



# **Anxiety of Erasure: Trauma, Authorship, and the Diaspora in Arab Women's Writings (Gender, Culture, and Politics in the Middle East)**

*Hanadi Al-Samman*

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## **Anxiety of Erasure: Trauma, Authorship, and the Diaspora in Arab Women's Writings (Gender, Culture, and Politics in the Middle East) Hanadi Al-Samman**

Far from offering another study that bemoans Arab women's repression and veiling, *Anxiety of Erasure* looks at Arab women writers living in the diaspora who have translated their experiences into a productive and creative force. In this book, Al-Samman articulates the therapeutic effects of revisiting forgotten histories and of activating two cultural tropes: that of the maw'udah (buried female infant) and that of Shahrazad in the process of revolutionary change. She asks what it means to develop a national, gendered consciousness from diasporic locals while staying committed to the homeland. Al-Samman presents close readings of the fiction of six prominent authors whose works span over half a century and define the current status of Arab diaspora studies—Ghada al-Samman, Hanan al-Shaykh, Hamida al-Na'na', Hoda Barakat, Samar Yazbek, and Salwa al-Neimi. Exploring the journeys in time and space undertaken by these women, *Anxiety of Erasure* shines a light on the ways in which writers remain participants in their homelands' intellectual lives, asserting both the traumatic and the triumphant aspects of diaspora. The result is a nuanced Arab women's poetic that celebrates rootlessness and rootedness, autonomy and belonging.

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