Ernst Herzfeld And The Development Of Near Eastern Studies 1900-50

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As archaeologist, philologist, and historian, German scholar Ernst Herzfeld (1879-1948) significantly shaped the study of the prehistoric to Islamic Near East. His life and work are reassessed and situated within decisive developments in research and politics in the 20th century, providing new insights into the historiography of the Near East.

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Studies in the history and archaeology of the ancient and Islamic Near East greatly expanded and matured during the first half of the 20th century. Ernst Herzfeld (1879-1948), a pioneer in the archaeology, art history, and Persian language studies, significantly shaped this development. He excavated such key sites as Samarra, Paikuli, and Persepolis, and helped to define prehistoric and Islamic art. He became the worlds first professor for Near Eastern archaeology in Berlin, adviser to Persias government, and a member of the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton. Scholars from a variety of disciplines reassess Herfelds wide-ranging contributions and situate them in their intellectual, academic, and political frameworks. The book provides new insights into the historiography of archaeological and historical interpretations of the Near East, especially Iran, the German academic-political milieu of the first half of the 20th century, and the controversial figure of Ernst Herzfeld.


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Milestones in the Development of Achaemenid Historiography in the Era of Ernst Herzfeld - Pierre Briant 2005

The Great American Plunder of Persia's Antiquities, 1925-1941 - Mohammad Gholi Majd 2003

Using recently declassified State Department records, Mohammad Gholi Majd describes the manner in which the U.S. government guided and assisted American museums in acquiring vast quantities of Persian antiquities and archaeological finds. In the evolution of American-Persian relations, the importance of the antiquities story has remained unrecognized.

Persepolis: Discovery and Afterlife of a World Wonder presents the first full study of the history of archaeological exploration at Persepolis after its destruction in 330 BC. Based on primary archival evidence, anecdotal information, and unpublished documents, this book describes in detail the history of archaeological exploration, visual documentation, and excavations at one of the most celebrated sites of the ancient world. The book addresses a broad audience of readers ranging from students of the archaeology, history, and art history of ancient, medieval, and modern Iran to scholars in Classical Studies and Ancient Near Eastern Studies.

From Cyprus to Seleukos - Pierre Briant 2021-02-01

The present volume is a collection of articles published in English by Professor Pierre Briant from the College de France, in various forms over the past three decades.

The Historiography of Persian Architecture - Mohammad Gharpour 2015

Histoiriography is the study of the methodology of writing history, the development of the discipline of history, and the changing interpretations of historical events in the works of individual historians. Exploring the historiography of Persian art and architecture requires a closer look at a diverse range of sources, including chronicles, historical accounts, travelogues, and material evidence coming from archaeological excavations. The Historiography of Persian Architecture highlights the political, cultural, and intellectual contexts that lie behind the written history of Persian architecture in the twentieth century, presenting a series of investigations on issues related to historiography. This book addresses the challenges, complexities, and contradictions regarding historical and geographical diversity of Persian architecture, including issues lacking in the 20th century historiography of Iran and neighboring countries. This book not only illustrates different trends in Persian architecture but also clarifies changing notions of research in this field. Aiming to introduce new tools of analysis, the book offers fresh insights into the discipline, supported by historical documents, archaeological data, treatises, and visual materials. It brings together well-established and emerging scholars from a broad range of academic spheres, in order to question and challenge pre-existing historiographical frameworks, particularly through specific case studies. Overall, it provides a valuable contribution to the study of Persian architecture, simultaneously revisiting past literature and advancing new approaches. This book would be of interest to students and scholars of Middle East and Islamic Studies, as well as Architectural History, including Islamic architecture and historiography.

Early Islamic Art and Architecture - Jonathan M. Bloom 2017-05-15

This volume deals with the formative period of Islamic art (c. 950), and the different approaches to studying it. Individual essays deal with architecture, ceramics, coins, textiles, and manuscripts, as well as with such broad questions as the supposed imposition of images, and the relationships between secular and sacred art. An introductory essay sets each work in context; it is complemented by a bibliography for further reading.

