



# **Desert Voices: Bedouin Women's Poetry in Saudi Arabia (Library of Modern Middle East Studies)**

*Moneera Al-Ghadeer*

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The Bedouin, or "desert dwellers," have a rich cultural heritage often expressed through music and poetry. Here Moneera Al-Ghadeer provides us with the first comparative reading of women's oral poetry from Saudi Arabia. She examines women's lyrics of love, desire, mourning and grievance. We come to understand Bedouin mores and--most significantly--the unique description of a desert that is consistently held to be infinite, evocative, stimulating and an eternal freedom.

As the first English translation and analysis of this poetry, *Desert Voices* is both a gesture to preserving the oral poetic tradition of Bedouin women and a radical critique addressing the exclusion of their poetry from current academic literary studies. The book provides invaluable material for reflection in the debates around oral culture and women's poetic composition while it translates, presents and critically examines a genre, which opens Arabic poetry and literature to contemporary theory and criticism.

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