Arabic Thought against the Authoritarian Age

In the wake of the Arab uprisings, the Middle East descended into a frenzy of political turmoil and unprecedented human tragedy which reinforced regrettable stereotypes about the moribund state of Arab intellectual and cultural life. This volume sheds important light on diverse facets of the postwar Arab world and its vibrant intellectual, literary, and political history. Cutting-edge research is presented on such wide-ranging topics as poetry, intellectual history, political philosophy, and religious reform and cultural resilience all across the length and breadth of the Arab world, from Morocco to the Gulf States. This is an important statement of new directions in Middle East studies that challenges conventional thinking and has added relevance to the study of global intellectual history more broadly.

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Arabic Thought against the Authoritarian Age

Towards an Intellectual History of the Present

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Preface

This is a companion volume to our previous book, *Arabic Thought Beyond the Liberal Age: Towards an Intellectual History of the Nahda* (Cambridge University Press, 2016). Both books have their origins in a conference we organized at Princeton University in October 2012, “Arabic Thought Beyond the Liberal Age: New Directions in Middle East Intellectual History.” We are delighted to reiterate our profound gratitude to the various institutions and individuals that made our original conference the enjoyable success that it was. We are particularly indebted to those sponsors at Princeton who made the conference possible financially: the David A. Gardner ’69 Magic Fund, the Council of the Humanities, the Program on International and Regional Studies (PIIRS), and its then-director Mark Beissinger. Patricia Zimmer orchestrated the conference proceedings; Joy Scharfstein graced us with posters and promotional materials; Barb Leavey in the history department gave us timely logistical support.

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Note on Transliteration

Throughout this book Arabic has been transliterated according to a simplified version of the system employed by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. For the benefit of non-specialists, all diacritics have been omitted, with the exception of ʿayn (‘) and hamza (ʾ). Common English forms of places, names, and terms are used when it seems commonsensical or expressly requested by an individual (i.e., Beirut not Bayrut or Beyrouth; Elias Khoury not Ilyas Khuri; and Rosa Yassin Hassan not Ruza Yasin Hasan). All translations, unless otherwise noted, are those of the chapter author(s).