1. Record Nr. UNINA9910458802503321

Titolo Arab painting [[electronic resource]] : text and image in illustrated Arabic manuscripts / / edited by Anna Contadini

Pubbl/distr/stampa Leiden;; Boston,: Brill, 2007
ISBN 1-282-60140-7

SBN 1-282-60140-7 9786612601408 90-04-23661-9 90-474-2237-6

Edizione [[2nd rev. ed.].]

Descrizione fisica 1 online resource (292 p.)

Collana Handbook of Oriental studies. Section 1, the Near and Middle East, ,

0169-9423 ; ; v. 90

Altri autori (Persone) ContadiniAnna

Disciplina 745.6/74927

Soggetti Illumination of books and manuscripts, Arab

Islamic illumination of books and manuscripts - Arab countries Illumination of books and manuscripts, Medieval - Arab countries

Manuscripts, Arabic Electronic books.

Lingua di pubblicazione Inglese

Formato Materiale a stampa

Livello bibliografico Monografia

Note generali Includes addenda and corrigenda.

Nota di bibliografia Includes bibliographical references (p. [177]-178) and index.

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Sommario/riassunto

Arab painting, preserved mainly in manuscript illustrations of the 12th to 14th centuries, is here treated as an artistic corpus fully deserving of appreciation in its own terms, and not as a mere precursor to Persian painting. The book assembles papers by a distinguished list of scholars that illuminate the variety of material that survives in scientific as well as literary manuscripts. Because of the contexts in which the paintings appear, a major theoretical concern is, precisely, the relationship of painting to text. It rejects earlier scholarly habits of analysing paintings in isolation, and proposes the integration of text and image as a more satisfactory framework within which to elucidate the characteristics and functions of this impressive body of work.