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Ancient Egypt Transformed: The Middle Kingdom



Synopsis

The first comprehensive survey of an artistically and culturally rich period in Egypt's history The Middle Kingdom (ca. 2030–1700 B.C.), the second great era of ancient Egyptian culture, was a transformational period during which the artistic conventions, cultural principles, religious beliefs, and political systems formed during earlier dynasties were developed and reimagined. This comprehensive volume presents a detailed picture of the art and culture of the Middle Kingdom, arguably the least known of Egypt's three kingdoms yet a time of remarkable prosperity and unprecedented change. International specialists present new insights into how Middle Kingdom artists refined existing forms and iconography to make strikingly original architecture, statuary, tomb and temple relief decoration, and stele. Thematic sections explore art produced for different strata of Egyptian society, including the pharaoh, royal women, the elite, and the family, while other chapters provide insight into Egypt's expanding relations with foreign lands and the themes of Middle Kingdom literature. More than 250 objects from major collections around the world are sumptuously illustrated, many with new photography undertaken specifically for this catalogue. This fascinating publication is a much-needed contribution to understanding ancient Egypt's art and culture, and shows how the Middle Kingdom served as the bridge between the monumentality of the previous centuries and the opulent splendor of later years.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This major publication presents a comprehensive picture of the art and culture of Egypt's Middle Kingdom, a time of remarkable prosperity and unprecedented change.

Adela Oppenheim is curator, Dorothea Arnold is curator emerita, Dieter Arnold is curator, and Kei Yamamoto is research associate, all in the Department of Egyptian Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The Middle Kingdom is my favorite with regard to their artifacts as that period created the wonderful dioramas for their tombs. This book has it all – gorgeous photos, the latest thought and research in a wonderful coffee-table sized book. Additionally, it's fascinating to see how art had to be redeveloped during this time – the skills were nearly forgotten during the first intermediate period, and the sculptures of the middle kingdom start off rather sophomoric but emerge as dazzlingly fine works of sculpture and jewelry. Frankly the jewelry of this period is more refined than that of the New Kingdom (King Tut's time). This is an exhibition catalog, not a survey. That means it carefully catalogs all objects that were in a museum exhibition, and therefore does not have the space to be a survey or primer on the subject at hand – there are many other works for that. At the time of my review (October 2016) the work was clearance priced, and any fan of Egypt that doesn't buy this work will regret it later.

I bought this to help with some research I am performing for a project. The Metropolitan Museum of Art has been involved in excavations in Egypt for decades (I nearly said 'over a century' but need to check my facts). Their Egyptian exhibit is one of the finest, containing some famous items (some of the Letters from Hekanakhte, which served as the inspiration for Agatha Christie's book *DEATH COMES AS THE END*, for example). Their texts are excellent and, it appears, their picture books are just as good. Actually, this is not a 'picture book', but the catalog for their recent exhibit covering the Middle Kingdom of Egypt. The text is very good. Informative, educational and even entertaining. The quality of the illustrations is truly superbe. The image for this listing is the cover of the book. The other pictures are equally well done.

As others have pointed out, this is a splendid volume written to accompany a magnificent exhibit. For various reasons, the Middle Kingdom, while recognized as significant, seems, at times, to be an extended footnote in many volumes on Egyptian history. *Ancient Egypt Transformed* makes a major course adjustment. Wonderfully illustrated with chapters written by the experts, it is up-to-date, even surprising. This volume has set a standard that will be difficult to top for some time to come. But for those interested in Egypt and the period, let's hope it challenges others to produce more, excellent

work.

Not only a catalogue but a good overview about Middle Kingdom which eclipsed between glorious old kingdom and new kingdom. As Very few authrative texts available about this particular period, this book is gladly welcome. Authorative text and excellent visual source. If you wish to have only one book in Middle Kingdom this is the book for you. I bought it for real bargain price from and glad to have it.

love this book. i just was at the met and it was nice to come home and see the items i saw again.

Excellent overview of Middle Kingdom art and history. Articles were very well written and the photographs were superb.Excellent addition to the library of anyone interested in Egyptian art and history.

Excellent product and service.

An excellent book on this topic superbly commented, referenced and illustrated. I do not understand a negative comment, which was very surprizing for a MET catalogue.

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