

Abstract

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Egypt: A Feminist Identity

Abstract Egypt: A Feminist Identity Arab feminism is a new approach to literary production particularly of the Arab male societies. However, this new critical approach is not fully crystallized and figured out yet. This paper is an attempt to reread the literary heritage of Eastern Arab writers in the light of Arab feminists who were suppressed and denied the privilege of literary expression for years. If politics has been classically defined as a masculine business, the feminine figures are always presented in the private domestic scenes being the source the reason of conflicts disputes. Conventionally, many Arab writers hide behind the scene of the feminist identity to investigate their political and religious views. Understanding politics and challenging traditional political theories pushed male writers to view Egypt not as a country a place where they live belong to but more profoundly to consider Egypt as a feminist identity they all fall in love rebel against. "Ihsan" in Naguib Mahfouz's novel Cairo Modern 1947 and "Galila" in his masterpiece Speaking the Morning and Evening 1987 are two female figures who are portrayed to represent Naguib Mahfouz's political and religious point of views towards Egypt and the society. Similar to black feminism Arab feminists tend to explore the feminist identity rooted in the inherited legacy of male writings that portray the female as a figure of seduction as one of mystical connotations. Thus, the study will analyze and shed light on the two female figures of Mahfouz being drawn to represent not simply Egypt, but more deeply to symbolize the feminist identity of the writer. In fact, the feminist identity is one of political rebellious and spiritual doubts.