

Arab Dystopian Impulse and Homosexual Configurations in Saleem Haddad's *Guapa*

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Abstract

The Arab spring's complexity and randomness displayed in Saleem Haddad's *Guapa* (2016) have made the tragedy of Arabs of homosexual orientations visible. Homosexuality is, writes Alexandra Simonon, against the Arab nature, and writing about homosexuality, in the Middle East, has therefore become an act of courage that resorts Arab writers to different strategies to configure their portrayals of Arab sexual life. This would justify the fact that homosexuals have been given a narrow space and visibility in Arab literature. Arab conflicting attitudes toward homosexuality are built around the local values which offer a homogeneous model of sexuality. To lessen the impact of homophobic attitudes, Saleem Haddad has made a serious attempt to deconstruct socio-political views which, according to Judith Butler, seek to augment themselves through a constant repetition of their logic, their metaphysics, and their naturalized ontology. The main focus of my presentation is to explore how Haddad navigates his way through the mist of Arab dystopian themes which are not entirely new in Arabic fiction, but they have become much more prominent in recent years (Abdel Aziz) to draw new lines for homosexual characters to act upon in an increasingly complex society. The paper draws mainly upon Butler's feminist assumption on gender and sexuality to explicate Arab queer authors' dystopian impulse. Arab homosexuals' sense of despair is shaped by the constitutions upon which Arab attitudes rest, i.e. society (religion) and politics. Unconditional loyalty to religious and political practices in the Middle East compels homosexuals into a social exclusion and social disorder.

Key words: Arab literature, Arab spring, homosexuality, Judith Butler, Middle East