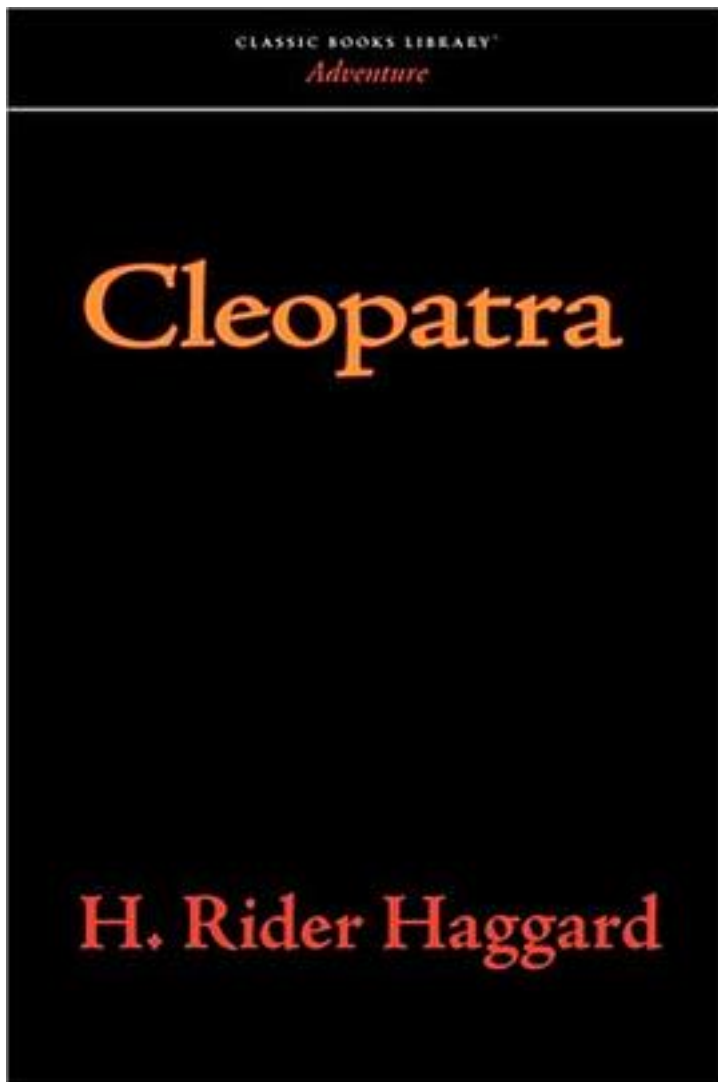


Cleopatra



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Few personalities from classical antiquity are more familiar yet more poorly grasped than Cleopatra (69-30 BC), Queen of Egypt. The subject of a vast repertory of post-antique popular culture and also a significant figure in literature, art, and music, Cleopatra herself is surprisingly little known and generally misunderstood. Even in the years immediately after her death her memory was condemned by those who defeated her. The image of Cleopatra as an unfit ruler and wanton seductress who destroyed the careers of two of Rome's greatest generals-an image first created by Octavian's propaganda campaign-informs the later portrayals of her on stage and screen. Cleopatra was an accomplished diplomat, administrator, linguist (she was probably the first Ptolemy ruler to learn Egyptian), and author, who, until her very last years, skillfully managed her kingdom in the face of a deteriorating political situation and increasing strength and hostility from Rome. The fact that the wealthy and pivotally placed kingdom of Egypt held out so long against Roman conquest is due primarily to the formidable skills of its last Ptolemaic Queen. Although she is the subject of a vast bibliography, she can be unfairly represented as a person whose physical needs determined her political decisions. Some of the most unbiased data from her own era, the repertory of art and coinage produced while she was alive, are too frequently ignored. In Cleopatra, Duane Roller has written the definitive biography of the Queen, not as a figure in popular culture or even in the arts and literature of the last five hundred years, but as the last Greek Queen of Egypt. In addition to providing an engaging narrative of the Queen's life, the author carefully contextualizes Cleopatra in the revolutionary events of the first century BCE. He highlights the important heritage of the Ptolemies, rulers in Egypt since the death of Alexander the Great three hundred years earlier, and the growing involvement of Rome in North Africa and the Middle East, culminating in Octavian's annexation of Egypt in 30 BCE. Roller also considers Cleopatra's various predecessor Queens, who are often ignored but were fascinating personalities in their own right, and her descendents: although Cleopatra was seen as "the last of the Ptolemies" her daughter and grandson ruled in Africa for another 70 years and created a Ptolemaic government-in-exile at Mauretanian Caesarea. The result is the most complete and authoritative portrait of the life and times of this perennially fascinating figure.

作者介绍:

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评论

有些微bias的感觉，抬了Cleopatra很多次，不过也说明了理由而且蛮合情合理的，但是没有太多论据支持这一点基本上都是作者自己的猜想，没有文献比较。所以不能算严谨学术，但是作为科普读物还是很优秀的。虽然都是史料，但是并不显得太枯燥。

与其说是传记，不如说是一个材料指南，看完整本书下来基本上对材料以及研究情况有个大致的了解。当成companion更合适，这本书的作者，如果我没记错的话，应该也是Oxford Bibliography里面Cleopatra条目的编者。英文版非常好，但中译本真的是翻得稀里哗啦。

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书评

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