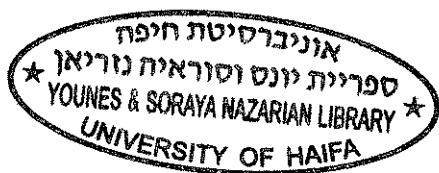


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The Arabic part of this volume opens with an article by Ḥusayn Ḥamza on the spoken poetry (°atābā) of *Muhammad al-°Ābid*. His paper deals with the character of the poet Muhammad al-°Ābid as derived from the °atābā poems that start with the phrase *ṣāḥ Mḥimmad l-°Ābid*. Al-°Ābid's poetry focuses mainly on the themes of alienation and exile, longing for homeland and absence from it. This article includes a collection of Muhammad al-°Ābid's poems and is one of the full-length pioneering studies dealing with popular Palestinian spoken poetry.

In his "The Origins of Science Fiction in popular and Classical Arabic Literature", °Iṣām °Asāqila sees in popular Arabic tradition tales of sorcery, Jinn and miracles mentioned in *The Thousand and One Nights* and popular biographies as the basis for science fiction. Accordingly, he claims, the Arabs are those who started the notion of science fiction, and the Arabic tradition invented the concept of the science fiction novel. The researcher considers the notion of Jinn and their deeds, the phenomenon of metamorphosis, the tales of Sinbad, the notion of disappearance and other extraordinary phenomena and miracles as the roots of science fiction. This article investigates further the origins of science fiction in classical Arabic literature, especially in works that contained ideas and topics regarded as the roots of science fiction.

Fu°ād °Azzām's article, "The Structure of Events in the Novels of Ḥaydar Ḥaydar", deals with the representation and structure of the events in novels by this Syrian writer. The article reaches the conclusion that some novels by this writer, like *al-Fahd*, are traditional. Others mix traditionalism with modernism (as does his *Shumūs al-ghajar*). His later novels are considered modern. Consequently, the structure of events, in Ḥaydar's novels, passes through the traditional stage in *al-Fahd*, and moves into a modernist one in his later works.

Evidence of Honey is a novel by the Syrian writer Salwā n-Nu°aymī. It is considered a good example of Arabic feminine literature of the last three decades. The article by

Muhammad Şaffūrī deals with the revolutionary features of this literature as they appear in this novel thematically and aesthetically. On the thematic level, the novel is erotic; it violates all social prohibitions which Arab women face, by dealing with detailed sexual issues which rely on the opinions of famous religious men. However, on the aesthetic level, the writer deconstructs male literary conventions and establishes new female conventions by de-formalizing the conventional plot. In addition, it employs feminine language overwhelmed by sexual expressions. The novel is distinguished by female protagonists and narrators. The novel thus achieves the purpose of modern Arabic feminine narrative fiction which dominates the text in an attempt to control the real world.

The review written by ʿAṭallāh Jabir discusses an article by Jābir ʿUşfur on the prosody used in Amal Dunqul's poem "Safar al-Khurūj" (The Travel of Leaving).

The English part of the journal includes an article by Ibrahim Mumayiz, "Pre-Islamic Arabian Christianity's Influence on Islam". The author explains aspects of how pre-Islamic Arabian Christianity which influenced Islam first took root in Bostra (Arabic Buṣṣrā), the capital of Roman Arabia, since it was there that the monk Bahira (Arabic Baḥīrā) met young Muhammad and discerned in him signs of prophethood. The influence of Origen on Christianity in Arabia is then dealt with, showing his role in consolidating Christianity in the Roman province of Arabia. The clash between Hellenized Alexandrian Christianity represented by Origen and the local Aramaic Christianity represented by Bahira is then discussed. The article surveys published material on Bahira's influence on Muhammad both from Christian and Muslim sources. Pre-Islamic Arabia is presented as a land rich in (Christian) heresies – *Arabia Haerisium Ferax*. Two such heresies are presented: first, Docetism – which asserts that it was not Jesus who was crucified, but that someone else was in his place. The paper quotes from the Qur'an on this heresy which became the official Islamic doctrine on the Crucifixion. Second, Collyridianism – the paganized over-veneration of the Virgin Mary, reflected in the prominence given to Mary in the Qur'an. The paper ends with the suggestion that Islamic prayer – *ṣalāt* – was based on prostration in prayer first practiced in Egyptian monasteries, which found its way to Bostra through the strong cultural ties between rural Egyptian and Aramaic Syrian Christianity. It is suggested that Bahira practiced prostration in prayer for young Muhammad to watch – and to emulate.