



Authority and Identity in Medieval Islamic Historiography: Persian Histories from the Peripheries (Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization)

By Mimi Hanaoka

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Intriguing dreams, improbable myths, fanciful genealogies, and suspect etymologies. These were all key elements of the historical texts composed by scholars and bureaucrats on the peripheries of Islamic empires between the tenth and fifteenth centuries. But how are historians to interpret such narratives? And what can these more literary histories tell us about the people who wrote them and the times in which they lived? In this book, Mimi Hanaoka offers an innovative, interdisciplinary method of approaching these sorts of local histories from the Persianate world. By paying attention to the purpose and intention behind a text's creation, her book highlights the preoccupation with authority to rule and legitimacy within disparate regional, provincial, ethnic, sectarian, ideological and professional communities. By reading these texts in such a way, Hanaoka transforms the literary patterns of these fantastic histories into rich sources of information about identity, rhetoric, authority, legitimacy, and centre-periphery relations.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Mimi Hanaoka is Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Richmond, where she is a scholar of history and religion. Her publications include scholarly journal articles on Persian and Islamic history and historiography. Her work as a social and cultural historian focuses on Iran and the Persianate world from the tenth to fifteenth centuries, concentrating on issues of authority and identity. In the field of global history, she concentrates on interactions between the Middle East and East Asia, focusing on the history of Iran-Japan relations.

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