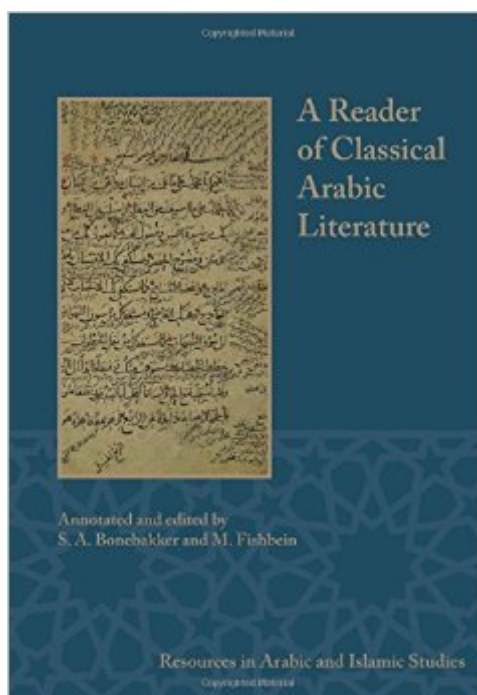


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A Reader Of Classical Arabic Literature (Resources In Arabic And Islamic Studies)



Synopsis

A Reader of Classical Arabic Literature is one of a very small group of resources in English for the teaching of intermediate and advanced level classical Arabic. Based on his lecture notes, the late Seeger Bonebakker designed a superb teaching text, which he then asked his UCLA colleague, Michael Fishbein, to help him annotate and augment. The result is a truly valuable reader, one used widely in the United States and Europe, featuring judicious and instructive selections from such works as Ibn al-Qifti's *Inbah al-ruwat*, al-Tanukhi's *al-Faraj ba'd al-shidda*, and al-Dhahabi's *Siyar a'lam al-nubala'*, among others.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I own a copy of the 1995 edition which was printed in Venice, but presumably not much has been changed. I am glad to see this book more widely available than when I was a graduate student. While working through this book will not make you a professional Arabist, it may well be one of the best books in the field for beginning readers of classical Arabic. It is more or less presupposed that the student has the equivalent of a standard two year MSA class, but this knowledge can of course also be acquired through diligent self-study in about a year with the use of a good grammar, such as Fischer or Wright, and a lot of patience. The texts are not translated, and one could quibble with the glossaries, but overall the selections, fourteen in number, are high quality excerpts from classical Arabic literature, even including bits of poetry. A big plus is that they are not

devoid of humor. Should you be deliberating between acquiring this volume or Frangieh's anthology, do not hesitate. In spite of the larger number of texts and the CD which Frangieh offers, this book is more affordable and overall superior.

Not much to be said beyond that this is a good Classical and Middle Arabic reader, a compilation of various interesting texts from the Abbasid era mainly, with very good vocabulary lists. I ran some of the glossary translations by a natively Arabic speaking friend, and he felt they were pretty good in giving the shades of meaning of the original texts. The printing is good quality, the Arabic fonts a solid and readable naskh typeface, the vowelling is minimal but it appears where needed for clarity, and this is what an Arabic student needs - experience in reading un-vowed text. The range of texts is rather nice, with a nice mix of the secular and sacred. It's like a necklace of different tasty stories and narratives, different interesting pieces strung along. I am finding it good for practicing transcription and translation. I recommend it to any student of Arabic or budding Arabist.

This is probably the best item of the sort. No DVD -CD attached. But there is no need for! It goes from introductory to very heavy stuff. And it is certainly highly recommended by Hebrew University teaching personnel.

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