

Studies in the Origins of Early Islamic Culture and Tradition (Variorum Collected Studies Series)

Michael Cook



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In contrast to the gradual formation of the high cultures of most of the world, the process by which Islamic civilisation emerged and took on its classical form between the 7th and 9th centuries was unusually sudden. The studies collected here are concerned with aspects of this remarkable development. Their topics are varied, including the emergence of dialectical theology, the origins of accounts of Pharaonic history current in medieval Egypt, the sources of Muslim dietary law, the Islamic background of Karaism, and Max Weber's views on Islamic sects. Other articles look at early Syrian eschatology and its connections with late antiquity and Byzantium, at the relevance of eschatology to debates about the dating of traditions, and at the attitudes of the early traditionists to the writing down of tradition. The final items examine reports about the textual affiliations of a long-lost Koranic codex and discussions of adultery among the baboons of Yemen. A recurring theme is the relationship between Early Muslim ideas and those of non-Muslim cultures, sometimes very ancient ones.

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