

The discoveries of French archaeologists at Susa uncovered the law code of the Babylonian king Hammurabi, dated early in the second millennium, thus destroying the traditional position of the chronological priority of Biblical codes. The laws uncovered prescribed penalties for full free citizens, a client class, and slaves. Strictly speaking, Hammurabi's laws were not statutes but royal decisions (as a basis for the administration of justice). Hittite laws have also been discovered in which the *lex talionis* does not apply. Assyrian laws were not based on royal decrees in actual cases, but were a compilation by jurists of traditional legal practice. In Egypt no law codes have been found earlier than the third century B. C. –at least not so far. In foreign relations and exchange, there were few places where a traveller from one major state could not be understood in another.

Natural resources included the production of pottery and use of metallurgy. Bronze and iron were widely available; technical, animal, and plant resources were exploited. In Mesopotamia, algebra was used but the Egyptians never went beyond elementary arithmetic, clumsily used. The Egyptians used a decimal system; the Sumerians also used a sexagesimal one. The Babylonians and Assyrians can be credited with the beginning of true mathematical astronomy but not the Egyptians. Medicine shows a combination of magic, the irrational, and common sense.

Polytheism characterized most ancient religions with some tendencies toward monotheism here and there. There was development from theriomorphism to anthropomorphism. The numinous nature of ancient religion is stressed. There is some historical bases but also allegorical suppositions of good and evil contending for man's allegiance. Vegetation, fertility, natural phenomena played a role. Syncretism must be taken into consideration from one religion to another, as must the practice of human sacrifice and the assumed presence of demons. Various myths are employed to support belief systems that indicated that «Man has concern for the continued existence of his world, for life itself, for his own place in the scheme of things, for the physical environment, for the seasons, for human institutions, for the political framework of life» (p. 293).

*Civilization Before Greece and Rome* is an extremely useful book for every classicist to read and use in trying to understand the greater context of the ancient world into which the ancient Greek and Roman worlds fit. In some ways, the pre-Greek and Roman worlds are radically different from their classical successors but in many areas they are not and much of what they had contributed to their own worlds continued to live on in the classical world. Certainly, Saggs has given us a survey from which we can all benefit—classicists as well as non-classicists.

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**A. Rosalie David, *The Egyptian Kingdoms. The Making of the Past.* New York: Peter Bedrick Books, 1988. Pp. viii (unnumbered)+152. 237 illustrations (192 in color). Hardcover, \$ 19.95.**

*The Making of the Past*, in the words of the Preface to the series, seeks to describe «in comprehensive detail the early history of the world as revealed by archaeology and related disciplines... Its subject is a *new* history –the making of a *new* past, freshly uncovered and reconstructed by skilled specialists.. Part of each

book is devoted to a reconstruction in pictures of the newly revealed cultures and civilization that make up the history of the area». The Advisory Board of the series is composed of John Boardman of Oxford, Basil Gray of the British Museum, and David Oates of the University of London. The volumes in question are intended for students, travellers, tourists, and interested general readers of whatever age. *The Egyptian Kingdoms* volume became available at the same time as Roger King's one on *The Greek World* and like *The Greek World* is a feast for the eyes as well as the mind.

The first edition of *The Egyptian Kingdoms* was published by Elsevier Publishing Projects SA of Lausanne in 1975 and the second edition appeared as an Equinox Ltd. volume in Oxford in 1988. This is the first American edition available at an incredibly reasonable price, thanks to its printing in Yugoslavia. The study of ancient Egypt is not a study widely pursued but the archaeological discoveries of the last few decades have made that study even more fascinating and necessary than ever. The author, who is an Egyptologist at the University of Manchester Museum, has also written a *Guide to Religious Ritual at Abydos*, the *Macclesfield Collection of Egyptian Antiquities*, the *Manchester Museum Mummy Project*, *Science in Egyptology* and (with E. Tapp) *Evidence Embalmed: Modern Medicine and the Mummies of Egypt*. David stresses that there are three areas in which recent advances are particularly noteworthy, and these are (1) in the degree of international cooperation in various rescue projects; (2) in the introduction of new techniques in archaeology, paleopathology, and language studies and in the willingness to adopt a multidisciplinary approach; and (3) in an awareness of the conservation problems which now affect the monuments and the artifacts, and the need to find solutions for these. The six chapters present (1) a history of ancient Egypt; (2) a survey of explorers and travellers; (3) a vivid description of pioneers of Egyptology; (4) an analysis of art and religion; (5) a disclosure of the relations between the King and the Commoner; (6) a description of building and planting. Chapters I-V also have a «Visual Story» –what one might call lavishly illustrated essays in pictures and words. The story of Egypt is lovingly traced from 5000 B.C. to 30 B.C. There is an introduction, a chronological table, a brief bibliography, a list of acknowledgments, a very useful glossary and a brief index.

