

The Herzfeld Archive of The Metropolitan Museum of Art

MARGARET COOL ROOT

ERNST EMIL HERZFELD (1879–1948) was an orientalist whose many talents led him to explore all phases of Near Eastern culture, from the prehistoric period to Islamic times and from linguistics and religion to art and architecture. Richard Ettinghausen wrote of him:

A list of his main fields of interest reads like the disciplines of a school of Oriental studies with an extensive faculty: historical geography and topography of the Near East; the stone age, copper age, and bronze age of Iraq and Iran; Hittite, Babylonian, and Assyrian civilizations; Achaemenid art, and the glory of Persepolis; the prophet Zarathustra; the problems of Parthian and Sasanian archaeology; the genesis of Muslim art; trends in the development of Islamic architecture; the epigraphic and numismatic documents of Achaemenid, Sasanian, and Muslim periods; the many intricacies of Near Eastern iconography—all these and many others were his fields of research and in all of them his keen and resourceful mind made new and vital contributions. . . . Even when, at times, scholars disagree with Herzfeld's interpretations, his points of view are always taken into serious account.¹

In preparation for his departure for the Near East upon retirement from the Institute for Advanced Study in 1944, Herzfeld offered for sale to the Metropolitan

Museum his archaeological library as well as a collection of his drawings, photographs, notebooks, note files, and journals—reflections of a lifetime and a life's work. The material so acquired by the Museum represents only a small part of Herzfeld's accumulation of such documents. In 1946 he willed the bulk of his archive to the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., with the provision that it be made available for scholarly research. Joseph Upton is now preparing a detailed catalogue of this material so that it will be accessible for this purpose.

Since no real inventory was ever made of the Herzfeld papers acquired by the Metropolitan, and in view of the ongoing project in Washington, it seemed appropriate to discover in detail what the Metropolitan's documents consist of and to what extent they duplicate or complement the material in the Freer Archive. Accordingly, for the summer of 1974 I received a grant from the Department of Public Education of the Metropolitan Museum to work within the Department of Ancient Near Eastern Art to put the collection of pre-Islamic Herzfeldiana into order. The system I formulated is similar to Joseph Upton's, and the hope is that it will be possible eventually to cross-index the completed catalogues of the two separate collections.

The pre-Islamic material is deposited in the Department of Ancient Near Eastern Art. Scholars desiring to study it will find a descriptive catalogue available there to acquaint them with the collection's history, contents, and the principles and specifics of

1. "In Memoriam Ernst Herzfeld," *Ars Islamica* 15/16 (1951) p. 261. For a bibliography of Herzfeld's published works see George C. Miles, "The Writings of Ernst Herzfeld Compiled by George C. Miles," *Ars Islamica* 7 (1940) pp. 82–92, and "Additions to the Bibliography of Ernst Herzfeld," *Ars Islamica* 15/16 pp. 279–280.

its organization.² From this catalogue the researcher can easily learn where to look in the accompanying card file for detailed information on, and the storage location of, specific items. The documents fall into these categories:

Drawings: Almost exclusively published drawings and preliminary or alternate versions of published drawings. Drawings of prehistoric pottery, artifacts, and decorative motifs (including 236 drawings of Samarra wares); Mitannian and Assyrian wares; plans, elevations, isolated architectural elements, and representations of architecture in ancient Near Eastern art; ancient Near Eastern relief sculpture; objects of the minor arts, including first-millennium jewelry and furniture elements and seals and buttons of the Jemdet Nasr period.

Study Collections: Integrated notes, photographs, and sketches organized by period and type.

1. Cultural assemblages: Ubaid period through Isin Larsa period.
2. Cultural assemblages (primarily sculpture): Hammurabi period through neo-Assyrian period with additional sections on the Hittites, the Urartians, and on Syrian sculpture by site.
3. Sixteen categories in art and archaeology of the second and first millennia.
4. Painted pottery by period or site, including a section on prehistoric pottery interconnections and a section on the pottery of eastern Persia, India, and China.
5. Sasanian studies: toreutics, architecture, ornament, numismatics.
6. Material on the Paikuli inscription. A large collection.
7. Geographical notes.
8. Notes on Parthian material, primarily from Assur.
9. Notes on Iranian architecture.
10. Notes on Elamite and Old Persian cuneiform.

