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 Islamic Literate Society ""; ""Terms Of Exchange: Problems Of  
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 Acquisition Of Knowledge ""; ""The Sacral As A Life Force: Al-Hilli's  
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 Sciences? ""  
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 Disputation In Rhetoric ""; ""In Pursuit Of Adab ""; ""The Litterateur's  
 Anecdotal Network""; ""An Open-Market Cultural Economy "";  
 ""Speculative Theology At Work ""; ""The Encyclopedic East ""; ""Defining  
 A Cultural Milieu: Multiple Genealogies ""; ""Al-Safadi's Navigations:  
 Theology And Traditionalists""; ""Literary Venues ""; ""Logic, Grammar,  
 And Jurisprudence ""; ""Traditionalist Alarm At Translating The Greeks  
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 ""Contentious Theological Grounds ""

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## Sommario/riassunto

"In The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters: Arabic Knowledge  
 Construction, Muhsin J. al-Musawi offers a groundbreaking study of  
 literary heritage in the medieval and premodern Islamic period. Al-  
 Musawi challenges the paradigm that considers the period from the fall  
 of Baghdad in 1258 to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1919 as  
 an "Age of Decay" followed by an "Awakening" (al-nahdah). His  
 sweeping synthesis debunks this view by carefully documenting a  
 "republic of letters" in the Islamic Near East and South Asia that was  
 vibrant and dynamic, one varying considerably from the generally  
 accepted image of a centuries-long period of intellectual and literary  
 stagnation. Al-Musawi argues that the massive cultural production of  
 the period was not a random enterprise: instead, it arose due to an  
 emerging and growing body of readers across Islamic lands who  
 needed compendiums, lexicons, and commentaries to engage with  
 scholars and writers. Scholars, too, developed their own networks to  
 respond to each other and to their readers. Rather than addressing only  
 the elite, this culture industry supported a common readership that  
 enlarged the creative space and audience for prose and poetry in  
 standard and colloquial Arabic. Works by craftsmen, artisans, and  
 women appeared side by side with those by distinguished scholars and  
 poets. Through careful exploration of these networks, The Medieval  
 Islamic Republic of Letters makes use of relevant theoretical  
 frameworks to situate this culture in the ongoing discussion of non-  
 Islamic and European efforts. Thorough, theoretically rigorous, and  
 nuanced, al-Musawi's book is an original contribution to a range of  
 fields in Arabic and Islamic cultural history of the twelfth to eighteenth  
 centuries. "Muhsin al-Musawi's work systematizes a huge body of  
 primary literary texts and current scholarship under a compelling and  
 original thesis. The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters will be the  
 starting point for a new generation of scholarship on this six-hundred-  
 year 'republic of letters' that stretched from India to North Africa." --

Suzanne P. Stetkevych, Sultan Qaboos bin Said Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Georgetown University"--

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