



Modern Arabic Fiction: An Anthology

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Beginning with the late-nineteenth-century cultural resurgence and continuing through the present day, short stories and novels have given voice to the personal and historical experiences of modern Arabs. This anthology offers a rich and diverse selection of works from more than one hundred and forty prominent Arab writers of fiction. The collection reflects Arab writers' formal inventiveness as well as their intense exploration of various dimensions of modern Arab life, including the impact of modernity, the rise of the oil economy, political authoritarianism, corruption, religion, poverty, and the Palestinian experience in modern times.

Salma Khadra Jayyusi, a renowned scholar of Arabic literature, has included short stories and excerpts from novels from authors in every Arab country. *Modern Arabic Fiction* contains writings stretching from the pioneering work of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century authors to the novels of Naguib Mahfouz and the stories of contemporary Arab writers. In addition to familiar names such as Mahfouz, the anthology presents excerpts from writers well known in the Arab world but just beginning to find an audience in the West, including early twentieth century Christian Lebanese writer Jurji Zaydan, whose historical epics were eye-openers for generations of Arab readers to the achievements of medieval Islamic civilization; Yusuf Idris's complex and brilliant portrait of Egypt's poor; 'Abd al-Rahman Muneef's searing exploration of the ecological and social impact of oil production; Palestinian writer Jabra Ibrahim Jabra's sophisticated description of the dilemma's of modern Arab intellectuals; and Jamal al-Ghitani's impressive employment of mythical time and the continuity of the past in the present.

Jayyusi provides biographical information on the writers as well as a substantial and illuminating introduction to the development of modern Arabic fictional genres that considers the central thematic and aesthetic concerns of Arab short story writers and novelists.

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