Skizzenbücher: Sketchbooks in which Herzfeld recorded his observations on topography, landscape, ar-

2. The Islamic portion of the Metropolitan Museum's purchase is deposited in the Museum's Department of Islamic Art. Manuel Keene of this department has made a preliminary listing of the material, but it has not yet been catalogued.

chaeological remains, architecture, and artifacts. One series documents stages in Herzfeld's trip to Shiraz and Samarra in 1905. Another records his daily progress on expeditions from Nineveh to the area of Suleimaniyeh, September-November, 1916.

Photo Albums: Mounted prints, many with dated captions, documenting Herzfeld's travels. The negatives for many of these prints are in the Freer Archive; since Herzfeld did not label the negatives, the Metropolitan's albums are a useful complement to the Freer's material. Especially important in this respect are Albums I (approximately 170 photos of places, sites, and people in Iraq, 1904-1916) and 2 (approximately 60 photos, made mainly in Iran, Syria, and Italy).

Notebooks: Five unrelated books. One contains accounting records for the Oriental Institute Persian Expedition, 1931. Another contains records of disbursements to Iraqi workmen, no date. The others record academic data. One, dated 1907 and labeled "Salsolacea Proben," contains pressed botanical specimens from Egypt. One is partially filled with annotated transliterations of Akkadian texts relating to the Mitanni. One, with no date or site specified, contains notes on the find spots in numbered buildings and on the state of preservation of a large number of "Kisten."

Personal Journals: The Freer Gallery owns many of Herzfeld's journals; the Metropolitan has but one, kept from 1897 when Herzfeld was twenty.

Manuscripts: Drafts of published and unpublished works by Herzfeld and Friedrich Krefter, the architect who worked in association with Herzfeld for many years. Of the manuscripts by Herzfeld himself two are published (Mss. 3 and 15a, b), eight are apparently unpublished (Mss. 1, 2, 4, 9, 10, 11, 13, 18), and three are lectures delivered but not published (Mss. 12, 16, 17). The unpublished mss:

1. "Die Sasanidische Kunst." Text for a handbook on Sasanian art in six chapters. No date.
2. Review article on Georg Husing's "Völkerschichten in Iran," *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien* 46, 1916. Dated 12/9/17.

4. "Die Kunst Vorderasiens (ausser Syrien und Kyprien)." Intended for publication in the *Handbuch der Altertums-Wissenschaft*.

9. "Der letzte Zug durch Transkaukasien." Short story describing Herzfeld's trip from Persia to Constantinople by way of Baku and Batum in 1905.

10. "Summary of the Most Important Discoveries made during an Archaeological Expedition to Persia, 1923-25," Intended for a popular journal.

11. Review of F. D. J. Paruck's *Sasanian Coins* (Bombay, 1924).

13. "Die Münzprägung der Sasaniden." Text with a listing by ruler of coin types.

18. "Bericht über eine neue entdeckte Sasanidische Burg in Persien." Report on Ardashir Khurrah, the city mound of ancient Firuzabad.

Newspaper Clippings: Items relating to archaeology. A particularly interesting series concerns the controversy over F. D. J. Paruck's *Sasanian Coins*, from the Persian journal *Jam-e Jamshid*.

Maps: Printed maps, frequently annotated by Herzfeld, as well as original maps in his hand. At least 315 printed maps of areas in the Near East, most of them produced before 1920. Also a group of reproductions of ancient and medieval maps. A superb collection.

Professional Correspondence: Includes letters from F. H. Weissbach, C. Uhlig, and a large series from many colleagues concerning the publication of Herzfeld's study of the Paikuli monument, which eventually appeared as *Paikuli, Monument and Inscription of the Early History of the Sasanian Empire* (Berlin, 1924).

Squeezes: Primarily squeezes of textile patterns on the Sasanian reliefs at Taq-i Bistan.

Postcards and Photographs: Representing miscellaneous ancient objects and monuments. A small collection.

The eclectic nature of this material, combined with considerations of conservation and storage, suggested these divisions of the catalogue rather than divisions by historical period or geographical area, and this is basic-

ally the system followed by Upton as well. The largest category, *Drawings*, I divided into four subgroups: pottery drawings (PD), sculpture drawings (scD), architecture drawings (arcD), and minor arts drawings (m.a.D).