Testing the Canon of Ancient Near Eastern Art and Archaeology - Amy Gansell 2020-01-06

Testing the Canon of Ancient Near Eastern Art and Archaeology invites readers to reconsider the contents and agendas of the art historical and world culture canon by looking at one of their most historically enduring components, the art and archaeology of the ancient Near East. Amy Shafer, Amy Rebecca Gansell, and other top researchers in the field examine and critique the formation and historical transformation of the ancient Near Eastern canon of art, architecture, and material culture. Contributors flesh out the current boundaries of regional and typological sub-canons, analyze the technologies of canon production (such as museum practices and classroom pedagogies), and voice first-hand heritage perspectives. Each chapter, thereby, critically engages with the historiography behind our approach to the Near East and proposes alternative constructs. Collectively, the essays confront and critique the ancient Near Eastern canon's present configuration and re-imagine its future role in the canon of world art as a whole. This expansive collection of essays covers the Near East's many regions, eras, and types of visual and archaeological materials, offering specific and actionable proposals for its study. Testing the Canon of Ancient Near Eastern Art and Archaeology stands as a vital benchmark and offers a collective path forward for the study and appreciation of Near Eastern cultural heritage.

The Bloomsbury Companion to Islamic Studies - Clinton Bennett 2014-11-20

The Bloomsbury Companion to Islamic Studies is a comprehensive one volume reference guide to Islam and study in this area. A team of leading international scholars - Muslim and non-Muslim - consider important aspects of study in the field, providing readers with a complete and accessible source of information to the wide range of methodologies and theoretical principles involved. Presenting Islam as a variegated tradition, key essays from the contributors demonstrate how it is subject to different interpretations, and how this varies historically and geographically. Their essays, in a comprehensive, balanced, and accessible manner, provide the essential foundation for further reading, and illustrate the best in current approaches to contextual analysis. The collection of essays also highlights recent trends in the development of critical and interdisciplinarity, and sets out to find profitable future directions for interdisciplinary research.

Arts and Culture in the Islamic World - Mohammad Majd 2014-01-24

This book provides a compelling overview of the arts and culture in the Islamic world, from the pre-Islamic period to the present day. It covers a wide range of artistic forms, including architecture, painting, ceramics, textiles, and calligraphy, and examines the ways in which these forms have been shaped by the unique cultural and historical context of the Islamic world. The book also considers the impact of other cultures on Islamic art and the ways in which Islamic art has influenced other cultures. It is an essential resource for students, scholars, and anyone interested in the arts and culture of the Islamic world.

The Cambridge Companion to Islamic Art - Roger Aston 2014-03-14

This book provides an introduction to the art and architecture of the Islamic world, from the pre-Islamic period to the present day. It covers a wide range of artistic forms, including architecture, painting, ceramics, textiles, and calligraphy, and examines the ways in which these forms have been shaped by the unique cultural and historical context of the Islamic world. The book also considers the impact of other cultures on Islamic art and the ways in which Islamic art has influenced other cultures. It is an essential resource for students, scholars, and anyone interested in the arts and culture of the Islamic world.

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Exile and the Nation-Ashish Marashi 2020-06-08 In the aftermath of the seventh-century Islamic conquest of Iran, Zoroastrians departed for India. Known as the Parsis, they slowly lost contact with their ancestral land until the nineteenth century, when steam-powered sea travel, the increased circulation of Zoroastrian-themed books, and the philanthropic efforts of Parsi benefactors sparked a new era of interaction between the two groups. Tracing the cultural and intellectual exchange between Iranian nationalism and the Parsi community during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Exile and the Nation shows how this interchange led to the collective reimagining of Parsi and Iranian national identity—and the influence of antiquity on modern Iranian nationalism, which previously rested solely on European forms of thought. Iranian nationalism, Ashish Marashi argues, was also the byproduct of the complex history resulting from the demise of the early modern Persianate cultural system, as well as one of the many cultural heterotopias produced within the Indian Ocean world. Crossing the boundaries of numerous fields of study, this book reframes Iranian nationalism within the context of the connected, transnational, and global history of the modern era.

Cosmos and Community in Early Medieval Art-Benjamin Anderson 2017-02-28 In the rapidly changing world of the early Middle Ages, depictions of the cosmos represented a consistent point of reference across the three dominant states—the Frankish, Byzantine, and Islamic Empires. As these empires diverged from their Greco-Roman roots between 700 and 1000 A.D. and established distinctive medieval artistic traditions, cosmic imagery created a web of visual continuity, though local meanings of these images varied greatly. Benjamin Anderson uses chronicles, tables, mantles, frescoes, and manuscripts to show how cosmological motifs informed relationships between individuals, especially the ruling elite, and communities, demonstrating how domestic and global politics informed the production and reception of these depictions. The first book to consider such imagery across the dramatically diverse cultures of Western Europe, Byzantium, and the Islamic Middle East, Cosmos and Community in Early Medieval Art illuminates the distinctions between the cosmological art of these three cultural spheres, and reasserts the centrality of astronomical imagery to the study of art history.

