimān himself provides the reader with criteria for masculinity and femininity, which imply masculine activity and feminine passivity. "The nature of women" he states,

is to be kind, delicate, gentle, mild-mannered, and obedient. This is as opposed to men whose duties call for them to be rough, callous, and strong. Most importantly, these qualities are necessary for the defense of their women, their children, and their nation (121).

Such a statement categorically places the male subject as defender of the nation and the female subject as the embodiment of it. The manly efficacy of Suleimān and the passivity of Wardah must be highlighted if she is to be the hero's desired love-object.

134 Wardah's passivity, her underdeveloped character, and her relationship with Suleimān stand in contradistinction to the European Madame Bellerose. Distinguishing herself from her companions, Madame Bellerose speaks Arabic and is versed in Arabic poetry. She is described as having "a strong intelligence and firm rationality. She knew the righteousness of knowledge and the duties it entails" (121). Her conversations with Suleimān are intellectual dialogues, which may be heated but never antagonistic like the debates between him and the Doctor. Suleimān is enthralled by Madame Bellerose because she displays all the virtues of civilization and progress and an understanding of Arab ways and history. For example, after Monsieur Bellerose accused the Arabs of being cowardly and slavish, Madame Bellerose pre-empted what the reader may expect to be Suleimān's defense of the Arab character. Contradicting her husband's belief, she says that Arabs possessed a sense of "national and religious fervor," which motivated them to throw off Mameluke tyranny (254). Recognizing that Suleimān is conscious of European ideologically charged stereotypes, Mme. Bellerose's invocation of history in the defense of the Arab character is significant. Her intervention assuages an antagonism between the defensive East and the accusatory West, providing her with a unique position between Arab and European subjects, or more specifically Suleimān and Bellerose's compatriots.

The relationship between Suleimān and Madame Bellerose develops in Wardah's absence. While all the main characters meet at the Bedouin camp, the direct relationship between Wardah and the hero transpires only after the relationship between him and Bellerose has been firmly established. In fact, soon after Suleimān and Wardah "reunite" in the Bedouin encampment, the Europeans are released from Captivity and never heard from again. At this point, the relationship takes on the compelling and passionate force necessary to justify the protagonist's prolific efforts in finding Wardah, from whom he is soon again separated. These circumstances lead us to conclude that the relationship between the hero and heroine is a transposition of Suleimān's relationship with Madame Bellerose. Moreover, his desire for Wardah is a transference of his original desire for the Western Bellerose.

The process of transference binds the narrative of *al-Huyām*. Throughout the romance, Suleimān is infatuated with almost every "refined" woman he sees, including Wardah when she is disguised as a servant. Also, just as the hero spies on Wardah in the garden, he spies on Madame Bellerose and Junly in a forest as they camp. Not recognizing them, he thinks that they are prostitutes (218). This act of spying is

repeated throughout the text in alternate forms. For example, the hero offers internal monologues admiring the beauty of the women he sees. However, on each occasion, after admiring them, Suleimān links these "love-objects" with Wardah, stating how they remind him of her (e.g. 319).

This act of looking, the male gaze possessing the female body, illustrates the active-passive relationship. If we agree with Jacques Lacan that "it is only with activity/passivity that the sexual relation really comes into play" (192), then Wardah, not Madame Bellerose, offers the perfect object-choice for Suleimān's displaced desire. The very qualities that make the European heroine desirable are undermined by her activity and her reciprocal relationship with the hero.

This insight becomes more apparent when we read the Suleimān himself recognizes the overlapping of desire for these two women. He poses them as two competing love-objects, who must be distinguished qualitatively by the type of the hero's love. Suleimān states that

I said to myself that this lady Bellerose has shed my blood. Yet, with love and dignity, I forgive her this grave sin. While my love for her is different from my love for Wardah, it is based on sincerity. As for my loving Wardah, my tongue is inadequate to describe it and my mind is too limited to fathom its depth. If I were to try to characterize the two loves, I would certainly fall short of the task, explaining, after much effort, water with water. (152)

135

This passage demonstrates that Suleimān's desire has a problem with representation, potentially blurring his two distinct types of love. Despite this problem, Suleimān's choice of Wardah as his primary love-interest is as unambiguous as his attraction for Bellerose.

