



An Account of Egypt

Herodotus

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Herodotus

An Account of Egypt Herodotus

Herodotus was a 5th century Greek philosopher. He is the "Father of History.." Herodotus was the first historian to collect materials, check them for accuracy and then place them in chronological order. His writings give the reader a sense of the nature of the world and of science during his time. Herodotus wrote a nine volume series called The Histories. An Account of Egypt or Euterpe is the second in the series. This is an eyewitness account of life in Egypt written in a simple style which is pleasing to read.

An Account of Egypt Details

Date : Published July 4th 2008 by Book Jungle (first published -450)

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Author : Herodotus

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From Reader Review An Account of Egypt for online ebook

Haythem Bastawy says

It is a miracle that this book still exists. It brings back to life the marvels of ancients Egypt, many of which don't exist anymore. Herodotus also talks about the customs and traditions of the Egyptians of that time, accounts of history passed down through generations of ancient families and amazing chronicles of kings and gods. I totally recommend for history lovers.

Kitty Red-Eye says

I rarely read a book I understand so little of. Written about 450 years BC, there is nothing I actually can relate to. I know some Greek mythology, I've read a little about ancient Egypt, ok... and so? I still don't get it. I like it, though. It makes for a challenging read, and I could wish I knew more about the societies in question, but I still somehow find it weirdo-fascinating to read about sacred animals, sacrifices (some of them human), ancient stories which are bound to be myths, one of them about a commoner who fooled the ruler for money, honour and even the ruler's daughter's "services" - after which he was granted the said daughter's hand in marriage and became king. I know this pattern. I've read it in Norwegian folk tales. It was awesome to see an ancient Greek/Egyptian (or should we say Mediterranean) version over this theme (the "make fun of the authorities" theme, I mean. There are many variations). It's very confusing, but just the fact that this book exists is pretty amazing... and the parts which one can understand without any expert knowledge in the field are pretty cool.

Do you know how to properly embalm a cat?

Rob says

While an important primary source, the minutiae dwelt upon by Herodotus is not my preferred minutiae.

Richard says

Reading this book gives you a chance to visit Egypt in the Fifth Century B.C. You can learn something of the Egyptian culture including their embalming techniques which varied according to the price paid. Herodotus describes the pyramids as they appeared in their original glory and shares something of the Egyptian view of their history while warning the reader that there is much he doesn't trust to be accurate.

He has been called "the father of history" and he well deserves the accolade.

Sacha Valero says

I decided to go through my original Kindle and found this. It wasn't very long and not really a historical account as you'd consider a history book today. This is more of a daily journal of what Herodotus saw during his travels through Egypt.

All in all it's an interesting read if you're curious about the ancient world. One problem for me was the density of the paragraphs. Wow were they long. We're talking more than one page, that makes for some tough reading. At least for me.

sherdnerdless says

Presumably translated from the ancient Greek, this give a near-contemporary account of the rulers within the Egyptian empire. Heavily male dominated and actually quite a slog despite the short length, consisting almost entirely of names, reigns and military campaigns (that wasn't meant to rhyme). Where are all the women? I think 3 are mentioned in the entire thing and only as asides. There's nothing really about the lives of ordinary people.

Mustafa Asfour says

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Luís Garcia says

(lido em Bandung, Indonésia)

John Anthony Smith says

Reading the summary associated with Euterpe, one might think that this was a book about almost anything related to the Persian War, but instead would find a historic view of ancient Egypt. With glowing columns and all sorts of abnormalities, Herodotus sometimes has a large than life mythological obstructions to a historic view of events. His curiosity sometimes turns those abnormalities into validations of the mysterious and leaves one wondering about the accuracy of his discovery. It's hard to conceive that Herodotus questioning a tale that he has heard would travel to Tyre to see for himself if a column truly glowed by itself at night, and then inaccurately write that he saw it glowing when it did not. Euterpe was a wonderful book to read to add to the legendary status and mythology of Egypt.

Liz Hopps (Elizabetha) says

Me encanta, lo he leído más de 5 veces.
Un excelente libro para trabajar la alteridad.

KATIE BURGETT says**Loved!**

This book offered so much first hand information while also giving you a detailed description of the gods of Egypt.