World Heritage in Iran-Ali Mozaffari 2016-02-11 Pasargadae is the location of the tomb of Cyrus the Great, founder of the Achaemenid Empire. Through the ages it was Islamised and the tomb was ascribed to the Mother of Solomon. It was only at the beginning of the twentieth century that archaeological evidence demonstrated the relationship between the site and Cyrus and it was appropriated according to political discourses on nationalism and Islamism while concurrently acknowledged as a national and then a World Heritage site. However, Pasargadae is neither an isolated World Heritage site, nor purely a symbol of abstract state politics. Pasargadae and its immediate vicinity constitute a living landscape occupied by villagers, nomads and tourists. This edited volume takes Pasargadae as a multi-disciplinary test case within which to discuss on a range of methodological and theoretical concerns on World Heritage sites. Written by an international team of experts, it offers fresh perspectives on the multifaceted sphere of World Heritage in Iran and its impact on modern Iranian history, the global economy and the tourism industry.

The Transformation of Nature in Art-Andaná K. Coomaraswamy 2016-05-31

The Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art and Architecture-Jonathan Bloom 2009-04-15 Oxford University Press is proud to present the most up-to-date and comprehensive encyclopedia in this field. In three illustrated volumes with more than 1,500 entries, the Encyclopedia deals with all aspects of this important area of study, ranging from the Middle East to Central Asia to Southeast Asia and Africa as well as Europe and North America. The Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art and Architecture covers all subject areas including: artists, rulers, writers, architecture, ceramics, sculpture, painting, calligraphy, coins, textiles, and much more. The Encyclopedia offers fully-updated articles and bibliographies that draw upon the expansive scholarship of The Dictionary of Art, as well as more than 500 plans, maps, diagrams, illustrations, and color plates. This exciting reference work is accessible to scholars, students and general readers, making it a reliable and essential resource covering this topic of burgeoning importance in world history and the visual arts.

A Companion to Ancient Near Eastern Art-Ant C. Gunter 2018-11-20 Provides a broad view of the history and current state of scholarship on the art of the ancient Near East This book covers the artistic and material culture of the Ancient Near East, from the Neolithic to the Islamic periods. It describes the art and culture of many different ancient societies, each with their own distinct artistic style. The book offers a variety of critical perspectives: across approaches and interpretative frameworks, key explanatory concepts, materials and selected media and formats, and zones of interaction. This important work also addresses both traditional and emerging categories of material, intellectual perspectives, and research priorities. The book covers geography and chronology, context and setting, medium and scale, while acknowledging the diversity of regional and cultural traditions and the uneven survival of evidence. Part One of the book considers the methodologies and approaches that the field has drawn on and refined. Part Two addresses terms and concepts critical to understanding the subjects and formal characteristics of the Near Eastern material record, including the intellectual frameworks within which monuments have been approached and interpreted. Part Three surveys the field's most distinctive and characteristic genres, with special reference to Mesopotamian art and architecture. Part Four considers involvement with artistic traditions across a broader reach, examining connections with Egypt, the Aegean, and the Mediterranean. And finally, Part Five addresses intersections with the Middle Ages and the early Islamic period, and the representation of cultural continuity and historical development. A Companion to Ancient Near Eastern Art is an enlightening, must-have book for advanced undergraduate and graduate students of ancient Near East art and Near East history as well as those interested in history and art history.

The Elamite World-Javier Alvarez-Mon 2018-01-29 Amongst the civilizations to participate in the dynamic processes of contact and interchange that gave rise to complex societies in the ancient Near East, Elam has remained one of the most obscure, at times languishing in the background of scholarly inquiry. In recent years, however, an increasing body of academic publications have acknowledged its relevance and suggested that its legacy was more considerable and long lasting than previously estimated. The Elamite World assembling a group of 40 international scholars to contribute to the expertise of the production of a solid, lavishly illustrated, English language treatment of Elamite civilization. It covers topics such as its physical setting, historical development, languages, and people, material culture, art, science, religion and society, as well as the legacy of Elam in the Persian empire and its presence in the modern world. This comprehensive and ambitious survey seeks for Elam, hardly a household name, a noteworthy place in our shared cultural heritage. It will be both a valuable introductory text for a general audience and a definitive reference source for students and academics.

The Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies-George Boys-Stones 2009-08-20 The Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies is a unique collection of some seventy articles which together explore the ways in which ancient Greece has been, is, and might be studied. It is intended to inform its readers, but also, importantly, to inspire them, and to enable them to pursue their own research by introducing the primary resources and exploring the latest agenda for their study. The emphasis is on the breadth and potential of Hellenic Studies as a flourishing and exciting intellectual arena, and also upon its relevance to the way we think about ourselves today.

The Parthians-Uwe Elberbruck 2003-03-25 This volume provides a comprehensive overview of the history and culture of the Parthian Empire, which existed for almost 500 years from 247 BC to 224 AD. The Parthians were Rome's great opponents in the east, but comparatively little is known about them today. This book explores the Empire's rise, expansion, and decline, and covers both the wars with the Romans in the west and the nomads in the east. Sources include the small amount from the Empire itself, as well as those from outside the Parthian world, such as Greek, Roman and Chinese documents. Elberbruck also explores the Parthian military, social history, religions, art, architecture and numismatics, all supported by a great number of images and maps. The Parthians is an invaluable resource for those studying the ancient Near East during the period of the Parthian Empire, as well as for more general readers interested in this era.

The Shaping of Persian Art-Yuka Kadour 2014-07-18 While the impact of the Persian style is undeniably reflected in most aspects of the art and architecture of Islamic Central Asia, this PERSO-CENTRAL ASIAN CONNECTION was clarified only through the Euro-American practice of collecting and interpreting the art and material culture of the Persian Islamic world in modern times. This had an enormous impact on the formation of scholarship on connoisseurship in Persian art, for instance, with an attempt to define the characteristics of how the Islamic art of Iran and Central Asia should be viewed and displayed at museums, and how these subjects should be researched in academia. This important historical fact, which has attracted scholarly interest only in recent years, should be treated as a historical deviation from the history of Persian civilization: thereby it can be the manifestation of particular historical times and charismatic individuals. Attention should therefore be given to various factors that resulted in the shaping of "Persian" imagery across the globe, not only in terms of national ideologies, but also in terms of the connection and interaction between the Islamic and non-Muslim worlds. This book explores the connections between and among Persia, China, India, and Islam, and is divided into three parts: The Shaping of Persian Art (1258-1318), The Development of Persian Art (1320-1420), and The Impact of Persian Art (1420-1532). The three parts provide an overview of the history of Persian art and the role it played in the formation of the Islamic art of Central Asia.

Archaeology of Empire in Achaemenid Egypt-Colburn Henry P. Colburn 2013-09-11 A study of the material culture of Egypt during the period of Achaemenid Persian rule, c. 526-404 BCE provides a new look at the material archaeological evidence for Achaemenid Egypt, including temples, tombs, irrigation works, statues, stele, seals and coins that demonstrates how different types of evidence, both textual and archaeological - including material of uncertain provenance - can be used to address a single historical question. Offers critical discussion of the dating criteria used by archaeologists for Egyptian Late Period material/Etruscan strategies used by the Persians to establish and maintain control of Egypt/Examines how these strategies may have affected the lives of people living in Egypt during the 27th Dynasty/In this new edition of the book, Colburn has provided a new concluding chapter that explores the influence of Persian rule on the economy of Egypt, including how the Persian conquest affected the production of luxury goods and how the Persian conquest affected the economy of Egypt. Includes new maps, figures, and tables. This book is a comprehensive study of the material culture of Egypt during the Achaemenid period, and includes new material and new maps.
range of experiences people had as a result.

Darius in the Shadow of Alexander-Pierre Briant 2013-01-05 Darius III ruled over the Persian Empire and was the most powerful king of his time, yet he remains obscure. In this first book devoted to the historical memory of Darius III, Pierre Briant describes a man depicted in ancient sources as a decent Oriental who lacked Western masculine virtues and was in every way the opposite of Alexander the Great.

