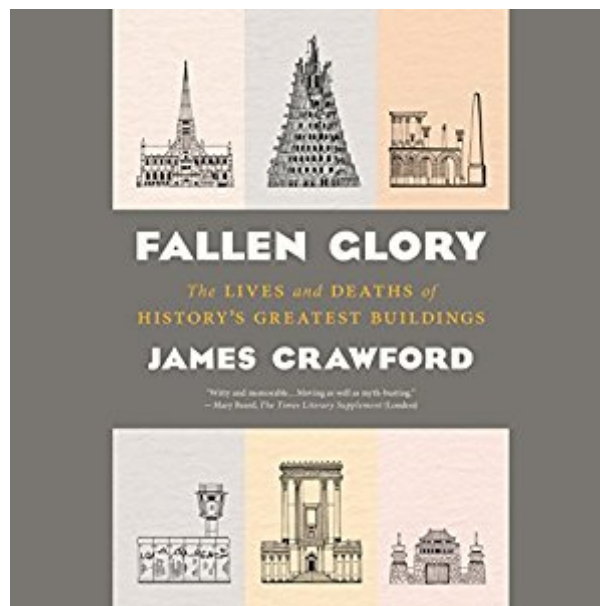




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Fallen Glory: The Lives And Deaths Of History's Greatest Buildings



Synopsis

An inviting, fascinating compendium of 21 of history's most famous lost places, from the Tower of Babel to the Twin Towers. Buildings are more like us than we realize. They can be born into wealth or poverty, enjoying every privilege or struggling to make ends meet. They have parents - gods, kings and emperors, governments, visionaries and madmen - as well as friends and enemies. They have duties and responsibilities. They can endure crises of faith and purpose. They can succeed or fail. They can live. And, sooner or later, they die. In *Fallen Glory*, James Crawford uncovers the biographies of some of the world's most fascinating lost and ruined buildings, from the dawn of civilization to the cyber era. The lives of these iconic structures are packed with drama and intrigue. Soap operas on the grandest scale, they feature war and religion, politics and art, love and betrayal, catastrophe and hope. Frequently their afterlives have been no less dramatic - their memories used and abused down the millennia for purposes both sacred and profane. They provide the stage for a startling array of characters, including Gilgamesh, the Cretan Minotaur, Agamemnon, Nefertiti, Genghis Khan, Henry VIII, Catherine the Great, Adolf Hitler, and even Bruce Springsteen. The 21 structures Crawford focuses on include The Tower of Babel, The Temple of Jerusalem, The Library of Alexandria, The Bastille, Kowloon Walled City, the Berlin Wall, and the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center. Ranging from the deserts of Iraq, the banks of the Nile, and the cloud forests of Peru to the great cities of Jerusalem, Istanbul, Paris, Rome, London, and New York, *Fallen Glory* is a unique guide to a world of vanished architecture.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

An absolutely fascinating book! It explores buildings, cities, and other architectural creations from millennia B.C. up to much more recent times. It explores the discovery process of the varying constructions, a slice of history about these, an analysis of what the particular story might tell us. The book begins with the Tower of Babel, an elusive subject. The chapter brings in American troops and Saddam Hussein himself as a part of the narrative (a fascinating juxtaposition). Other ancient examples: the Palace of King Minos on Crete, and the Temple at Jerusalem, among others. That is Part One of the volume. Part Two focuses on the "unhappiness of empires." Examples include: The Forum of Rome, Alexander's Library at Alexandria, for instance. Next, "The King is Dead, Long Live the King." We read the story of the building of St. Paul's Cathedral in London and its demise in 1666; the Bastille in Paris; the Fortress of Golconda in India. Finally, Utopia versus Dystopia. Here, we see the effort to create Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, the Pruitt-Igoe housing complex in St. Louis, the Berlin Wall, and the virtual construction of GeoCities. The book ends on the very unhappy note of ISIS' destruction of much of the important historical city of Palmyra. A fascinating work that pulls together numerous threads to create a narrative that goes beyond the physical structures discussed and described.

It's tempting to say, This is how all history should be written and taught for non-historians. Through tales of the rise and fall of many of the world's greatest buildings and cities, Crawford really brings history to life. Though copiously footnoted suggesting considerable academic rigor, this book is full of lively and fascinating storytelling that leaves a reader filled with amazement at what humans can do, and by their folly as well. A terrific read - highly recommended.

A very interesting and well-written book.

Scholarly, engaging account of man's thirst for architectural commemoration, and the nearly universal "rise and fall of" nearly every example -- from wood, through sand, clay, rock, steel, plastic, even to electronic (the reimagined grand library at Alexandria now via the internet).

A wonderful read

a fascinating book which would be of interest to those who like history, urban geography, and architecture.

Fascinating!

A really good read. Well researched and organized.

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