

An eleventh-century Egyptian guide to the universe: the book of curiosities

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Abstrak

Acquired by the Bodleian Library in 2002, the Book of Curiosities is now recognized as one of the most important discoveries in the history of cartography in recent decades. This eleventh-century Arabic treatise, composed in Egypt under the Fatimid caliphs, is a detailed account of the heavens and the Earth, illustrated by an unparalleled series of maps and astronomical diagrams. With topics ranging from comets to the island of Sicily, from lunar mansions to the sources of the Nile, it represents the extent of geographical, astronomical and astrological knowledge of the time. This authoritative edition and translation, accompanied by a colour facsimile reproduction, opens a unique window onto the worldview of medieval Islam. An extensive glossary of star-names and seven indices, on birds, animals and other items have been added for easy reference.