King and Court in Ancient Persia 559 to 331 BCE-Lloyd Lewellyn-Jones 2014-02-14 This book explores the representation of Persian monarchy and the court of the Achaeamenid Great Kings from the point of view of the ancient Iranians themselves and through the sometimes distorted prism of Classical authors.

The Impact of Classical Greece on European and National Identities-M. Haqmna 2021-11-15

Age of Transition-Edward Bleiberg 2015 Building on the groundbreaking 2012 exhibition "Byzantium and Islam: Age of Transition," this work explores the transformations and continuities in the Byzantine Empire from the seventh to the ninth century. The present volume extends the exhibition catalogue's innovative investigation of cultural interaction between Christian and Jewish communities and the world of Islam. Eleven essays by internationally distinguished scholars address such topics as the transmission of Christian imagery to the Mediterranean, the Abydos Christian basilica and the Muslim world, the purposeful use of figural floor mosaics in places of worship, the evolution of classical and Byzantine motifs in a new cosmology for Muslim rulers, and interconnections in the realm of music. Each essay provides compelling evidence that the era of transition from Byzantine to Islamic rule in the eastern Mediterranean and North Africa resulted in unprecedented cultural cross-fertilization and significantly affected the development of the Mediterranean world for centuries to come.

Iconography of Islamic Art-O'Kane Bernard O'Kane 2019-08-06 People have been searching for meaning in Islamic art for centuries. Newly available in paperback, this book explores the iconography of Islamic art, presenting a diverse range of approaches to the subject. Despite this variety, there is an overarching theme: the linking of the interpretation of images to textual sources. This results in a collection of in-depth studies of motifs as diverse as the peacock, trees, and the figure holding a cup and branch. In addition, new interpretations are presented of other subjects, such as an Abydos metal basin or Mongol paintings. Textual sources on the Ka'ba or the use of marble provide a starting point for the examination of objects and their relationship to history. The architecture of Islamic art, covered in a separate volume, is not discussed here.

Imperial Matter-Lori Khatchadourian 2016-03-18 A free ebook version of this title is available through Luminos, University of California Press's new open access publishing program. Visit www.luminosoa.org to learn more. What is the role of the material world in shaping the tensions and paradoxes of imperial sovereignty? Scholars have long shed light on the complex processes of conquest, extraction, and colonialism under imperial rule. But imperialism has usually been cast as an exclusively human drama, one in which the world of matter does not play an active role. Lori Khatchadourian argues instead that things—from everyday objects to monumental buildings—profundly shape social and political life under empire. Out of the archaeology of ancient Persia and the South Caucasus, Imperial Matter advances powerful new analytical approaches to the study of imperialism that are relevant to our own times.

Modernism and the Early Middle East-Sandy Isenstadt 2011-03-01 This provocative collection of essays is the first book-length treatment of the development of modern architecture in the Middle East. Ranging from Jerusalem at the turn of the twentieth century to Libya under Italian colonial rule, postwar Turkey, and on to present-day Iraq, the essays cohere around the historical encounter between the political, economic, and cultural modernity that shaped the region and the often conflicting architectural styles that emerged in its wake. The contributors explore how the modern movement was shaped by the political and cultural context of the Middle East and how it in turn shaped that region.

The Sasana Era-Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis 2010-07-20 This latest volume in "The Idea of Iran" series concentrates on the Sasanian period. Seizing power from the previous dynasty - the Parthians - the Sasanians ruled Iran and most of the ancient Near East from 224 until 642 CE. They are particularly fascinating because of their adherence to Zoroastrianism, an ancient dualistic Iranian religion named after the prophet Zarathustra (or, in Greek, Zoroaster). The Sasanians expressed the divine aspect of their rule in a variety of forms, such as on coins, rock reliefs and silver plates, and architecture and the arts flourishing under their aegis. Sasanian military success brought them into conflict with Rome, and later Byzantium. Their empire eventually collapsed under the force of the Arab Muslim AD 642, when Zoroastrianism was replaced with Islam. Engaging with all the major aspects of Sasanian culture, twelve eminent scholars address subjects which include: early Sasanian art and iconography; early Sasanian coinage; religion and identity in the Sasanian empire; later Sasanian orality and literacy; and state and society in late antique Iran. The volume in question arguably comprises the most complete and comprehensive treatment of the Sasanian civilization yet to be published in English.