The transference of desire—the substituting of an accessible love-object for an inaccessible one—is a common trope in later Arabic literature, particularly in *al-madrasah al-hadithah* (The Modern School). For example, in Haykal's *Zaynab*, Hāmid's desire for the peasant heroine Zaynab is increased only when his primary love, Azīzah, marries elsewhere.¹⁵ Al-Māzini's *Ibrāhīm al-Kātib* (*Ibrāhīm the Writer*) is another example.¹⁶ The protagonist Ibrāhīm desires his cousin Shūshū, who is replaced by two accessible and willing substitutes. Both of the lovers, Laylah and Syrian-Christian nurse Marie; metonymically fulfill, at least temporarily, his primary desire for his cousin.

However, in *al-Huyām*, the transference of Suleimān's desire is more complicated than substituting one love-object for another. Like Naguīb Mahfouz's *Bidāyah wa-Nihāyah* (*Beginning and End*) written some seventy years later, the conflict between the hero's love-objects (Bahiyah and Ahmad Bey's daughter in *Bidāyah*) are informed by sexual, ideological, and class desires.¹⁷ Wardah's qualities of refinement and virtue facilitate the transposition of Suleimān "love". That is, his desire is fulfilled metonymically through a displacement of his desire for Madame Bellerose to Wardah. Yet, Wardah is more than a stand-in for Bellerose and the Western "success" that she represents, just as Ahmad Bey's daughter's class means success to Hasanayn

in *Bidāyah*. As a passive native love-object, Wardah fulfills the desire of Suleimān without compromising his masculine efficacy and cultural autonomy.

The relational quality between characters illustrates not only Suleimān's exemplary nature, but also it endows Wardah with the ideal characteristics for being a native love-object. Consequently, Suleimān's transposed desire for Wardah is not possible without the example of Madame Bellerose, just as his success is not possible without the pernicious native failure of the hotel servant or the cowardice of Dr. Boueff. His pronouncement of love for Wardah serves as a commitment to both the principles of European-informed progress and the preservation of native authenticity. That is, while the representation that Wardah embodies is circumscribed by the example of Madame Bellerose, the latter's activity and foreignness prohibit the fulfillment of Suleimān's desire. Contrarily, Wardah, cultured and passive, is uniquely a "native daughter" (*ibnat al-watan*).

136

THE ALLEGORY OF LOVE

We have seen that Wardah mirrors Madame Bellerose's refinement and enlightenment. However, they are differentiated as two separate choices: a native and a foreign choice. This choice is a political necessity. Suleimān articulates this when, upon each encounter with an attractive woman, he reminds himself (and the reader) that Wardah is his ideal love and there can be no choice other than the native one (e.g. 94). Wardah can satisfy the protagonist's desire because she represents a nexus between the nation and a Western-inspired "progress."

Likening the heroine to the nation and seeing this relationship as a national allegory is a popular trope that occurs frequently in modern Arabic literature, especially in Egyptian nationalist literature (*al-adab al-qawmī*). For example, in Haykal's novel, Zaynab functions metonymically as the embodiment of authentic rural Egypt. Likewise, young Muhsin's love for his neighbour Saniyya, in Tawfīq al-Hakīm's *'Awdat al-Rūh* (*Return of the Spirit*), is another ready example of this phenomenon during the Egyptian nationalist liberation period.¹⁸ Indeed, Northrop Frye tells us that the ornate portraiture of the romance genre fosters the reader's association with the protagonists, compelling us to read the individual's story allegorically (Frye 304).

Doris Sommer adopts a method that reads Latin American melodramatic novels as national allegories. These novels have important similarities to the Arabic romance, particularly regarding shared "social ideals and concomitant strategies" (Sommer 1990, 79). Sommer notes that the main characters of nineteenth century Latin American romances usually originate from clashing social groups, classes, and ethnicities. The lovers' struggle for unification allegorically illustrates the necessity and "naturalness" of the nation and national unity (Sommer 1990, 81). Latin American "novels are all ostensibly grounded in the 'natural' romance that legitimates the

nation-family relationship through love" (Sommer 1990, 76). In Europe and Latin America, she states, "love and productivity were coming together in the bourgeois household where, for the first time in the history of the family, love and marriage were supposed to coincide" (Sommer 1990, 85). Consequently, "we may understand the concept 'love of country' as a metonymy, and the goal of productivity as implying reproductivity...Conjugal romance's national project...is to produce legitimate citizens, literally to engender civilization" (Sommer 1990, 86).

