



Of Irony and Empire: Islam, the West, and the Transcultural Invention of Africa (SUNY series, Explorations in Postcolonial Studies)

Laura Rice

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Examines the transformative power of irony in the creation of Muslim Africa.

Of Irony and Empire is a dynamic, thorough examination of Muslim writers from former European colonies in Africa who have increasingly entered into critical conversations with the metropole. Focusing on the period between World War I and the present, “the age of irony,” this book explores the political and symbolic invention of Muslim Africa and its often contradictory representations. Through a critical analysis of irony and resistance in works by writers who come from nomadic areas around the Sahara—Mustapha Tlili (Tunisia), Malika Mokeddem (Algeria), Cheikh Hamidou Kane (Senegal), and Tayeb Salih (Sudan)—Laura Rice offers a fresh perspective that accounts for both the influence of the Western, instrumental imaginary, and the Islamic, holistic one.

“This is one of the rare studies of African literature to bridge the gap between North African and Sub-Saharan literature, two worlds that rarely meet in the minds of most specialists in the field of African literature ... [it] is a valuable contribution to studies of African literature and society today. For this reason, it is a book that should be read by all who claim to be specialists in African literature.” — Comparative Literature Studies

“This book is beautifully written in clear, elegant prose and provides an original, imaginative, and compelling argument regarding alternative modernities in twentieth-century Africa.” — Winifred Woodhull, author of *Transfigurations of the Maghreb: Feminism, Decolonization, and Literatures*

“This is an excellent critical examination of some of Africa’s most celebrated novels and the author approaches this rather complicated field with a unique commentary and balanced perspective.” — Chouki El Hamel, Arizona State University

Laura Rice is Professor of Comparative Literature at Oregon State University and cotranslator (with Karim Hamdy) of *Century of Locusts* by Malika Mokeddem and *Departures* by Isabelle Eberhardt.

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