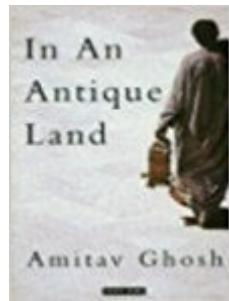


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In An Antique Land



Synopsis

As he searches for information about the life of an Indian slave in twelfth-century Egypt, the author, a Hindu, comes face to face with the Muslim world and culture of modern Egypt, in a narrative that juxtaposes ancient history and modern travelogue.

Book Information

Hardcover: 393 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 53 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #891,370 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #108 in Books > Travel > Africa > Egypt > General #549 in Books > Travel > Middle East #739 in Books > History > Ancient Civilizations > Egypt

Customer Reviews

In a leisurely blend of travelogue, history and cross-cultural analysis, Indian writer Ghosh reconstructs a 12th-century master-slave relationship that confounds modern concepts of slavery. Abraham Ben Yiju, a prosperous Tunisian Jewish merchant based in medieval Cairo, resettled in Aden, then spent two decades on India's Malabar Coast, where he hired a slave or servant, probably of Indian origin, named Bomma. Bomma acted as Ben Yiju's business agent and made overseas trips for him. In medieval India and the Middle East, Ghosh points out, servitude was often a career opportunity, the principal means of recruitment into privileged strata of the army and bureaucracy. Researching in letters and documents in Egypt, where he lived for several years, Ghosh (The Shadow Lines) evokes a world of mud-walled houses and class warfare between Egyptian laborers and landowners. He also writes vividly of southern India, a tapestry of castes, cults and worship of spirit-deities. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Ghosh, an Indian Hindu, first read about a medieval (12th century) Jew and his Indian slave while a student at Oxford. He became fascinated almost to the point of obsession. After studying Arabic, he enrolled at a university in Alexandria, Egypt to perform further research. A professor found him

lodgings in an nearby village. This book recounts his attempt to merge the two stories: life in modern Egyptian villages (not dissimilar to that of 5000 years ago), and his search for the Indian slave. The merger doesn't quite work. Individually, both subjects are fascinating; together they are less so. In addition, Ghosh's language and writing style are both stilted. Still, Ghosh's subject is exotic yet intimate, and academic and public libraries should consider purchasing his account.- Paula M. Zieselman, Fulbright & Jaworski, New YorkCopyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Great condition

Very informative on Egyptian rural life before and after Naser. Rather slow and long winded on the Indian and Egyptian diaspora.

The author carries 3 themes simultaneously across the book. Excellent book, especially for those interested in history.

A fascinating, well-written and informative book.

A great scholarly read!

Loved it.

The book In the Antique Land: History in the Guise of A Traveler's tale was received in the condition advertised. Very pleased with the prompt service.

A WONDERFUL HONEST NARRATIVE OF A TRUE EXPERIENCE. GIVES DEEP INSIGHT INTO THE EVERYDAY LIVES OF A PEOPLE IN AN ANTIQUE LAND.

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