Sommer's assumptions are relevant to Arabic romances whether written by Syrian Nu'mān Qasātīlī in the nineteenth century or Shihātah al-'Ubayd in the twentieth century.¹⁹ His insights reinforce the understanding that the transference of Suleimān's desire for Wardah is necessary to national reform and that the female protagonist is metonymically a national love-object. In *al-Huyām*, we find the popular leitmotif of "love of the nation" (*hubb al-watan*), so prevalent in the works of innumerable *ruwwād al-nahdah*, along with the conjugal metaphor at the romance's end. Discussing the progress of the nation towards social reform, the narrator states:

137

The day that unity (*ittihād*) weds harmony (*ulfah*) is the day prejudice (*ighrād*) dies and the welfare (*sālih*) of the nation is consummated (702).²⁰

As Sommer and Frye suggest, the conjugal metaphor regarding national reform is particularly pertinent in romances. The struggles of the protagonists are the struggles of the nation; they are not only mutually referential but inextricable. The union of the two enlightened natives, Wardah and Suleimān, who allegorically waded through their country's decay and fanaticism, establishes a meaningful future for the nation, presenting the possibility for the reproduction of "progress".

Al-Huyām classically expresses this process. Wardah is likened to the nation and even given the authority of the nation itself. For example, the narrator Salīm writes Suleimān a letter asking if he will surrender his search for Wardah. The hero responds, "how can I forget her? She is like my kidney...She is my soul and the only thing I have in this world. She is my heaven". He continues:

You are asking if I am returning to my nation. What is my nation, you wonder? Is it the buildings of Beirut and its trees or its heat and dust? Don't you know that my nation is where Wardah lives? And if she sets down at the end of the world, there is my nation. (572)

In this passage, the representation of Wardah transcends the nation that she otherwise embodies. She becomes an immutable sign of the nation while also surpassing it as ideal and idyll. The above passage shows that Wardah's ontological status raises the nation to a new metaphysical level.

We have seen that for the protagonist the representation of the geographic nation becomes almost indistinguishable from Wardah. The plot of the story itself revolves around the protagonists' wandering from Syrian city to Syrian city and beyond. In other words, Suleimān's journey, before and after Wardah, is a national tour. This tour brings the hero to the Cedars of Lebanon where he finds Wardah's name carved

onto a cedar tree. This sign is her message to him. The narrator, Salim, who has met his friend at the Cedars, tells us that Suleimān says:

no doubt that Wardah, my love and the bloodline of my life, wrote her name here with her own hand because I told her that if I escape from the Bedouin's captivity, I would go, in search of her, to all the famous places in Syria. So she wrote what she wrote knowing that I would pass by here. (510)

Wardah's name is carved into the sign of the nation, the Cedar, which is explicitly stated as one of the "famous places in Syria".²¹ The national symbol and the female protagonist's name are collapsed into one. The gesture reveals that Wardah brings to her relationship with the reform-minded Suleimān a national authenticity that Bellerose could never provide.

138 Wardah-as-nation constitutes the very identity, even the very ontology, of Suleimān. Just as he welcomes death without her (722), his initial separation from her sends the hero into anomie, leading him deep into profound, even profane, philosophical and existential questioning. He asks himself:

I wonder who I am? Where am I among God's creatures and what are the requisites of existence? Am I awake or dreaming? Who are these people who pass around me, going from here to there? How do they begin and how do they end? What is the path of their existence and what is the meaning of their death?...Are they born only to die and disappear and why? Does the sun set on mankind and never again rise?...Why is this person great and this one lowly? Why is this one rich and that one poor; this one strong and that one weak? Why is one tall and another short, and one brown-skinned (*asmar*) and another white? Why is this one Muslim and that one Christian? What is one's kinship and what is one's origin? What is existence as compared to non-being? And non-being versus being? What is this great secret that hides from us the understanding of these mysteries? (126-27)²²

The loss of Wardah is the loss of the idealized and transcendental nation, the loss of identity and ontological certitude. The absence of ontological and subjective certitude, the absence of knowing, constitutes the death of the nation. Since the libidinal object of desire acts as a metonym for the nation, Suleimān's unification with Wardah is an allegory of the success of national reform. Therefore, external and subjective being – public and personal success – come to fruition when one is joined with one's desired object.

