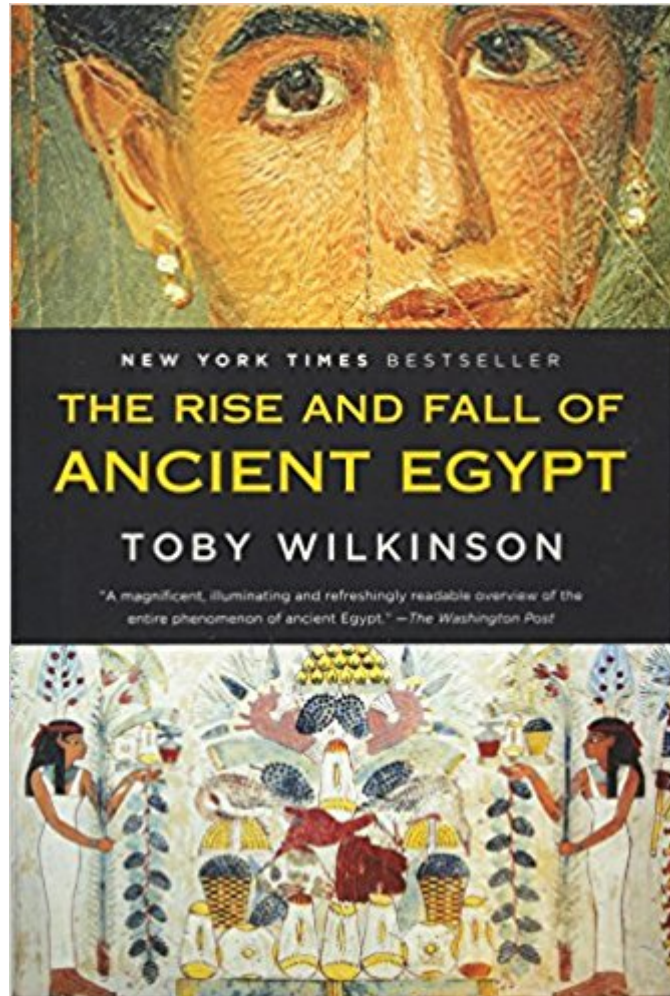




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The Rise And Fall Of Ancient Egypt



Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
“Magisterial . . . [A] rich portrait of ancient Egypt’s complex evolution over the course of three millennia.”
Los Angeles Times
NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY The Washington Post
Publishers Weekly
In this landmark volume, one of the world’s most renowned Egyptologists tells the epic story of this great civilization, from its birth as the first nation-state to its absorption into the Roman Empire. Drawing upon forty years of archaeological research, award-winning scholar Toby Wilkinson takes us inside a tribal society with a pre-monetary economy and decadent, divine kings who ruled with all-too-recognizable human emotions. Here are the legendary leaders: Akhenaten, the “heretic king” who with his wife Nefertiti brought about a revolution with a bold new religion; Tutankhamun, whose dazzling tomb would remain hidden for three millennia; and eleven pharaohs called Ramesses, the last of whom presided over the militarism, lawlessness, and corruption that caused a political and societal decline. Filled with new information and unique interpretations, *The Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt* is a riveting and revelatory work of wild drama, bold spectacle, unforgettable characters, and sweeping history.
“With a literary flair and a sense for a story well told, Mr. Wilkinson offers a highly readable, factually up-to-date account.”
The Wall Street Journal
“[Wilkinson] writes with considerable verve. . . . [He] is nimble at conveying the sumptuous pageantry and cultural sophistication of pharaonic Egypt.”
The New York Times

