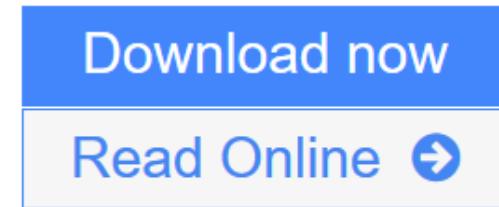




Classical Arabic Literature: A Library of Arabic Literature Anthology

Geert Jan Van Gelder



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A major achievement in the field of translation, this anthology presents a rich assortment of classical Arabic poems and literary prose, from pre-Islamic times until the 18th century, with short introductions to guide non-specialist students and informative endnotes and bibliography for advanced scholars. Like many pre-modern Arabic anthologies it aims at being both entertaining and informative. It ranges from the early Bedouin poems with their evocation of desert life to refined urban lyrical verse, from tender love poetry to sonorous eulogy or vicious lampoons, and from the heights of mystical rapture to the frivolity of comic verse. The prose contains anecdotes, entertaining or edifying tales and parables, a fairy-tale, a bawdy story, samples of literary criticism, and much more.

With this anthology, distinguished Arabist Geert Jan van Gelder brings together well-known texts as well as less familiar pieces that will be new even to scholars in the field. Many recent studies and anthologies of Middle Eastern literatures are primarily interested in Islam and religious matters—an emphasis that leads to the common misconception that almost everything in the region was and is dominated by religion. *Classical Arabic Literature* instead brings to life the rich variety of pre-modern Arabic social and cultural life, where secular texts happily coexisted with religious ones. This masterful anthology, in English only, will introduce this vibrant literary heritage to a wide spectrum of new readers.



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