

Egyptology: The Missing Millennium brings together for the first time the disciplines of Egyptology and Islamic Studies, seeking to overturn the conventional opinion of Western scholars that Moslems/Arabs had no interest in pre-Islamic cultures. This book examines a neglected period of a thousand years in the history of Egyptology, from the Moslem annexation of Egypt in the seventh century CE until the Ottoman conquest in the 16th century. Concentrating on Moslem writers, as it is usually Islam which incurs blame for cutting Egyptians off from their ancient heritage, the author shows not only the existence of a large body of Arabic sources on Ancient Egypt, but also their usefulness to Egyptology today. Using sources as diverse as the accounts of travelers and treasure hunters to books on alchemy, the author shows that the interest in ancient Egyptian scripts continued beyond classical writers, and describes attempts by medieval Arab scholars, mainly alchemists, to decipher the hieroglyph script. He further explores medieval Arab interest in Ancient Egypt, discussing the interpretations of the intact temples, as well as the Arab concept of Egyptian kingship and state administration?including a case study of Queen Cleopatra that shows how the Arabic romance of this queen differs significantly from Western views. This book will be of great interest to academics and students of archaeology, Islamic studies and Egyptology, as well as anyone with a general interest in Egyptian history.

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