



# Arnold J. Toynbee: A Life

*William H. McNeill*

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## **Arnold J. Toynbee: A Life** William H. McNeill

One of the most remarkable thinkers of this century, Arnold Toynbee won world-wide recognition as the author of the monumental ten-volume *A Study of History*. Its publication and phenomenal success brought him fame and the highest praise, as the reading public proclaimed him the most renowned scholar in the world.

This thought-provoking, engaging study of Toynbee, written by one of today's most eminent historians, weaves together Toynbee's intellectual accomplishments and the personal difficulties of his private life. Providing both an intimate portrait of a leading thinker and a judicious evaluation of his work and his legacy for the study of history, William H. McNeill offers both a biography and a commentary on how to write and understand history. Along with an illuminating discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of *A Study of History* and the countless other works written by Toynbee, McNeill offers a compelling examination of the responses of other historians (including the devastating attack launched by Hugh Trevor-Roper) and Toynbee's attempts to modify his *Study* to answer these criticisms. McNeill also explores his tormented personal life, including his troubled marriage to Rosalind Murray and the suicide of his son, Anthony. In this sympathetic depiction of a life, both triumphant and tragic, McNeill brings his skills to bear on one of the greatest figures in his field, illuminating a career of rare accomplishment.

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