As an example of how the system works, each drawing is entered on a 3 x 5 file card under the appropriate primary group heading. The card contains basic descriptive information, bibliographic information when obtainable, and the storage location. The numbering system begins at "1" for each group or subgroup. Thus, there is a PD-1 and an arcD-1. Whenever possible, I have grouped all drawing versions of the same object together, with explanatory notes. Thus, there are cards for PD-87, PD-87a, and PD-87b. PD-87, with the notation "pub" in the upper right corner of its card, is the drawing of the painted design on a prehistoric vessel from Samarra as published in 1930 (Figure 1). PD-87a is an inaccurate and unpublished reconstruction of the central motif on the same vessel. PD-87b represents a preliminary attempt to join the fragments of the pot correctly (Figure 2).

A list of plate and figure numbers of the published drawings, arranged by publication, are included as an appendix to the catalogue. These should be of use to the student who doubts the accuracy of a published drawing, especially when photographic and written records do little to clarify puzzling points, and where the object drawn is now lost or has substantially deteriorated. Let us suppose, for instance, that a student is interested in Herzfeld's published drawing of the Palace P relief at Pasargadae that shows King Cyrus the Great standing, followed by an attendant (Figure 3). If the student checks the appended list he will find that the Archive contains an original Herzfeld drawing of this relief, though not the published one. After obtaining the scD number from the list, he can check the card file for the location of the drawing. When he has the drawing (Figure 4) in hand he will notice a significant discrepancy between the published and unpublished versions. In the published drawing Herzfeld shows on the preserved lower part of the relief a considerable portion of a parasol handle, presumably held by Cyrus' attendant. On the rougher unpublished drawing, one perhaps more likely to have been made on the spot, this handle does not appear at all on the preserved part of the relief. Herzfeld has, however, reconstructed an entire parasol

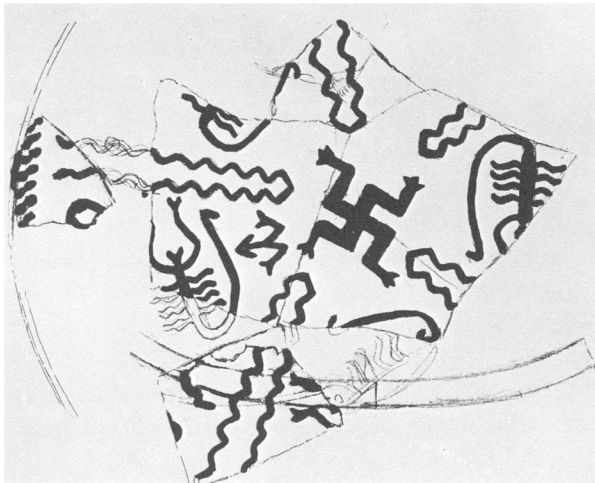


FIGURE 1
Drawing by Herzfeld, ^PD-87. Painted design on a prehistoric vessel from Samarra, as published in *Die vorgeschichtlichen Töpfereien von Samarra V* (Berlin, 1930) no. 4, fig. IV

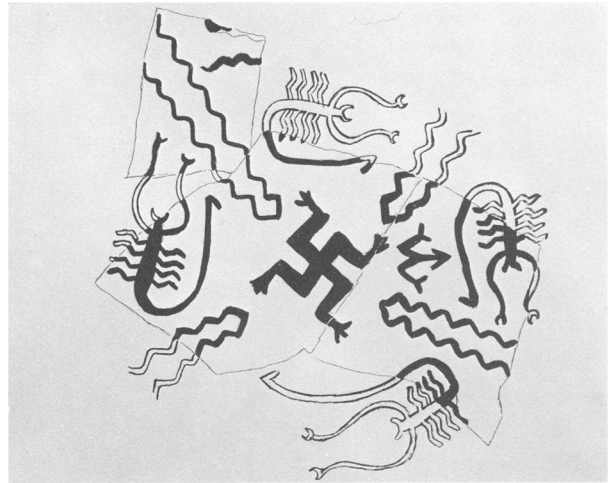


FIGURE 2
Unpublished drawing by Herzfeld, ^PD-87b. Preliminary attempt to reconstruct the vessel from fragments

