



Trials of Arab Modernity: Literary Affects and the New Political

Tarek El-Ariss

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Challenging prevalent conceptualizations of modernity--which treat it either as a Western ideology imposed by colonialism or as a universal narrative of progress and innovation--this study instead offers close readings of the simultaneous performances and contestations of modernity staged in works by authors such as Rifa'a al-Tahtawi, Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq, Tayeb Salih, Hanan al-Shaykh, Hamdi Abu Golayyel, and Ahmad Alaidy.

In dialogue with affect theory, deconstruction, and psychoanalysis, the book reveals these trials to be a violent and ongoing confrontation with and within modernity. In pointed and witty prose, El-Ariss bridges the gap between Nahda (the so-called Arab project of Enlightenment) and postcolonial and postmodern fiction.

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