Egyptology from the First World War to the Third Reich-Thomas Schneider 2012-11-08 Only recently has Egyptology started examining aspects of its history and its implications for our self-understanding and understanding of ancient Egypt, Egyptology, and the past as a whole. This edition presents aspects of ideology, scholarship, and individual biographies from World War I to the "Third Reich".

The Oxford Companion to Archaeology-Neil Acher Silverman 2012 Since its publication in 1996, The Oxford Companion to Archaeology has firmly established itself as the standard reference work in the field of archaeology. Written by over 160 scholars from over 50 countries, it remains a favorite among students, scholars, and anyone interested in archaeology. In this edition, the second edition provides thorough coverage to historical archaeology, the development of a field of study, and the ways the discipline works to explain the past. In addition to these theoretical entries, other entries describe major excavations, discoveries, and interpretations, from the discovery of the cave paintings at Lascaux to the deciphering of Egyptian hieroglyphics and the use of luminescence dating. Much has changed in the field since 1996. Recent developments in methods and analytical techniques (e.g., laser-based mapping and survey systems, new applications of the scanning electron microscope) have revolutionized the ways excavations are performed. Cultural tourism, cultural resource management, heritage, and conservation have been redefined as areas within archaeology, and have had new emphasis given them by scholars and administrators. Major new sites have expanded our understanding of prehistory and human developments through time. The second edition explores each of these advances in the field, adding approximately 200 entries and expanding the total work to three volumes. Neil Acher Silverman, a renowned practicing archaeologist, author, and scholar, and a board member for the first edition, is the editor in chief. In addition to significant expansion, first-edition entries have been thoroughly revised and updated to reflect the progress that has been made in the last decade and a half.

Introduction to Islamic Archaeology-Marcus Milwright 2010-02-05 Traces archaeology's contribution to Islamic culture from its earliest manifestations to the present: This introduction to the archaeology of Islamic art includes the history of the discipline from its earliest manifestations through to the present and evaluates the contribution made by archaeology to the understanding of key aspects of Islamic culture. The author argues that it is essential for the results of archaeological research to be more fully integrated into the wider historical study of the Islamic world. His organisation of the book into broad themes allows a focus on issues that are relevant across different regions and periods, and the broad geographical scope reflects the main focus of archaeological research in the Islamic world to the present day. Key Features: Includes short case studies to allow the reader to examine the ways in which archaeologists collect and interpret material in specific contexts. Organisation of the book into broad themes allows a focus on issues that are relevant across different regions and periods, and the broad geographical scope reflects the main focus of archaeological research in the Islamic world to the present day. Key Features: Includes short case studies to allow the reader to examine the ways in which archaeologists collect and interpret material in specific contexts. Consider archaeological work conducted in the area stretching from Afghanistan and the Central Asian republics in the east to Spain in the west draws comparisons with Islamic regions of sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Americas. Contributions also tackle both methodological and theoretical issues related to the study of pilgrimage, sacred travel and other types of movement to, from and within sanctuaries through case studies stretching from the first millennium BC to the early medieval period.
The Lost Archive-Marina Rustow 2020-01-14 A compelling look at the Fatimid caliphate's robust culture of documentation The lost archive of the Fatimid caliphate (909–1171) survived in an unexpected place: the storage room, or geniza, of a synagogue in Cairo, recycled as scrap paper and deposited there by medieval Jews. Marina Rustow tells the story of this extraordinary find, inviting us to reconsider the longstanding but mistaken consensus that before 1500 the dynasties of the Islamic Middle East produced few documents, and preserved even fewer. Beginning with government documents before the Fatimids and paper's westward spread across Asia, Rustow reveals a millennial tradition of state record keeping whose very continuities suggest the strength of Middle Eastern institutions, not their weakness. Tracing the complex routes by which Arabic documents made their way from Fatimid palace officials to Jewish scribes, the book provides a rare window onto a robust culture of documentation and archiving not only comparable to that of medieval Europe, but, in many cases, surpassing it. Above all, Rustow argues that the problem of archives in the medieval Middle East lies not with the region's administrative culture, but with our failure to understand preindustrial documentary ecology. Illustrated with stunning examples from the Cairo Geniza, this compelling book advances our understanding of documents as physical artifacts, showing how the records of the Fatimid caliphate, once recovered, deciphered, and studied, can help change our thinking about the medieval Islamicate world and about premodern polities more broadly.
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