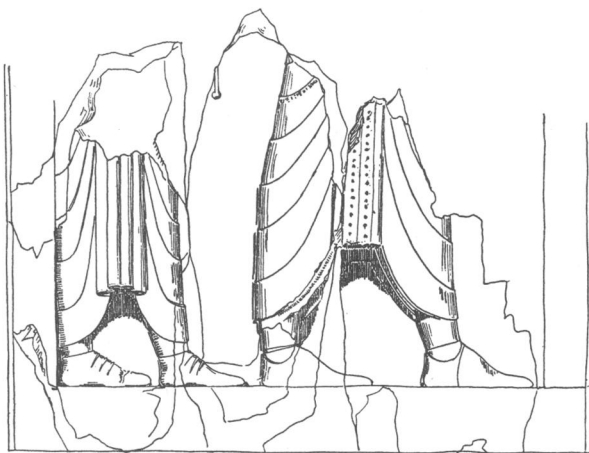


FIGURE 3
Drawing by Herzfeld. Palace P at Pasargadae, as published in *Iran in the Ancient East* (New York, 1941) fig. 363

FIGURE 4
Unpublished drawing by Herzfeld, ^{sc}D-11

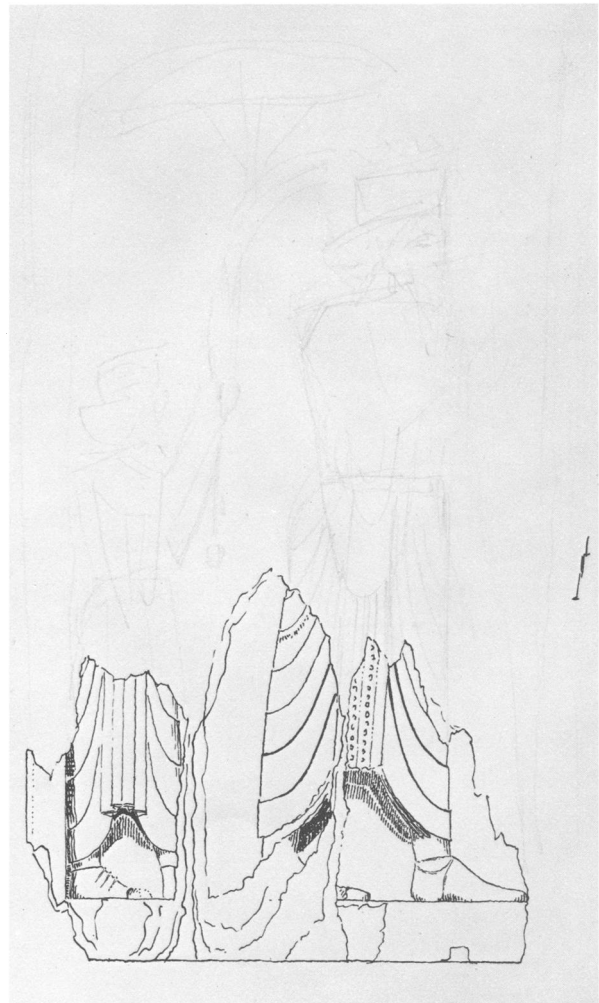




FIGURE 5
Photograph by Herzfeld, Photo Album-2. Outside the Russian Consulate, Isfahan, December 1905

in pencil above the broken edge of the preserved portion of the relief.³ Without entering here into the questions raised by such a discrepancy, it is obvious from this example that the appendix list can be quite useful.

The Study Collections of notes, photographs, and drawings are of great interest, since much of the material assembled here seems to be that from which Herzfeld wrote his cross-cultural art historical syntheses such as “Die Kunst des zweiten Jahrtausends in Vorderasien.”⁴ At the very least, these notes and drawings will be suggestive and stimulating to the modern student, since some of the objects mentioned and sketched seem never to have been published, others appeared long ago in obscure publications, and still others, well known, have otherwise unknown fragments recorded here.