The uncritical adoption of European culture and scientific knowledge would certainly be an unhappy outcome of reform and infer that "civilization" meant a surrender of the Arabs' national-cultural identity. The union between Suleimān and Madame Bellerose (if she were available) would produce such an effect and a rejection of the national choice. Salim, in fact illustrates the disastrous consequences of such a union in his subsequent novel, *Asmā*, where Nabihah, the culturally superficial counterpart to the heroine Asmā, decides to marry a less than desirable European.²³ Nabihah construes her Western lover to be the epitome of civilization by merit of his nationality, despite the poverty of his mind, spirit, and means. Therefore, as we

have seen, the transference of Suleimān's desire for Bellerose to Wardah in *al-Huyām* offers the satisfactory resolution to the desire for the West, substituting a domestic, indeed national, choice for his primary foreign one. The unity of our hero and heroine promises a productive future.

Recognizing the political importance of the protagonists' union, *al-Huyām*'s conclusion takes on a particular irony. After their escape from the pirate steamship, the *Arcadia*, and Suleimān's release from prison in Crete, the lovers write to the narrator. He informs us that the two were married in Naples where they currently reside. As Sommer's analysis of Latin American romances suggests, this marriage is the consummation of "progress" and the unity of the nation. However, the fact that the matrimony is consummated in Europe has an ironic effect.

While their union attends the tension between Suleimān's desire for an object that is primarily configured on a Western ideal (Bellerose), their marriage and residence in Europe returns the allegory to the authority of the West ameliorated by Wardah's intervention. That is, *al-Huyām*'s narrative relates the importance of cultural authenticity in national reform, but the protagonists' marriage in Naples turns around to reassert the primacy of an ideal European space where the exemplary Arab subjects have found refuge, solace, and closure.

139

EPILOGUE

If we are to agree with Georg Lukács in understanding the rise of humanist literature in Europe as a protest against imperial regimes, we may perceive Salim al-Bustānī's *al-Huyām fī Jinān al-Shām*, as well as most of his other romances and historical novels, as a protest against not a regime but a condition. Certainly, the appearance of the Arabic romance and its generic cousin, the historical novel, corresponds to a changing consciousness and the ascent of a new type of indigenous bourgeoisie (Lukács 25-26).²⁴ The struggles of this Arab bourgeoisie were even more complicated than those of its counterpart in Europe. Critical of their own social and cultural states, bourgeois Arab intellectuals strove to integrate non-indigenous, particularly Western, cultural, social, and political practices to redress what they diagnosed as the causes for Arab "stagnation". Conscious of Europe's imperialist designs and the ideological apparatus used to justify these aspirations, Arab reformers recognized the politically loaded nature of their project. Therefore, many a nineteenth century Arab thinker, regardless of confession or local origin, contemplated how to import "Western" knowledge in order to re-awaken or maintain an authentic native civilization (*tamaddum*).

This struggle is ever present in the ground breaking fiction of Salim al-Bustānī. His opus itself encapsulates what he called the new "spirit of the age" (*rūh al-'asr*),²⁵ the spirit to strive for a "popular" society based on progressive, even democratic, principles such as reason, equality, and justice. In *al-Huyām*, young Salim strives for

a new sense of Arab-Syrian identity that circumvents the paradoxes of this new age, diminishing the tensions within reform. That is, rather than seeing *al-Huyām* and the romance genre as qualitatively poor or exclusively didactic, they should be seen, as Lukács suggests, as a site of cultural and political contestation.

