

The Cambridge Ancient History Volume 1, Part 2: Early History of the Middle East



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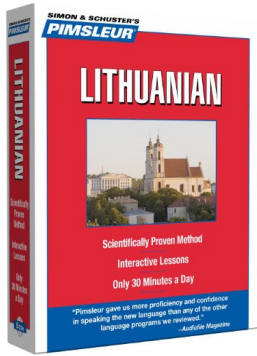
The Cambridge Ancient History Volume 1, Part 2: Early History of the Middle East

Part II of volume I deals with the history of the Near East from about 3000 to 1750 B.C. In Egypt, a long period of political unification and stability enabled the kings of the Old Kingdom to develop and exploit natural resources, to mobilize both the manpower and the technical skill to build the pyramids, and to encourage sculptors in the production of works of superlative quality. After a period of anarchy and civil war at the end of the Sixth Dynasty the local rulers of Thebes established the so-called Middle Kingdom, restoring an age of political calm in which the arts could again flourish. In Western Asia, Babylonia was the main centre and source of civilisation, and her moral, though



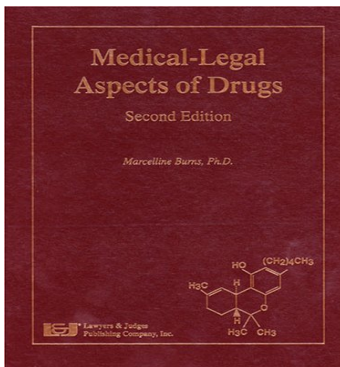
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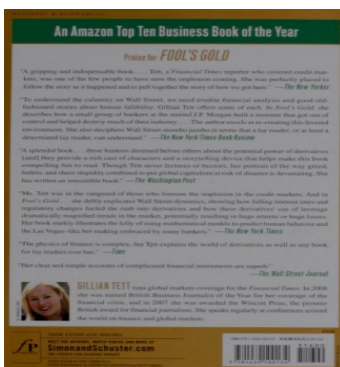
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Review 1:

Super geeky book, therefore I love it! This volume covers roughly the third millennium BC, plus a little before and after. The Sumerians, the early Egyptians (Old and Middle kingdoms) and a few others.

Review 2:

The Cambridge Ancient History books are packed with information but very dry reading. They present the established conservative scientific viewpoint. There is an overabundance of time spent on pottery and speculation from it. Personally, I think that many theories established from pottery are on shaky ground. However, these are the books used as reference by many other books and worth reading.

Review 3:

Better than what I expected! I got the book right on time and it was in an excellent condition. Bravo!

Review 4:

This was a wonderful find. It is in perfect condition and completes his 13 volume set. Now he can rearrange his whole library!

Review 5:

The Cambridge Ancient History is a fantastic achievement. However, it began to be written 40 years ago, and it shows. The first few volumes (including this one) have been left far behind by new findings and modern scholarship, a situation that contrasts sharply with the volumes dealing with more "recent" times (particularly the Roman period), which were only just completed, contain state-of-the-art material and are far easier to read. The volumes dealing with the ancient Near East are badly in need of an update. Still, if you want an authoritative, broad (and dry) treatise that will point you in the right direction for further research, this is a good place to start.

It would be unfair to demand richer narrative from a book dealing with a time when writing was still in the process being invented. However, the work does become overly tedious at times, particularly when discussing "remains" (i.e. barely recognizable foundations of buildings of ambiguous purpose). Field archaeologists may find it more palatable than armchair historians.

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