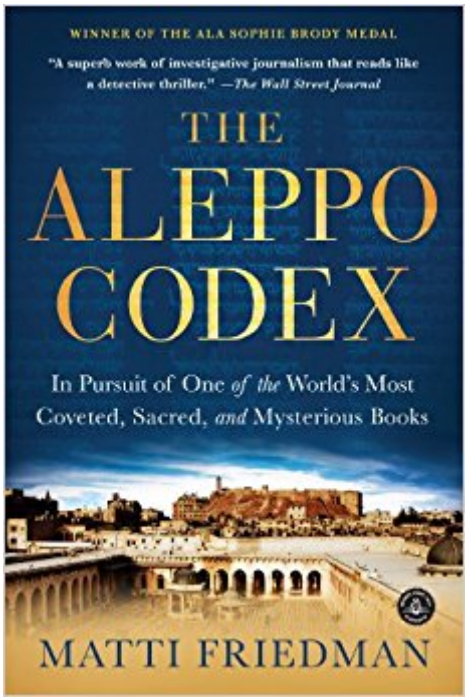
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The Aleppo Codex: In Pursuit Of One Of The WorldÃ¢â‚¬â„¢s Most Coveted, Sacred, And Mysterious Books



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Synopsis

Winner of the 2014 Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish LiteratureA thousand years ago, the most perfect copy of the Hebrew Bible was written. It was kept safe through one upheaval after another in the Middle East, and by the 1940s it was housed in a dark grotto in Aleppo, Syria, and had become known around the world as the Aleppo Codex.Journalist Matti FriedmanÃ¢â ¬â„¢s true-life detective story traces how this precious manuscript was smuggled from its hiding place in Syria into the newly founded state of Israel and how and why many of its most sacred and valuable pages went missing. ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s a tale that involves grizzled secret agents, pious clergymen, shrewd antiquities collectors, and highly placed national figures who, as it turns out, would do anything to get their hands on an ancient, decaying book. What it reveals are uncomfortable truths about greed, state cover-ups, and the fascinating role of historical treasures in creating a national identity.

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review Written in the tenth century, the Aleppo Codex is the most accurate copy of the Hebrew Bible. Named for the Syrian city in which it was kept, the codex is also known as the Crown of Aleppo and was said to protect those who cared for it and curse those who defiled it. Friedman, a Jerusalem journalist, came across part of the Crown in a museum and decided he wanted to write about itÃ¢â ¬â •in doing so, he opened a treasure box of history, mystery, conspiracy, and convolutions that would do any biblical thriller proud. There are several intriguing strands in play here. First, there is the history of a vibrant Syrian community, under siege when Israel became a state. Add a cast of academics, spys, merchants, refugees, and bureaucrats, high and low, whose

roles in getting the Crown out of Syria and into Israel loop and reloop throughout the narrative. Then there is the ever-evolving topic of the underground market for antiquities, fascinating in itself, but Friedman shows us, in addition, just how much is lost when the very rich purchase rarities and remove them from the public eye. The time line sometimes gets confusing, and so do the players (though an introductory Ã¢â ¬Å“cast listÃ¢â ¬Â• helps), but Friedman has done a remarkable jobÃ¢â ¬â •finding sources and digging through archivesÃ¢â ¬â •of getting the CrownÃ¢â ¬â„¢s fascinating story out of the shadows and into the light. In the process, heÃ¢â ¬â„¢s become the latest in the long line of the CrownÃ¢â ¬â„¢s protectors. --Ilene Cooper --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

BooklistÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Top 10 Religion and Spirituality BooksÃ¢â ¬Å“A superb work of investigative journalism that reads like a detective thriller.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â ¢The Wall Street JournalÃ¢â ¬Å“FriedmanÃ¢â ¬â„¢s clear writing and dogged pursuit of some otherwise overlooked assumptions read more like a detective novel than history . . . Friedman has written an important account in accessible, gripping prose.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â ¢The Christian Science Monitor Ã¢â ¬Å“A thrilling, step-by-step quest to discover what really happened to JudaismÃ¢â ¬â„¢s most important book . . . Many of [The Aleppo CodexÃ¢â ¬â„¢s] most astute and well-earned revelations are also its biggest surprises.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢The Boston GlobeÃ¢â ¬Å“The Aleppo Codex builds to a moral crescendo more impressive than the climactic fight scene in any thriller.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â ¢Salon Ã¢â ¬Å“Friedman creates a riveting story, one that the reader will have a hard time putting down.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â ¢The AdvocateÃ¢â ¬Å“Thrilling . . . a real-life National Treasure that reads like fantastical fiction.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â ¢CultureMob Ã¢â ¬Å“[Friedman] opened a treasure box of history, mystery, conspiracy, and convolutions that would do any biblical thriller proud . . . Friedman has done a remarkable jobÃ¢â ¬â ¢finding sources and digging through archivesÃ¢â ¬â ¢of getting the CrownÃ¢â ¬â„¢s fascinating story out of the shadows and into the light. In the process, heÃ¢â ¬â„¢s become the latest in the long line of the CrownÃ¢â ¬â„¢s protectors.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â ¢Booklist, starred reviewÃ¢â ¬Å“Sharply etched . . . A carefully paced narrative of purloined Judaica.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â ¢Kirkus Reviews Ã¢â ¬Å“FriedmanÃ¢â ¬â„¢s account of how the Codex was taken from Syria in the 1940s, later to resurface in Jerusalem, although no longer