140 Suleimān's plight is two-fold. The hero wrestles with Arab cultural "decay" and the pre-eminence of the West. His actions demonstrate the efficacy of the native subject, who himself enacts reform through his performance. This performance stays in multiple relations with the conduct of his native and foreign counterparts. Yet, Suleimān is torn between his love of his nation (*watan*) Syria and his desire for a Western ideal, represented by Mme. Bellerose. The second half of the narrative resolves this tension. With Wardah's intervention, Suleimān is able to construct a national love-object, who embodies both his Western-inspired reform principles and native cultural authenticity. Undoubtedly, this cultural-political-libidinal dilemma is found later in innumerable Arabic novels from Yahya Haqqī's *Qindīl Umm Hāshim* (*Umm Hashim's Lamp*), Mahmoud Taymūr's *Nidā' al-Majhūl* (*The Call of the Unknown*) to Tayib Sālih's most brilliant *Mawsim al-hijrah ila al-Shamāl* (*Season of Migration to the North*).²⁸

Al-Huyām warrants investigation not because it was the first Arabic romance nor because it has been forgotten in the study of Arabic literature. Rather, Salīm's romance expresses how Arabic literature was a fundamental space in which to contest colonial intrusions and, in so doing, configure new possibilities for and Arab subjective ideal, that can be both progressive and authentic. Yet, the struggle and resolution within *al-Huyām* reaches beyond formulating a satisfactory national choice in lieu of the desire for the other. A close reading reveals that the narrative is framed by the binary metaphysics of ontological presence and absence, as Derrida might say. While the union of Wardah and Suleimān presents the promise of native progress, Wardah functions as a supplement for Suleimān's primary desire for the West and a supplement for what the natives lack. The hero combats in every possible way the conception of Arab absence and Western presence. The ironic ending revisits Western "success" despite Suleimān's exemplary performance and the final closure presented by his union with Wardah. Not surprisingly, Salīm al-Bustānī recognized that this struggle with European presence and native failure would continue for some time. In one of his final editorials, Salīm criticizes his urban compatriots for confusing materialism with true progress.

Nothing is uglier than the establishment of progress without any real basis.

We are not surprised that the introduction of superficial foreign civilization (*al-tamaddun al-khārijī*) spreads throughout the East before true civilization (*al-hadārah*) overtakes the mountains, plains, and the interior. This is because the superficial spreads very quickly as if it were riding on the waves of the sea or wings of lightning. It plants itself firmly in foolish and weak-minded people, who have no patience to acquire serious matters or obtain true progress.

Easterners have over-emphasized this superficial sort of "progress", which has allowed the people of the West to belittle us. Westerners even treat unjustly those who have earned the right to be revered and honoured. The masses (*al-‘ammah*) quickly run to harmful foreign ways. The blood of his kind of civilization is corrupt in us and it is most difficult to reform it if the contamination matures (449-50).²⁹

WORKS CITED

- Badawi, M.M. *Modern Arabic Literature and the West*. London: Ithaca P, 1985.
- _____. *A Short History of Modern Arabic Literature*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1993.
- al-Bustānī, Butrus. *Khutbah fi adab al-‘arab* (Public Address in Arabic Literature). Beirut: s.n. [1858]. Reprinted in *A‘māl al-Jam‘iyah al-Sūriyah lil-fanūn wal-‘ulūm* (Works of the Syrian Society for Arts and Sciences). Comp. Yūsuf Qizma Khūrī. Beirut: Dār al-Hamrā, 1990. 101-17.
- al-Bustānī, Butrus. "Ta‘līm al-nisā’." *A‘māl al-Jam‘iyah al-Sūriyah lil-fanūn wal-‘ulūm* (Works of the Syrian Society for Arts and Sciences). Comp. Yūsuf Qizma Khūrī. Beirut: Dār al-Hamrā, 1990. 45-53.
- Al-Bustānī, Salīm. *al-Huyām fī Jinān al-Shām* (Love in Damascene Gardens). *al-Jinān*. (The Gardens). Beirut: 1870.
- _____. *Asmā’ (Asmā’)*. *al-Jinān*. Beirut: 1873.
- _____. *Iftitahiyyat majallat al-Jinān al-Bayrūtīyah 1870-1884* (The Opening Editorials of the Bairūtī Journal al-Jinān). Comp. Yūsuf Qizma Khūrī. Beirut: Dār al-Hamrā, 1990.
- _____. "Rūh al-‘asr" (The Spirit of the Age). *al-Jinān* (1870): 385-88.
- _____. "‘Ubūdiyyah dukhāniyah" (The Slavery of Smoking). *al-Jinān*. Beirut: 1870.
- _____. "Limādhā?" (Why?). *al-Jinān* (1871): 503.
- _____. "al-Ulfah wal-ittihād wal-ta‘aqqul wa lā siyyamā fil-wilāyāt al-‘arabiyah" (Concord, Unity, and Reason in the Arab Provinces). *al-Jinān* (1876): 649-52.
- _____. "Innanā asbahna fī zamān musāwāh wa-intizām" (We've Come to the Age of Equality and Order). *al-Jinān* (1878): 703-04.
- _____. "al-Mudākhalāt al-ajnabiyah fi Misr" (Foreign Intervention in Egypt). *al-Jinān* (1879): 353-55.
- _____. "Asbāb taqaddum Bayrūt wa numuwwiha al-sarī" (Reasons for Beirut's Progress and Speedy Growth). *al-Jinān* (1884): 449-51.
- al-Dīn, Khayr. *Muqaddimat kitāb aqwam al-masālik fī ma‘rifat ahwāl al-mamālik* (1867). Beirut: Dār al-Tali‘ah, 1978.
- Derrida, Jacques. *On Grammatology*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1974.

