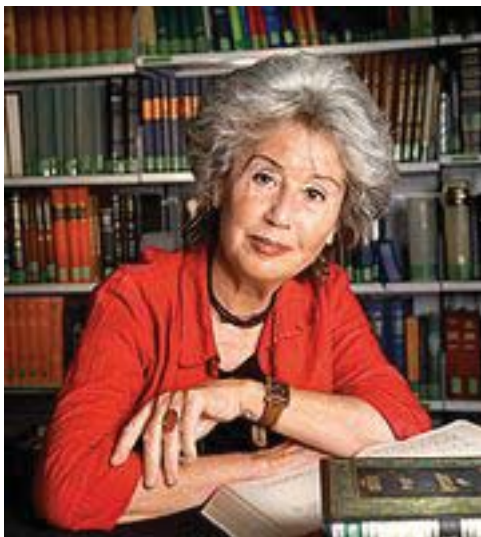


The Center for Middle East Studies presents the
R. Stephen Humphreys Distinguished Lecture

The “Discovery of Writing” in the Qur’an: tracing an epistemic revolution in Arab Late Antiquity

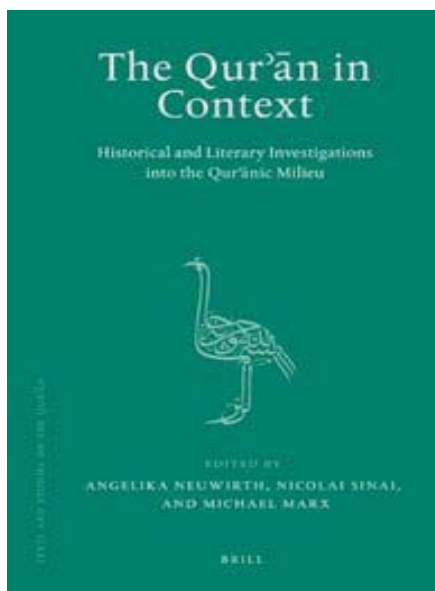
Angelika Neuwirth

Arabic Studies, Free University (Berlin)



Tuesday, May 21 / 4pm
HSSB 4080

The Qur’an—being the first significant non-oral literary text in the Arabic language—induced an epistemic revolution in the Arabic-speaking world of Late Antiquity. This fundamental renewal of the Arab Late Antique world was achieved through the Qur’anic negotiation and re-interpretation not only of the neighboring Jewish and Christian traditions but no less through the re-working of the Ancient Arabic lexicon of concepts. The talk will discuss the emergence of a communal identity based on the newly discovered authority of writing and in particular the understanding of the prophetic proclamation, Qur’an, as a “reading” from a celestial text. At the same time, the poetical concept of script as a frustratingly mute and unintelligible sign system (wahy) will be un-demonized: Qur’anic wahy is communication par excellence.



*Sponsored by the Center for Middle East Studies,
R. Stephen Humphreys Distinguished Lecture Series*