

## MEDIA IMAGES

# Heart of an Empire: Herzfeld's Discovery of Pasargadae

On view February 13–July 31, 2016, Freer|Sackler

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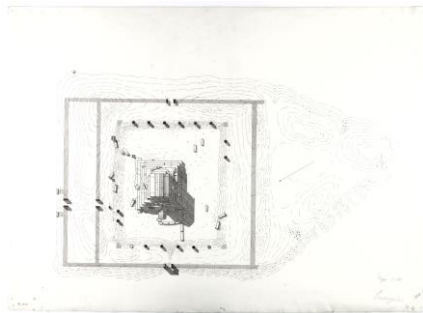
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Before his untimely death in 530 BCE, the Achaemenid king Cyrus the Great laid the foundation of the ancient world's first empire in his birthplace, Anshan (Parsa), in southwestern Iran. In 539 BCE, he chose Pasargadae as the heart of his multilingual, multifaith empire and transformed it into a magnificent symbol of Achaemenid power. The site also became Cyrus's final resting-place.

Located in the fertile plain known as the *dasht-i murghab*, or "plain of the water bird," Pasargadae comprised lavish palaces, gardens, pavilions, and a number of other structures. With the fall of the Achaemenids in 330 BCE, the site was gradually forgotten, and in the early thirteenth century, materials from the palace grounds were used to transform Cyrus's mausoleum into a mosque. The impressive structure even became known as a woman's burial place. It was not until 1908 that the German archaeologist Ernst Herzfeld (1879–1948) devoted his dissertation to Pasargadae and proved conclusively that it was the royal capital of the Achaemenid Empire—and that the tomb belonged to one of the most admired rulers of the ancient world.

This exhibition focuses on Herzfeld's discovery of Pasargadae and explores his meticulous work to restore the site's historical and archaeological importance.

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**Mausoleum of Cyrus: ground plan**  
Ernst Herzfeld  
Iran, 1905–28  
Drawing, ink on paper  
Ernst Herzfeld Papers  
Freer|Sackler Archives  
FSA A.6 05.0808



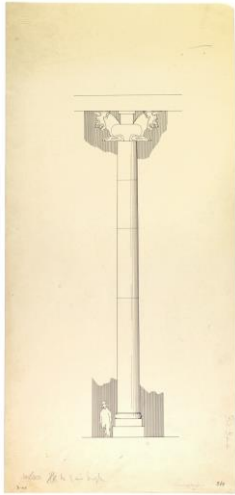
**Mausoleum of Cyrus**  
Ernst Herzfeld  
Iran, 1905–28  
Glass plate negative  
Ernst Herzfeld Papers  
Freer|Sackler Archives  
FSA A.6 04.GN.0448

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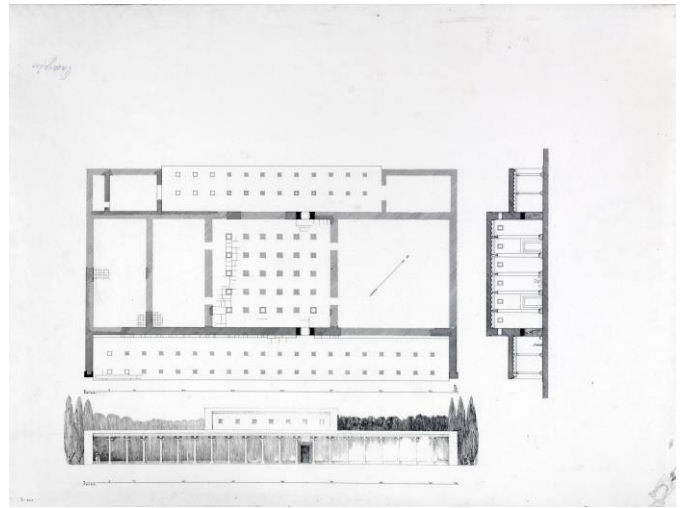
Office of Public Affairs and Marketing  
Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery



**FREER | SACKLER**  
THE SMITHSONIAN'S MUSEUMS OF ASIAN ART



Palace S: reconstruction of column  
 Ernst Herzfeld  
 Iran, 1905–28  
 Ink on paper  
 Ernst Herzfeld Papers  
 Freer|Sackler Archives  
 FSA A.6 05.0805



Palace P: Herzfeld's reconstructed ground plan and elevation of the ruins  
 Friedrich Krefter  
 Iran, 1928  
 Ink on paper  
 Ernst Herzfeld Papers  
 Freer|Sackler Archives  
 FSA.A.6.05.0807