Journalist and author, Matti Friedman details the history and the journey of one of the greatest books in Jewish Biblical Literature. The Codex, known as the Aram-Tzova, and later, the Aleppo

Crown, originated in Tiberius in 930CE. Scholars painstakingly copied in an exact and precise replication, each and every letter, each and every vowel, and each and every word of the Tanach, the Hebrew Bible. The express purpose of the Codex was to insure that Jews in the Diaspora would have only one exact Bible for every Jewish community throughout the world, as singularity and unification was ultimately the only possibility for the survival of Judaism. The Codex, meant to be a reference guide, issued as a bound book rather than a rolled scroll. Mattie FriedmanÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s non-fiction work offers a wealth of information on Jewish history, and though slows in parts, bogged down in detail, ultimately brings to light the fate of the treasured and beloved, priceless Crown of Aleppo.

Plus -1. The Aleppo Codex, including its ancient and modern history, is worth reading about. You will learn more about it here than you will in Wikipedia, &c.2. The discussion of the Israeli government's treatment of the sacred texts of North African and Arabian Jewish communities that were resettled in Israel is is a sidelight, but interesting. It's also illustrative of the attitude of the the secular Jews who founded modern Israel. They placed the culture of these ancient communities in museums, while pushing their people into the modern socialist framework.Minus -There simply isn't enough here for a book length piece. Too much conjecture, both on the part of the author and many of the interviewees. Overall, I'm glad the author took the time to do the leg work.I bought the Kindle version.

This book had many twists and turns in the author's dogged determination to find out what really happened to this sacred book. Had this not been labeled non-fiction, I would have thought it was fiction. This author takes the reader on his journey to discover the truth. His conclusion as to what happened is unexpected, yet makes sense.

This is a terrific account of the recovery of the Aleppo Codex, perhaps the most important surviving manuscript of the Hebrew Bible. The story of this codex is well known -- or should I say, thought to be well konwn. Friedman shows that much of the story surrounding this codex is false. He tells his quest for the true story in a very compelling manner. I highly recommend this book. It is far, far better than the other recent account of the codex, which now sells for over $100 on .

This is an amazing story. I love science fiction but this true story beats almost anything and it's true. More twists plots and characters than any fiction writer could manage. Including a death that might

be murder! A morality tale of the venality and corruption that people and governments are capable of when an object of great value comes into play. A sad commentary on the people involved in a country that could have been a "light onto the world

I have been aware of the official, sanitized, history of the Codex, so I was surprised at Friedman’s exposure of the apparent theft of the missing pages. Maybe I shouldn’t have been surprised at the cover-up by so many academicians, but I found this at least as disturbing as the apparent theft itself. Friedman leads the reader through his own stages of discovery. He writes well and makes a convincing case. Friedman refrains from an actual "j’accuse" moment, but lets the reader draw his own conclusions.

Talk about convoluted mysterious loss of papers that are a part of the history of the Jewish people . Deception seemed to be everywhere, the Israeli officials were far from honest, the Syrian people were equally duplicitous and it all made for a great whodunit with no real answers at the end. The Mystery remains to this day as far as I know but Mr. Friedman made it into a great story. thanks

This is wonderful book. I highly recommned it not just for people fascinated by the Codex (like myself) but for anyone. Great elements of mystery, history, fraud, and possible murder, all wraped up in the murky world of rare book collecting. I think also, given the strong feelings of all involved, this book is presents a balanced approach, and does not promote one side or the other.And for me, the book gives much to think about. The community of Allepo claims jurisdiction, but only by possession (true a 700+ year possession). It was written in Tiberias, taken to Jerusalem, ransonmed to Fustat (Cairo) and then taken to Allepo. Who really gets to say - this is mine? And even more, why is the question is it mine even relevant? In the end, the Codex is a book. It was meant to be read, not hidden away in a vault, not collected, not pursued, and not argued over. It even lost its identity as a codex/book and referred to as a crown. As is so often the case with so many things, we tend to look only at the cover, and forget to look inside!But the Allepo Codex is a good read, a good read that gets one to think. What more can one want from a book?

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