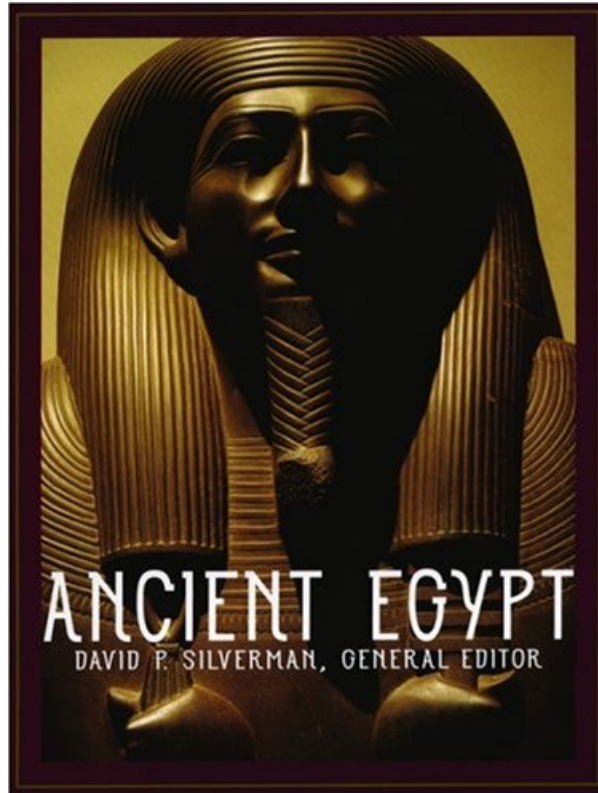
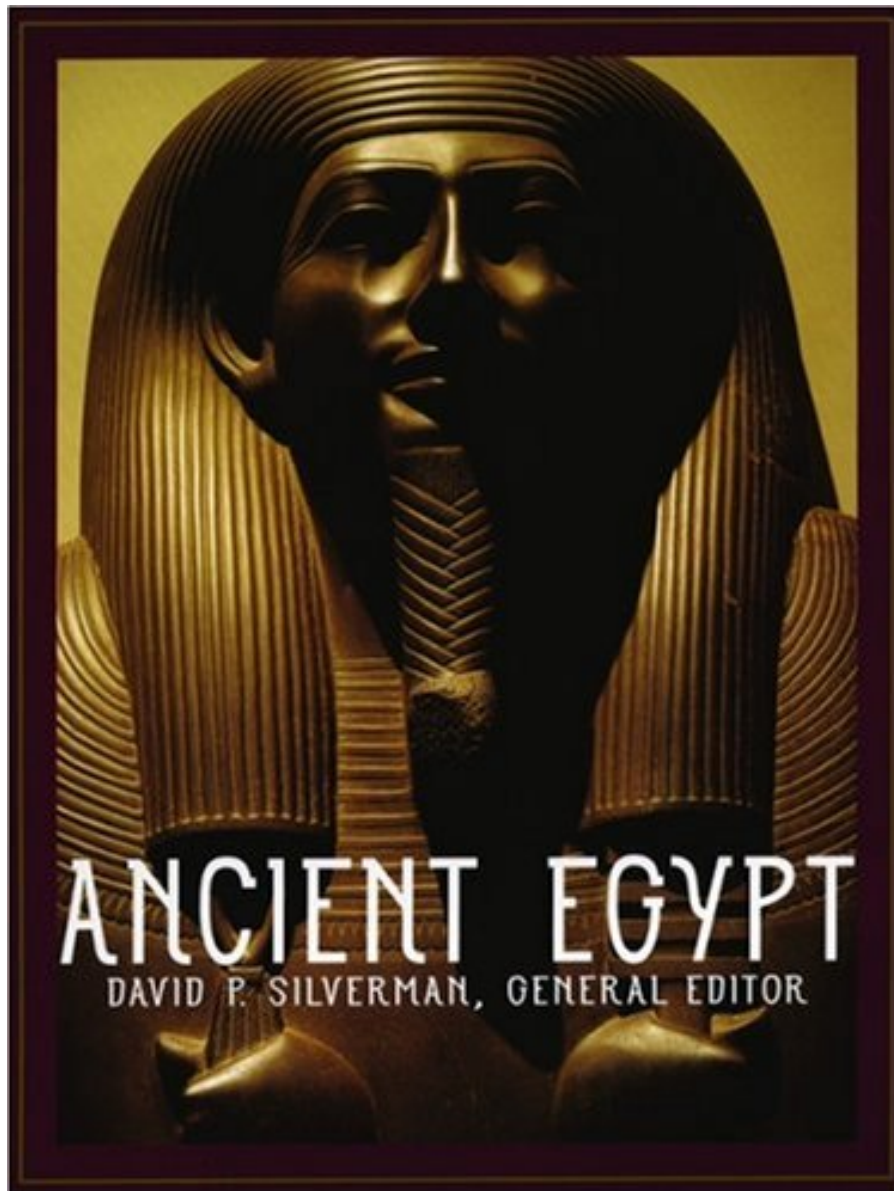