Roland says

An Account of Egypt is a really interesting book.
On the one hand it can be amazingly dry, boring and a difficult read at times

And his friends being troubled at it admonished him in some such words as these: "O king, thou dost not rightly govern thyself in thus letting thyself descend to behaviour so trifling; for thou oughtest rather to have been sitting throughout the day stately upon a stately throne and administering thy business;...."

You get it.

On the other hand the stories and the "facts" (hearsay, as Herodotus puts it) are interesting, especially coming from a book written 2500+ years ago.

It is a mixture of history, speculations

now that they say...

tourist guide book

all the other temples which were of repute, works which are worth seeing for their size,..

and at times very dry description of buildings

the length outside is one-and-twenty cubits, the breadth is fourting cubits, and the heights eight.

It is worth reading by anyone who likes ancient history. After all, Herodotus is said to be the first real historian.

Jennieblakey says

Long sentences but good

A lot of long sentences. Had to re-read paragraphs often to figure out what was being said. Worth the extra effort though.

Teresa says

Aside from the humorous/perplexing "histories" of the Egyptians and Hellenes, there is an arrogance to Herodotus's writings which amuse me. Never do the Egyptians worship different gods, merely call gods by different names-- Isis is Hera, etc.

Perry Whitford says

A flawed and fascinating account of all things Egyptian, much of it from first-hand testimony.

Book 2 of Herodotus opens up with what must be one of history's earliest recorded descriptions of a scientific experiment, also one the stupidest. In order to try and prove whether the Egyptian or Phrygian nation was the elder, the Pharaoh had two children reared in complete isolation, the 'object herein was to know, after the indistinct babblings of infancy were over, what word they would first articulate.'

The children said "Becos," the Phrygian word for bread. Despite the fact his nation lost by the result, the king was perfectly convinced by it!

This is just one of the stories of dubious authenticity contained herein. In a footnote Rawlinson rues how Herodotus 'indulged in the marvelous at a sacrifice of truth' in much that he detailed about Egyptian life. To my way of thinking we don't lose by this, far from it.

On the most important matters he was scrupulously impartial, how else could he, a Greek, say this of the gods from his own country?: 'My inquiries prove that they were all derived from a foreign source, and my opinion is that Egypt furnished the greater number.'

I love all the chapters about the gods and the pharaohs, but much of the content here is of matters geographical and ethnographical, about the Nile, the distances between cities, the different customs between peoples of the Upper and Lower Kingdom.

I didn't help myself through these passages by insisting on reading all of Rawlinson's notes in their entirety. Brilliant though his scholarship is these notes are at least four or five times longer than Herodotus's own text and of minor interest.

Something I could have lived without discovering was the details about embalming, which Herodotus witnessed up close: 'They take first a crooked piece of iron, and with it draw out the brain through the nostrils'. If anything the following stages were even yuckier.

Most of all I like those stories. Here's a curious one, about a supposed pharaoh named Pheron who was struck blind after throwing a spear into Nile, an affliction which lasted a decade until an oracle informed him he would be cured by washing his eyes in the urine of faithful woman.

Wouldn't you know he tried he sought the help of his wife first and remained blind! He called on many women before he found the remedy. All the women who failed him he promptly burnt, as you do.

Herodotus asked the Egyptian priests about Troy and they told him that Helen was in Egypt the whole time, which he believed because 'if Helen would have been at Troy, the inhabitants would, I think, have given her up to the Greeks, whether Alexander (Paris) consented to it or no. For surely neither Priam, nor his family, could have been so infatuated as to endanger their own persons, their children, and their cities, merely that Alexander might possess Helen.'

Fair point, but why wouldn't they have sent an emissary to Egypt to find out during the nine years they dallied in Troy? And besides, that would make Homer a liar.

His history of the pharaohs is necessarily patchy but fortunately Rawlinson spends more than fifty pages in an appendix clarifying what was known at the time, then for everything which has come to light since you can always look online, i.e. this translation was done before the discoveries of Flinders Petrie etc.

If all you know about the Egyptians is how to walk like one, this book will fill in the rest of the blanks for you.