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Cambridge University Egyptologist Wilkinson (*Lives of the Ancient Egyptians*) offers a revisionist view of the ugly life hidden by the splendors and dazzling treasures of pharaonic Egypt. He shows in rich detail that it was a brutal society where life was cheap, royal power absolute and established through fear and coercion. Wilkinson finds unequivocal evidence in royal tombs like that of First Dynasty king Djer (c. 2900 B.C.E.), surrounded by 318 buried retainers, probably victims of human sacrifice. Even if construction workers for Khufu's Great Pyramid at Giza ("the ultimate projection of absolute power") were reasonably fed and housed, they were virtual, if not literal, slaves, drafted to perform the perilous work. Later the fanatical, heretic king Akhenaten built a new model city with grand temples where mountains of food were offered to a sun god while his people were starving and severely overworked. The Ptolemies' punitive economic policies unleashed a peasants' revolt that fatally weakened their empire. This is a penetrating and authoritative overview of a violent ancient civilization often revered by contemporary scholars and enthusiasts. 24 pages of color photos; 44 b&w photos; 12 maps. (Mar.) (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Egyptologists constitute a relatively small subspecialty among professional historians. Perhaps that is why many express an almost fanatical devotion to and admiration for the culture of ancient Egypt. Wilkinson, an award-winning Egyptologist who teaches at Oxford, provides a fine single-volume history of ancient Egypt that covers more than 3,000 years, from prehistory to the Roman conquest. He uses a conventional chronological approach that inevitably uses archaeological sources to provide examples. Like his colleagues, Wilkinson expresses admiration for the continuity, stability, and relative harmony of pharaonic Egypt. Yet he is strikingly at odds with other Egyptologists in his efforts to present the darker side of Egyptian life. Egyptian rulers created and maintained the first true nation-state. As Wilkinson shows, however, the price of this stability was regimes based on fear, coercion, and, when deemed necessary, violent military suppression. This superbly written survey is ideal for general readers and likely to engender controversy among specialists. --Jay Freeman --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

A rousing story of 3,000 years of Egyptian history covering the highs and lows of this monumental civilization that achieved things that we are only today beginning to understand. A must read for any Egyptologist.

Toby Wilkinson is a superbly talented writer. He knows how to tell a story, and how to write history

as the exciting series of stories that it is. In this book he delivers the wonders and mysteries of ancient Egypt to the popular reader with depth and grace. This is simply a joy to read. Curl up in a comfortable chair and dig in. ---- I'm so thrilled with this book that I'm devouring it as if I were eating chocolate. It will make a perfect gift for young adults in the family who have not yet discovered the tantalizing beauty of ancient Egyptian culture. And it is a marvelous book for anyone who wants to be up to date on the latest discoveries and revelations. How thrilling to read about the monoliths of Nabta Playa, as well as to revisit the familiar stories of Akhenaten and Tutankhamen, Ramses II and Ramses III and move on to the great and seductive Cleopatra with prose that just rolls so beautifully along. ---- I'm so glad we have a writer of this knowledge and skill to deliver the great story of the Nile valley to new generations. ---- I haven't enjoyed a book on Egypt or archaeology so much since I read "Lost Worlds" when I was a kid. And this is fact filled, accurate, current, comprehensive and rich --- as well as being fun.

Really good book. Made for a great textbook in Ancient Egypt class.

Excellent book. Based on archeological evidence, the author outlines the historical development and advancement of the worlds first civilization. His determination that the kings of Egypt ruled with an iron hand is completely believable. Their ruthless despotism is made apparent. The author challenges the widespread belief that they ruled with a gracious benevolence. They made themselves into living gods! Why? Because the common Egyptian would never dare rise up and challenge the rule of a god! A great book! A comprehensive study. Worth getting, worth the price. Read the book and you'll have a broad understanding of ancient Egypt.

Very readable, very informative, very encompassing. Highly recommend this book to anyone who enjoys history and a story well told.

Wilkinson does a good job of covering a huge span of time in a book of reasonable length. However, there is so much information covered that it is sometimes blurred. If you already have Egyptology tendencies, you will probably enjoy it.

Little confusing at first but then later it got more interesting

Before I visited Egypt in 2010, I looked for books about ancient Egypt. While there were works on

portions of ancient Egyptian history and about certain figures like Cleopatra, Akhenaten, and Rameses II, there was no book that covered the whole period. This book came out a year later and was everything that I had been looking for. Wilkinson covers the history of Egypt from prehistoric times until the time of Cleopatra. While other historians focused mainly on the Pharaohs and the nobility (and Wilkinson does not ignore those subjects at all), Wilkinson also takes time to describe the lives of average Egyptians. He also discusses ancient Egyptian literature and poetry; how the Pyramids were built; and how the Egyptian army was maintained, trained, and armed. Wilkinson does an outstanding job of covering all aspects of ancient Egypt. However, not only is the book comprehensive, but it is also well written and enjoyable to read. This book is simply the best of its kind on the subject.

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