The Genesis of Literature in Islam
From the Aural to the Read
Gregor Schoeler
Revised edition in collaboration with and translated by
Shawkat Toorawa

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Asks how knowledge was transmitted in the period of Classical Islam

Description
The Qur’an was the first book of Islam and indeed the first book of Arabic literature. It contains the word of God and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. Muslims wishing to fully understand and interpret this material were inspired to make an inventory and study of their tradition. This involved the collection, transmission and instruction of the sacred text, of the words and deeds of Muhammad, and also of poetry.

This activity, which began towards the end of the seventh century, relied predominantly on oral communication between teacher and student. However writing became an integral part of this process, and was the genesis of one of the richest literatures of late antiquity and the middle ages. This is clear from the widespread dissemination of scholarship through the writing and proliferation of books.

The Genesis of Literature in Islam explains how this change in the transmission of knowledge - from predominantly oral/aural to written - came about.

- Considers the evolution of the Qur’an as it became an official written document
- Explores the role of the court in the development and transmission of Arabic literature
- Looks at the influences on the transmission of knowledge from Arabic, Jewish and Hellenic-Christian culture
- Situates the development of Islam and the Arabic language within the history of the book

Selling Points
- Translation of an influential French publication; this edition has been revised in a collaboration between the author and the translator
- 26th volume in established and respected The New Edinburgh Islamic Surveys series edited by Professor Carole Hillenbrand

The Authors
Gregor Schoeler is Professor and Chair of Islamic Studies, Orientalisches Seminar, University of Basel.

Shawkat Toorawa is Professor of Near Eastern Studies at Cornell University.

Series
The New Edinburgh Islamic Surveys

Readership
Islamic Studies
Upper level undergraduates, MA students and postgraduates in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, Arabic, and Religious Studies.
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