



Cultural Memory and Western Civilization: Functions, Media, Archives

Aleida Assmann

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Cultures invest great efforts into creating a long-term memory on the basis of oral transmission, media technology, and institutional frameworks. This book provides an introduction to the concept of cultural memory, focusing on the "arts" of its construction, particularly various media such as writing, images, bodily practices, places, and monuments. Examining the period from the European Renaissance to the present, Aleida Assmann reveals the close association between cultural memory and the arts, arguing that the artists who have supplemented, criticized, transformed, and opposed it are its most lucid theorists and acute observers. Her analysis also addresses the interaction of cultural memory with individual memory and the ways in which cultural memory supports or subverts social and political identity constructions. Ultimately, this book offers a comprehensive overview of the history, forms, and functions of cultural memory, which has become a central analytical tool for scholars across disciplines.



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