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The ancient Egyptians created some of the world's most beautiful art and architecture. To this day, this ancient civilization--which produced the great pyramids, the riddle of the Sphinx, and the riches of Tutankhamun--exerts a strong hold on our imaginations.

Now, in *Ancient Egypt*, eminent Egyptologist David P. Silverman and a team of leading scholars explore the cultural wealth of this civilization in a series of intriguing and authoritative essays based on the latest theories and discoveries. Illustrated with more than 200 superb color photographs, maps, and charts, this book illuminates the vivid and powerful symbolic images of this fascinating culture--from pyramids and temples to priests and rituals; from hieroglyphic writing to daily life by the Nile; and from temple carvings to the cult of the dead. Correcting the popular misconception of the Egyptians as a death-obsessed people, the book uses the most recent historical research and archaeological finds to illuminate the routines of daily life in royal, elite, priestly circles, as well as at lower levels of society. We learn, for example, that despite the monochromatic appearance of most temple ruins today, in ancient times they would have been colorful, even gleaming structures; that the title "Pharaoh" derives from the Egyptian phrase *per aa*, which means "great house" and was originally a reference to the royal palace; that temples employed all manner of part-time and full-time personnel, from farmers and carpenters to scribes, jewelers, and keepers of livestock; and that Egyptian law viewed women as equal to men, and they could, in some cases, wield considerable influence.

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- Great product!

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Its thematic organization provides a unique perspective on Ancient Egypt

By doc peterson

Organized by theme, Silverman's *Ancient Egypt* provides an unusual approach to the topic. Divided into three parts (The Egyptian World, Belief and Ritual, Art, Architecture and Language), the subsequent chapters are written by a variety of scholars, each an expert in their fields (to name a few: Fekri Hassan a geo-archeologist formerly of Washington State, more recently at the Egyptian Ministry of Culture writing on commerce; Gay Robbins of Emory University on Women in Ancient Egypt, Ian Shaw of University of Liverpool on urban centers, Zahi Hawass - former Egyptian Minister of Antiquities on the Pyramids). These scholars provide a fresh take on Egyptian history.

I was particularly struck by the chapters on "The Celestial Realm" and "Tombs and Temples" as both provided unique details about Egyptian cosmology and the evolution of funerary architecture. The number of color plates and maps are also helpful and illustrative in connecting details to the larger historical narrative. However, I had problems with the historical narrative itself; in a few words, it was simply too brief. The opening chapter, "Three Kingdoms and Thirty-four Dynasties" covered the entirety of Ancient Egyptian history in 20 pages. While the ebbed flow of history was discussed well, one cannot adequately write a political history of the 2000+ years of Ancient Egyptian history in so few pages.

Further, the thematic nature of the book also meant that events or issues would be repeated in chapter after chapter. For example, the reign of Akhenaten is discussed several times: in the political history of the 18th dynasty, again in a chapter about cities and capitals, yet again in the discussion of art and architecture, and still again in the chapter about temples and tombs. While events and individuals like Akhenaten are repeatedly highlighted, other significant facets are overlooked or given short shrift (the Naqada period or the Second Intermediate Period).

While *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt* remains unrivaled in terms of its scholarship and depth, the strength of Silverman's thematic approach is the variety of perspectives it provides beyond the exclusively political. For those who already have a passing familiarity with Ancient Egypt but are searching for interesting details and a more social history approach to the time, this would be my recommendation.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

This book has the best of the expert writing on their areas of expertise

By CatPaws

This book has the best of the expert writing on their areas of expertise. They all know how to tell you everything in a concise way in language that the average person can understand. The pictures, many I'd not seen before, are for the most part clear enough to make out things, maps and plans of ancient forts and

temples homes, etc. are excellent with clear keys and explanations. If you wanted only one good book to read on Ancient Egypt, I would not hesitate to recommend this book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Information in the book provides a good overview of Ancient Egypt

By Ann F. Rapp

Information in the book provides a good overview of Ancient Egypt. The writing style is clear, concise, and easy to understand. The print is quite small which makes it hard to read, especially in the inserted boxes and sidebars. Recommended to go along with the Coursera course on Ancient Egypt.

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