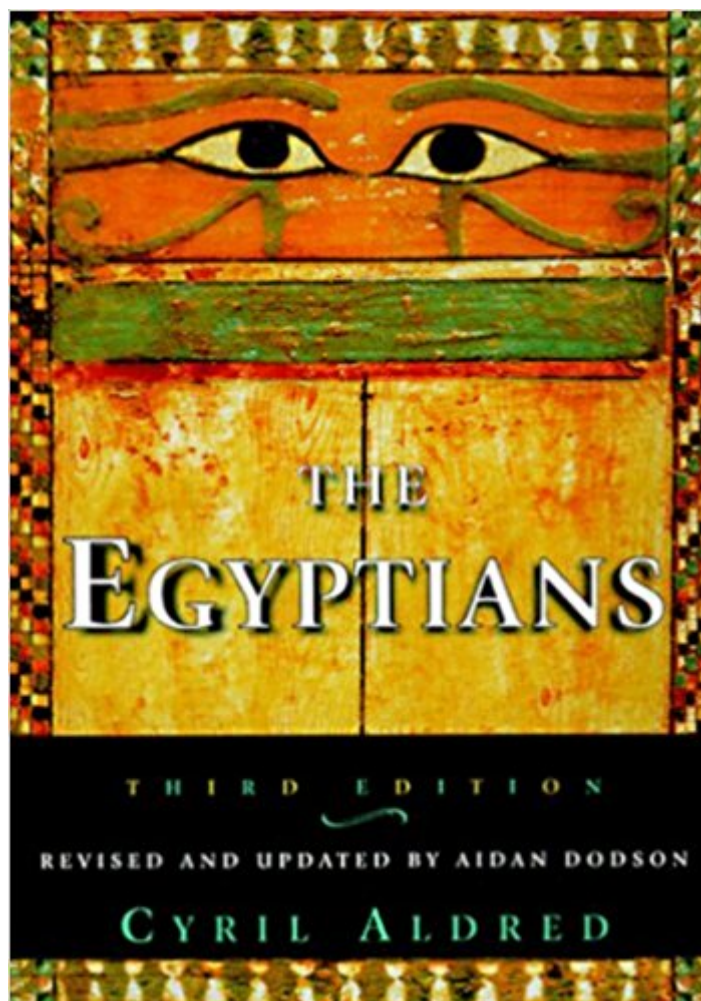


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The Egyptians (Ancient Peoples And Places)



Synopsis

The twin themes - the overwhelming importance of the Nile and the pharaoh - provide the unifying thread running through Cyril Aldred's classic text. Aidan Dodson has completely revised the book whilst carefully preserving its succinct and lucid qualities. Many significant recent finds are investigated: at Abydos in the Delta, in the Valley of the Kings; at the pyramids of Abusir, Giza and Saqqara; and at Avaris. Much fresh thinking on the first unification of Egypt, her early kings, and the third intermediate period is included. The dating has been revised throughout to accord with the most up-to-date scholarship, and many new photographs have been incorporated. The bibliography has been revised and expanded, and a complete chronology and list of kings is included for the first time.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The best single account of ancient Egyptian history and culture that is available. -- Antiquity

A good read promptly delivered.

This was for one of my classes and it is a very good textbook and the price is just right.

I bought this book with the intention of developing a solid "base" understanding in ancient Egyptian history. In that respect, I was, for the most part, disappointed. If you already have a basic

understanding of the topic, this is a good book for a quick "review", but it's a bit stuffy for the lay-person just starting out. It's short on excitement, long on the dry facts. I like to feel like an "armchair Indiana Jones" when I read history books, and this book didn't much convey that feeling to me.

This is a complete history from Neolithic times, covering unification and intermediate period, ups and downs, and the long decline to foreign domination by Hyksos, Assyrians Persians and their successors. It tracing the institution of kingship, inheritance of throne through eldest daughter, and social as well as political history. Religion is especially well written as it was thought that the pharaoh god controlled the Nile provided agricultural economy. All social strata, administrative nobility, scribes and slaves are also depicted. There's a pragmatic perspective of monotheism as the version initiated by Akhnaten failed to benefit Egypt. The realistic history doesn't engage in either biblical speculation or some of the strange hypotheses surrounding establishment of the dual kingdom or changes in dynasty such as the murder of Tutenkhamen. Pyramid building and the less spectacular necrology of the New Kingdom is well done. My only criticism is lack of an included king list. It's necessary to use a chronology like that in 'Chronicle of the Pharaohs' by Peter Clayton in order to get the setting for translating the unfamiliar naming convention that Aldred uses. Otherwise this is a great political and social history in a small volume. Reference: Chronicle of the Pharaohs by Peter A. Clayton, Good time-line and history

"The Egyptians" is a wonderful piece, spanning the whole of Egyptian history minus Ptolmiac times, which duly belong more to Greek and Roman history than to Egyptian. However, unlike Nicolas Grimal's "A History of Ancient Egypt," this work is written much better and Cyril's very formal, yet oddly casual style makes for quite the enjoyable read. A chapter is spent on Egyptian social classes, ranging from the Pharaoh to the peasantry to slaves, a delightful bite of information concerning Deir el-Medina hidden within. However, I must confess that one of the greatest pleasures came to me when I found among the wonderful plates a long sought after photo of the author, standing in the temple of Seti I at abydos; I like to have faces to go along with my favorite Egyptological authors. I also send my admonitions to Aidon Dodson for a wonderful job of updating; he made the book current without undermining Cyril's style, and nowhere can you detect his presence save for his well-said preface.

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I recommend Aldred's "The Egyptians" more than Grimal's book "A History of Ancient Egypt," which is vague and confusing. Aldred's book is definitely a much better and more reliable introduction to all aspects of this civilization, from history to religion, geography to social ranks.

This is a good bird's eye view of the emergence of Egyptian civilization as it appears almost in parallel to the rise of the Sumerian world. The earliest period of Egyptian civilization after the unification of the upper and lower kingdoms is, as Aldred suggests, the most creative, and the entire cycle of civilization stretches as long as the period in our tradition from the Classical Greeks to modern times, a tremendous range, with an amazing overall continuity. A closer look shows the change in character of the civilization and many interior transformations. This account is a fine beginning to Egyptian history. To the ancient Greeks this world was what they meant by 'ancient'

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