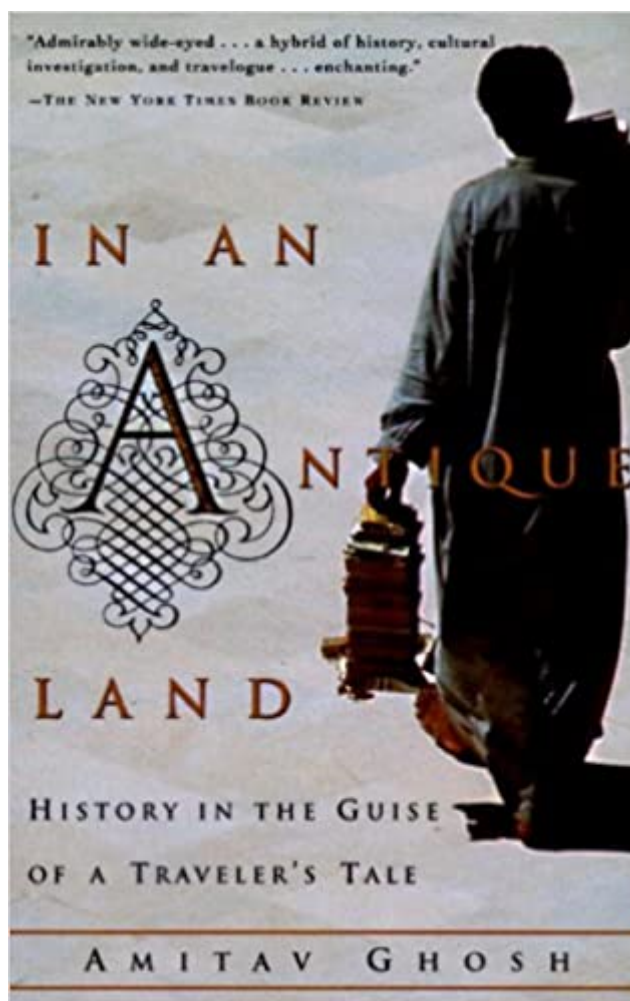


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In An Antique Land: History In The Guise Of A Traveler's Tale



Synopsis

Once upon a time, an Indian writer named Amitav Ghosh set out as an Indian slave, name unknown, who some seven hundred years before had traveled to the Middle East. The journey took him to a small village in Egypt, where medieval customs coexist with twentieth-century desires and discontents. But even as Ghosh sought to re-create the life of his Indian predecessor, he found himself immersed in those of his modern Egyptian neighbors. *Antique Land* Combining shrewd observations with painstaking historical research, Ghosh serves up skeptics and holy men, merchants and sorcerers. Some of these figures are real, some only imagine, but all emerge as vividly as the characters in a great novel. *Antique Land* is an inspired work that transcends genres as deftly as it does eras, weaving an entrancing and intoxicating spell.

Book Information

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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. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

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. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

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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