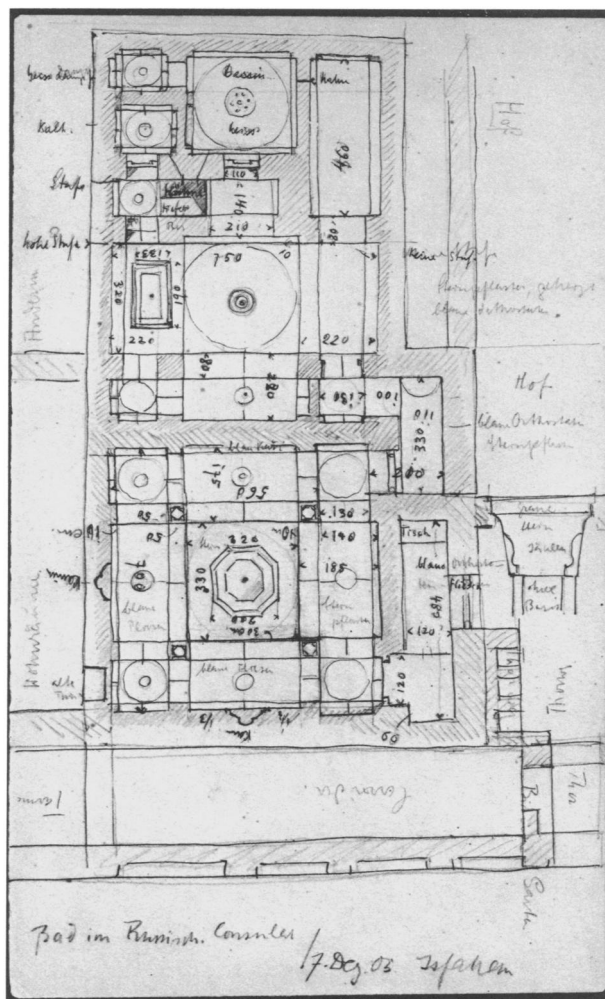
In broadest terms, the Metropolitan’s Herzfeld Archive will acquaint the interested student with the working methods and patterns of conceptualization of a man whose visual sensitivity and classical education

3. No parasol handle can be detected on the actual Palace P relief today. In his first publication of the relief (“Bericht über die Ausgrabungen von Pasargadae 1928,” *Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 1 [1929], p. 14) Herzfeld mentions that the attendant holds the handle of some object. The photograph he publishes (plate III) does not clarify the matter, although it does seem that some slight protrusion shows up at the point where he indicates in the published drawing the presence of the parasol handle.

4. *Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 8 (1937) pp. 103–160, and 9 (1938) pp. 1–79.

allowed him to synthesize vast bodies of information on art and linguistics. His penchant for free-associating may shock the sensibilities of the modern archaeologist; but Herzfeld, born in Germany in 1879, was the product of a different, pioneering era. Many of the questions of interrelationship with which he struggled are still open, even though the present method of tackling them is usually more precise. The Archive as a whole is a worthwhile reminder of a previous generation’s universalist overview of ancient civilizations, a perspective now virtually impossible to realize because the greatly increased volume of knowledge on the Near East forces the modern scholar to specialize.

FIGURE 6
Sketch by Herzfeld, Skzb-4. Baths in the Russian Consulate, 7 December 1905



In addition to these documents of archaeological import, the Archive contains papers that reveal facets of Herzfeld's personal concerns and preoccupations. In the Personal Journal, for example, Herzfeld, at age twenty, quoted poets, philosophers, and political figures whom he admired and aspired to emulate. As a restless youth who would soon explore vast territories of the world and of the intellect, Herzfeld wrote almost prophetically that he craved "Neue Menschen, neue Städte, neue Situationen, neue Ideen, neue Impressionen, neue Anschauungen, neues Angeschautes . . . und vor allem viel."

Another document that offers insights into Herzfeld's personal feelings in Ms-9, "Der letzte Zug durch Transkaukasien," in which he recounts his perilous journey in late December 1905 from Persia to Constantinople by way of Russia during the workers' strikes that accompanied the 1905 Revolution. Herzfeld's journal for this period is in the Freer Archive, N-82. In the short story as well as the journal Herzfeld describes his difficulties in obtaining accurate information on the political situation from the Russian Consul in Isfahan before setting out. In one of the Photo Albums is a labeled photograph (Figure 5), perhaps made on 7 De-

cember, the day when Herzfeld, despite his pressing business there, found time to draw a plan of the baths in the Russian Consulate (Figure 6). The short story, a later version, presents considerable embroidery on his understandably brief journal entries. The entire experience made a lasting impression on him, from his fascination with the sea of faces in the Baku station waiting room to his horror at the sight of an Armenian farmer being carried off by an angry mob to certain death.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my thanks to the Department of Public Education for appointing me Graduate Assistant to the Department of Ancient Near Eastern Art for the summer of 1974, thereby making my work on this project possible. Special thanks are due Vaughn E. Crawford and Prudence Oliver Harper of the Department of Ancient Near Eastern Art for their advice, their scholarly interest, and their friendly encouragement. In addition I am grateful to Kim Otis who, as a summer intern in the Department of Paper Conservation, did an excellent job repairing damaged drawings in the Archive. I am indebted, furthermore, to Joseph Upton for patient explanations of his method of cataloguing the material in the Herzfeld Archive of the Freer Gallery of Art.