ENDNOTES

1. This article is dedicated to Prof. Edward Said, without whose political and intellectual inspiration I would have been hard pressed to navigate the treacherous path between the potential hegemony of the colonial and nationalist legacies. An abbreviated form of this article was presented at the Annual Middle Eastern Studies Association Conference in San Francisco, Nov 22, 1997. The earlier truncated version appears electronically in *Jouvert* (3:3). I wish to thank Walid R'ad, Ruth Tsoffar, Jad and Marguerite for their most helpful remarks and support.
 2. Salīm al-Bustānī, *al-Huyām fi Jinān al-Shām, al-Jinān* (Beirut: 1870). Like the literary-scientific journals that were to follow such as Fransis Nimr's and Y'aqūb Sarrāf's *al-Muqtataf*, Jurji Zaydān's *al-Hilāl*, and Muhammad 'Abduh's and Rashid Rida's *al-Manār, al-Jinān* was widely read throughout Greater Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. The aforementioned later journals would considerably expand readership throughout North Africa, Yemen, Europe, and the Americas.
 3. Archivist Yūsuf Qizma Khūri has compiled these opening articles in Salīm al-Bustānī, *Ifitāhiyyāt majallat al-Jinān al-Bayrūtīyah 1870-1884* (*The Opening Editorials of the Bairūtī Journal al-Jinān*), vols. 1 and 2 (Beirut: Dār al-Hamrā', 1990).
 4. See Rifā'a Rāfi' al-Tahtāwī's neglected commentary on Egyptian society and culture in *Manāhij al-albāb al-misriyyah* (Cairo: [Būlāq], 1869/1286).
 5. See Khayr al-Dīn's political treatise *Muqaddimat kitāb aqṣam al masālik fi ma 'rifat ahwal al-mamālik* (Beirut: Dār al-Talī'ah, 1978), first published in 1867.
 6. In addition to his articles "Hubb al-watan" (Love of the Nation), "al-Islāh" (The Reform), and "Man Nahnu" (Who are we?) in *al-Jinān* (vol. 1, 1870), see Butrus al-Bustānī's now forgotten treatise *Khutbah fi adab al-'arab* (*Lecture on the Culture of the Arabs*), reprinted in *A'māl al-Jamī' yah al-Sūriyah lil-jamīn wal-'ulūm* (*Works by the Syrian Society for Arts and Sciences*) (Beirut: Dār al-Hamrā', 1990).
 7. The *maqāmah* is a prose fictional genre created by Badi al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī (969-1008). Several hundred *maqāmāt* have been written since, relating a story of a traveling narrator who roams throughout the Islamic world and continually happens upon the guileful anti-hero. The *maqāmah* is written in rhymed prose (*saj*) and usually challenges the linguistic, literary, and lexicographical prowess of the reader. Many literati of the Arab Renaissance experimented with the genre. In addition to Mubārak and al-Muwayliḥī, see Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm's *Layālī Satih* (*Satih's Nights*) (Cairo: Maktabat al-adab, 1898). While all but abandoned by 1910, Arab authors still draw on the genre's structure and character portraiture for inspiration. For the best example, see Emile Habibi, *al-Waqā' i' al-gharibah fi ikhtifā' Sa'id Abi al-Nahs al-Mutashāil* (*The Secret Life of Sa'id*) (Beirut: Dār Ibn Khaldūn, 1974, 2nd edition).
