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978-0-521-76551-0 - Egypt and the Limits of Hellenism

Ian S. Moyer

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EGYPT AND THE LIMITS OF HELLENISM

In a series of studies, Ian Moyer explores the ancient history and modern historiography of relations between Egypt and Greece from the fifth century BCE to the early Roman empire. Beginning with Herodotus, he analyzes key encounters between Greeks and Egyptian priests, the bearers of Egypt's ancient traditions. Four moments unfold as rich micro-histories of cross-cultural interaction: Herodotus' interviews with priests at Thebes; Manetho's composition of an Egyptian history in Greek; the struggles of Egyptian priests on Delos; and a Greek physician's quest for magic in Egypt. In writing these histories, the author moves beyond Orientalizing representations of the Other and colonial metanarratives of the civilizing process to reveal interactions between Greeks and Egyptians as transactional processes in which the traditions, discourses, and pragmatic interests of both sides shaped the outcome. The result is a dialogical history of cultural and intellectual exchanges between the great civilizations of Greece and Egypt.

IAN S. MOYER is Assistant Professor in the Department of History, University of Michigan. His current research and teaching interests include ancient Greek history, especially of the Hellenistic period; Late Period, Ptolemaic, and Roman Egypt; ethnicity and culture in the ancient world; historiography and ethnography; and ancient religion and magic. He is the author of several articles, and he has lectured on various topics related to his research for this book at universities in the United States and Europe.

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Acknowledgments

This is a book about a recurrent, generative dialogue that spanned centuries and crossed cultural lines. The book itself is also the product of innumerable dialogues with teachers, colleagues, students, friends and family, dialogues that crossed disciplines, generational divides, and various other borders. It did not take centuries to write (despite my own perceptions of time at particular moments), but it did take several years, during which I accumulated the many debts I owe to those who were willing to participate in this dialogical endeavor. Here I would like to record my deep gratitude to them. If the reader finds any faults with the written results, they are, of course, my responsibility alone.

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