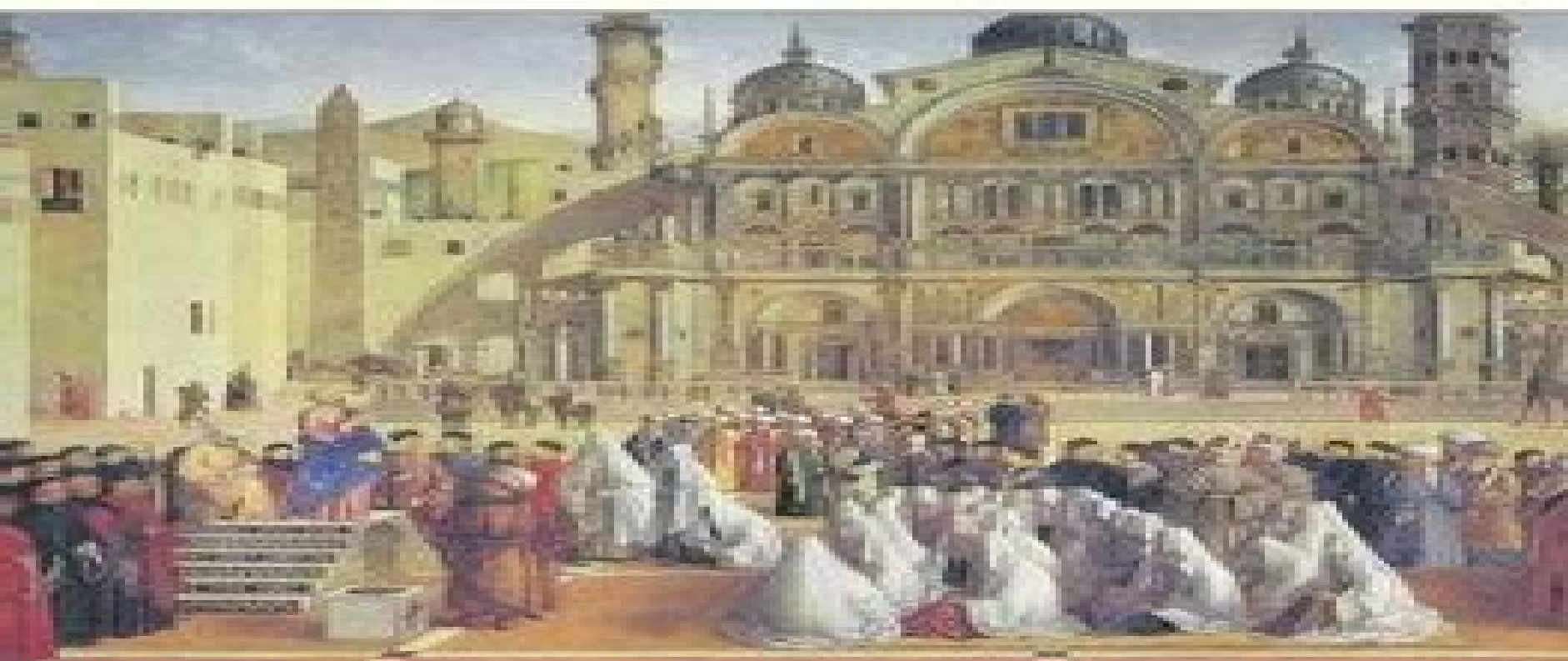




ALEXANDRIA

CITY OF THE WESTERN MIND

THEODORE VRETTOS



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Industrial & Mining Standard ,1905 *Nature and Resources* ,1996 [Alexandria](#) Theodore Vrettos,2010-06-15

Alexandria was the greatest cultural capital of the ancient world Accomplished classicist and author Theodore Vrettos now tells its story for the first time in a single volume His enchanting blend of literary and scholarly qualities makes stories that played out among architectural wonders of the ancient world come alive His fascinating central contention that this amazing metropolis created the western mind can now take its place in cultural history Vrettos describes how and why the brilliant minds of the ages Greek scholars Roman emperors Jewish leaders and fathers of the Christian Church all traveled to the shining port city Alexander the Great founded in 332 B C at the mouth of the mighty Nile There they enjoyed learning from an extraordinary population of peaceful citizens whose rich intellectual life would quietly build the science art faith and even politics of western civilization No one has previously argued that unlike the renowned military centers of the Mediterranean such as Rome Carthage and Sparta Alexandria was a city of the mind In a brief section on the great conqueror and founder Alexander we learn that he himself was a student of Aristotle In Part Two of his majestic story Vrettos shows that in the sciences the city witnessed an explosion Aristarchus virtually invented modern astronomy Euclid wrote the elements of geometry and founded mathematics amazingly Eratosthenes precisely figured the circumference of the earth and 2 500 years before Freud the renowned Alexandrian physician Erasistratus identified a mysterious connection between sexual problems and nervous breakdowns What could so cerebral a community care about geopolitics As Vrettos explains in the third part of this epic saga if Rome wanted power and prestige in the Mediterranean the emperors had to secure the good will of the ruling class in Alexandria Julius Caesar brought down the Roman Republic and then almost immediately had to go to Alexandria to secure his power base So begins a wonderfully told story of political intrigue that doesn't end until the Battle of Actium in 33 B C when Augustus Caesar defeated the first power couple Anthony and Cleopatra The fourth part of Alexandria focuses on the sphere of religion and for Vrettos its center is the famous Alexandrian Library The chief librarian commissioned the Septuagint the oldest Greek version of the Old Testament which was completed by Jewish intellectuals Local church fathers Clement and Origen were key players in the development of Christianity and the Coptic religion with its emphasis on personal knowledge of God flourished Vrettos has blended compelling stories with astute historical insight Having read all the ancient sources in Ancient Greek Hebrew and Latin himself he has an expert's knowledge of the everyday reality of his characters and setting No reader will ever forget walking with him down this lost city's beautiful dazzling streets

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1. Understanding the eBook Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download
 - The Rise of Digital Reading Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download
 - User-Friendly Interface

4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download
 - Personalized Recommendations
 - Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download User Reviews and Ratings
 - Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download and Bestseller Lists
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 - Highlighting and Note-Taking Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download
 - Interactive Elements Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download
8. Staying Engaged with Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download
9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download
10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download
 - Setting Reading Goals Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time

12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Alexandria City Of The Western Mind Epub Download
 - Distinguishing Credible Sources
13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
 - Exploring Educational eBooks
14. Embracing eBook Trends
 - Integration of Multimedia Elements
 - Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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