The civilization of Egypt, one that is so strange to us and that the Greeks found so fascinating and revealing and was so crucial to the understanding of the Middle East, is explored in terms of the conventions of representation in art, the role of the pharaoh in religion, how the pyramids were constructed, and how a corpse was mummified. Four visual essays are devoted to explaining the evolution of the pyramid, Akhenaten's royal city of Tell el-Amarna, the form and function of a temple, and the famous story of Howard Carter's discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun in 1922. Ever since scholars among Napoleon's invasion forces rediscovered what was an almost forgotten civilization, ancient Egypt has been a source of fascination to investigators of all kinds. A. Rosalie David cautiously reminds us of the significance of the Egyptian heritage when she says:

«The wisdom of the ancient Egyptians is legendary, and they made significant contributions to many branches of learning. In their continuing quest for eternity and in their attempt to conquer both death and their earthly environment, they stand out among ancient peoples. Perhaps their greatest legacy to succeeding generations lies in their indestructible belief in the ability and supremacy of man» (p. 136).

*The Egyptian Kingdoms* is a wonderful companion volume to *The Greek World*.

It is a book every classicist should be familiar with and one that can provide the layperson with authoritative information and a sure guide to an appropriate appreciation and understanding of ancient Egypt.

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**M. I. Finley**, *Ancient History: Evidence and Models*. Peregrine Books [Elisabeth Sifton Books]. New York: Penguin Books, 1987. Pp. x (unnumbered)+131. Paperback, \$6.95.

**M. I. Finley**, *The Use and Abuse of History*. Revised Edition. Peregrine Books [Elisabeth Sifton Books]. New York: Penguin Books, 1987. Pp. 253. Paperback, \$8.95.

The late Arnaldo Momigliano, himself one of the most important ancient historians of our day, has called Moses Finley «the most influential ancient historian of our time» and his work «the most valuable writing on ancient history written since 1945» (referring specifically to *The Use and Abuse of History*). The profession will certainly miss the highly perceptive and forthright criticism of the profession made by this late Professor of Ancient History at the University of Cambridge, Fellow of Jesus College, and Master of Darwin College (died 1986), but his numerous publications will serve to remind us of the special contribution that he made to the examination and practice of historiography. Both books briefly reviewed here were originally published previously in 1985 (Great Britain) and 1986 (U.S.A.) and 1971 (Great Britain) and 1975 (U.S.A.) respectively and are collections of essays, most of which were published in various British and European publications. Their availability in convenient format together makes their accessibility much greater for all interested.

*Ancient History* makes a number of key points, among which are: (1) that the study of history is in no significant sense a science; (2) the historian's evidence –whether in the form of documents, literary texts or objects– proposes no questions; (3) the long tradition that sources written in Greek or Latin are immune from the canons of judgment and criticism that are applied to all other documents is not justified and constitutes an impediment to any proper historical analysis; and (4) the first question to be asked of any written source are why was it written and why was it published. These observations are of primary concern in the six essays reproduced here, namely, «'Progress' in Historiography»; «The Ancient Historian and his Sources»; «Documents»; «How it really was»; «War and Empire»; and «Max Weber and the Greek City-State». Finley himself makes it clear in his Preface that «This is a book about the study and understanding of the history of the Greeks and Romans; about the evidence that is available to the historians and its severe limitations; about the practices of historians in dealing with the evidence, and about alternative procedures that might be attempted; in sum, about what we can know and what we are unlikely ever to know». His conclusion is that «The models would have to be dynamic, so as to reveal the direction, the limits and the tempo of change, the important variations according to origin, period, political authority and so on... The objective, in the final analysis, is one paradoxical one of achieving a more complex picture by the employment of simplifying models» (p. 108).