



Ancient West Asian Civilization: Geoenvironment and Society in the Pre-Islamic Middle East

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This book explores aspects of the ancient civilization in West Asia, which has had a great impact on modern human society—agriculture, metallurgy, cities, writing, regional states, and monotheism, all of which appeared first in West Asia during the tenth to first millennia BC.

The editors specifically use the term "West Asia" since the "Middle East" is seen as an Eurocentric term. By using this term, the book hopes to mitigate potential bias (i.e. historical and Western) by using a pure geographical term. However, the "West Asia" region is identical to that of the narrower "Middle East," which encompasses modern Iran and Turkey from east to west and Turkey and the Arabian Peninsula from north to south.

This volume assembles research from different disciplines, such as the natural sciences, archaeology and philology/linguistics, in order to tackle the question of which circumstances and processes these significant cultural phenomena occurred in West Asia. Scrutinizing subjects such as the relations between climate, geology and human activities, the origins of wheat cultivation and animal domestication, the development of metallurgy, the birth of urbanization and writing, ancient religious traditions, as well as the treatment of cultural heritage, the book undertakes a comprehensive analysis of West Asian Civilization that provided the common background to cultures in various areas of the globe, including Europe and Asia.

These contributions will attempt to demonstrate a fresh vision which emphasizes the common cultural origin between Europe and West Asia, standing in opposition to the global antagonism symbolized by the theory of "Clash of Civilizations."

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