

The History of Western Asia in the Second Millennium B.C.

MICHAEL B. ROWTON

The guiding principle in planning the work on the structure of state and society during the later phase of Mesopotamian civilization, after 2000 B.C., has been that, since no civilization exists in a vacuum, no civilization should be studied in a vacuum. In other words adjacent regions and related problems should receive due attention, bearing in mind that what happens on the periphery may be as important as developments at the center.

This approach to the problem has entailed considerable preliminary work in marginal fields such as comparative chronology, the effect of the physical environment on history, relations between nomads and the settled population, between the tribe and the state, problems relating to siltation of the watercourses and dislocation of the farming population. Eight articles dealing with these preliminary studies have been published since work began in 1964; two further are in preparation.