



The Arab Families Working Group

Gender and Nation in Egyptian Fiction in the 1990s: A Reading of Somaya Ramadan's *Leaves of Narcissus*

This paper is part of a project that looks at literary representations of gendered roles in the 1990s in Egypt. It takes as its starting point a controversial characterization of some of the fiction published in the 1990s in Egypt, namely, that this fiction does not engage with larger or national issues "al qadaya al-kubra".

Drawing on postcolonial feminist approaches to gender and nation, the paper interrogates the meaning of identity, specifically gendered national identity, through a reading of Somaya Ramadan's novel, *Leaves of Narcissus*. Ramadan's inter-textual and cross-cultural text reworks the limits of identity and raises new questions about the meaning of the nation and belonging.

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