

Nadia Hajal/ Backleh

**Research Title:** Towards a Liberating Paradigm: Reading Sexuality and Nationalism in the Artwork of Ismail Shammout

**Abstract:** This research seeks to explore the different conceptions of nakedness and the controversy around its expressiveness/ representations in artworks dedicated to nationalism and human liberation as the case in the artworks of the Palestinian artist Ismail Shammout (1930-2006). The specific research question is: In what ways do Shammout's paintings of 'naked human bodies' complement to his overall organic art project of expressively narrating the Palestinian human tragedy, people's struggle and aspirations to national freedom and human liberation? The researcher argues that Although these paintings reflect the openness of the artist to western history of art, yet their expressions of nakedness depart from western traditional objectification of human bodies. In addition, they culturally resist orientalist and colonial inscriptions of the Other's body and sexuality through constructing counter meanings. Furthermore, they culturally challenge hegemonic conceptions of the national and the political towards a paradigm that opens up to the personal, the sexual, and the human in an integrative approach.