



Museums in Arabia: Transnational Practices and Regional Processes

Karen Exell, Sarina Wakefield

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Museum activity has, in recent years, undergone major and rapid development in the Arabian Peninsula, with the regeneration of existing museums as well as the establishment of new ones. Alongside such rapid expansion, questions are inevitably raised as to the new challenges museums face in this region and whether the museum, as a central focus of heritage preservation, also runs the risk of overshadowing local forms of heritage performance and preservation. With contributions from leading academics from a range of disciplines and heritage practitioners with first-hand experience of working in the region, this volume addresses the issues and challenges facing museums in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Yemen and the UAE. It focuses on the themes of politics, public engagement and the possibility of a new museum paradigm which might appropriately reflect the interests and culture of the region. The interdisciplinary approaches analyse museum development from both an inside and outside perspective, suggesting that museums do not follow a uniform trajectory across the region, but are embedded within each states' socio-cultural context, individual government agendas and political realities. Including case study analysis, which brings the more marginal nations into the debates, as well as new empirical data and critical evaluation of the role of the museum in the Arabian Peninsula societies, this book adds fresh perspectives to the study of Gulf heritage and museology. It will appeal to regional and international practitioners and academics across the disciplines of museum studies, cultural studies, and anthropology as well as to anyone with an interest in the Gulf and Middle East.

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