 8. See 'Ali Mubārak, *'Alam al-dīn* (Alexandria: Matba'at Jarīdat al-Mahrūsah, 1882).
 9. See Muhammad al-Muwayliḥī, *Hadith 'Isa ibn Hishām aw fatrah min zamān* (*The Tale of 'Isa bin Hishām or a Period of Time*) (Cairo: Matba'at al-Ma'arif, 1907 [1324]), first serialized in *Misbāh al-Sharq* (1898-9).
 10. All translations from Arabic to English are my own.
 11. As a diligent student of current political developments throughout the Ottoman Empire and the West, as well as prolonged interaction with Westerns in Lebanon, Salīm was acutely aware of Western prejudice and colonial aspirations in the Middle East. For an example, see his article "al-Mudākhalāt al-ajnabiyah fi Misr" (Foreign Intervention in Egypt) in *Al-Jinān* (1879), 353-355.
 12. His love, Wardah, herself argues against the unhealthy habit when the protagonist first spies on her and her friends in the Damascus park (59).
- Frye, Northrop. *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957). Tenth ed. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1990.
- Hakīm Tawfiq. *'Awdat al-Rūh (Return of the Spirit)*. Cairo: Maktabat al-adab, 1928.
- Haykal, Muhammad Husayn. *Zaynab*. Cairo: Dār al-Hilāl, 1913.
- Lacan, Jacques. *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-analysis*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1978.
- Lukács, Georg. *The Historical Novel*. Boston: Bisson Books, 1983.
- Mahfouz, Naguib. *Bidāyah wa-Nihāyah (Beginning and End)*. Beirut: Dār al-Qalam, 1949.
- Al-Māzinī, Ibrāhīm. *Ibrāhīm al-Kātib (Ibrāhīm the Writer* [1931]). Cairo: Dār al-sh'ab, 1970.
- Mubārak, 'Ali. *'Alā' al-dīn*. Alexandria: Matba'at Jarīdat al-Mahrūsah, 1882.
- 142 Muwayliḥī, Muhammad. *Hadith 'Isa ibn Hishām* (The story of 'Isa ibn Hishām). Cairo: Matbaat al-ma'arif, 1907.
- Al-Naqqāsh, Marūn. *Arzat Lubnān (The Cedars of Lebanon)*. Beirut: 1869.
- Al-Qasātīlī, Nu'mān. *al-Fatāt al-amīnah wa ummuhā (The Faithful Aminah and her Mother)*. al-Jinān. Beirut: 1880.
- Al-Qasātīlī, Nu'mān. *Riwayat Anīs (The Story of Anīs)*. al-Jinān. Beirut: 1881.
- Sharabi, Hishām. *Arab Intellectuals and the West*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1970.
- Sharabi, Hishām. *Neopatriarchy*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1988.
- Sheehi, Stephen. "Epistemography of Modern Arab Subjectivity". *Public* 16 (1997): 65-84.
- Sommer, Doris. *Foundation Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1991.
- _____. "Irresistible Romance." *Nation and Narration*. Ed. Homi K. Bhabha. London: Routledge, 1990. 71-98.
- al-Tahtāwī, Rifā'a Rāfi'. *Manāhij al-albāb al-misriyyah*. Cairo: [Būlāq], 1869/1286.
- 'Ubayd, Shihātah. *Dars al-Mu'allim (The Teachers' Lesson)*. Cairo: Al Dār al-qawmīyyah, 1964.
- Zolondek, Leon. "Ash-Sh'ab in Arabic Political Literature of the 19th Century." *Die Welt des Islams*, X (1965): 1-16.

13. Salim wrote an article condemning smoking, "'Ubūdiyyah dukhāniyyah" (smoking slavery), in *al-Jinān* (1870), as well as mentioning it in his short stories such as "Najīb wa Latīfah" in *al-Jinān* (1871), and his novel *Asmā* in *al-Jinān* (1873).
14. Egyptian Qāsim Amin wrote *Tahrir al-Mara'ah* (*Woman's Emancipation*) (Cairo: Maktabat al-Taraqi', 1899) and *al-Mara'ah al-Jadidah* (*The New Woman*) (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'arif, 1900). Al-Tahtāwī and Ahmad Fāris al-Shidyāq commented on the topic. However, the earliest developed argument for women's education and emancipation was made in 1849 in Butrus al-Bustānī's article "Khitāb fī Ta'lim al-Nisā'" (Women's Education) and appeared later in the works of al-Jam'iyah al-Sūriyah lil-fanūn wal-'ulūm, op.cit. 45-53. Salim al-Bustānī never dedicated an article exclusively to women's rights but the topic maintained a strong presence in his fiction and his reform editorials. For an example, see "Limādhā?" (Why?) in *al-Jinān* (1871), p.503.
15. Muhammad Husayn Haykal, *Zaynab* (Cairo: Dār al-Hilāl, 1953), first published 1913.
16. Ibrāhīm Al-Māzinī, *Ibrāhīm al-Kātib* (Cairo: Dār al-sh'ab, 1970), first published 1931.
17. See Naguīb Mahfouz, *Bidāyah wa-Nihayah* (*Beginning and End*), (Beirut: Dār al-Qalm, 1949).
18. *Twfik al-Hakīm 'Awdat al-Rūh* (Cairo: Maktabat al-adab, 1964), first publication 1928.
- 144 19. For example, *Nu'mān al-Qasātīlī, al-Fatāt al-amīnah wa ummuhā* (*The Virtuous Girl and her Mother*) in *al-Jinān* (Beirut: 1880); and *Riwayāt Anīs* (*The Story of Anīs*) in *al-Jinān* (Beirut: 1881); and the short stories of Shihātah 'Ubayd republished from the journal *al-Sufūr* in *Dars al-Mu'allim* (Cairo: Dār al-gawmīyah, 1964).
20. These terms form the nomenclature for reform and are found throughout Salim's and others' writing. For an example, see his article "al-Ulfah wal-ittihād wal-ta'qqul wa lā siyyamā fīl-wilāyāt al-'arabīyah" (Concord, Unity, and Reason, especially in the Arab Provinces), in *al-Jinān* (1876), pp. 649-52.
21. No research has yet determined the genealogy of Lebanese, Syrian, and Arab nationalist imagery. However, by 1869 Marūn al-Naqqāsh's plays were posthumously published as *Arzat Lubnan* (*Cedars of Lebanon*); Beirut, s.n., 1869).
22. Hishām Sharābī asserts (1970 and 1988) that Arab intellectuals failed to articulate "a genuinely independent critical and analytical discourse in which the problematics of identity, history, and the West could find effective resolution" (Sharabi 1988, 10). The above passage, which recites the litany of the most basic existential questions posed in the most straightforward manner, suggests that the contrary is true.
23. Salim al-Bustānī, *Asmā*, in *al-Jinān*, Beirut, 1873.
24. Also see my forthcoming article, "Overview of Arabic Literature of the Nineteenth Century: The Genre of Subjectivity".
25. Salim mentions this "new spirit" throughout his commentary and novels. For example, see his novel, *Bint al-'asr* (*Daughter of the Age*) in *al-Jinān* (1875); and his editorial, "Rūh al-'asr" (The Spirit of the Age) in the first volume of *al-Jinān* (1870), pp. 385-88.
26. The first Arab thinker to talk of *al-sh'ab* (the people) in its modern political meaning, Salim has innumerable references to these principles, equality, justice, and reason (*musāwāh, 'adl, ta'qqul*). For one example, see his articles, "Innānā asbahna fī zaman musāwāh wa intizām" (We've Come to the Age of Equality and Order) in *al-Jinān* (1878), pp.703-04. Also see Zoioudek.
27. M.M. Badawi, for example, while seeing Salim's novel as an experiment with new prose narratives, concludes that they are unequivocal failures as novels (Badawi 1993, 95).
28. Yahyā Haqqī's *Qindil Umm Hāshim* (*Umm Hāshim's Lamp*) (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'arif, 1944); Mahmūd Taymūr, *Nidā al-Majhūl* (*The Call of the Unknown*) (Beirut: Dār al-Makshūf, 1939); and Tayib Sālih, *Mawsim al-hijrah ila al-shamāl* (*Season of Migration to the North*) (Cairo: Dār al-Hilāl, 1969).
29. Salim al-Bustānī, "Asbāb taqaddum Bayrūt wa numuw wihā al-sarī" (Reasons for Beirut's Progress and Speedy Growth) in *al-Jinān* (1884) p. 449-50.