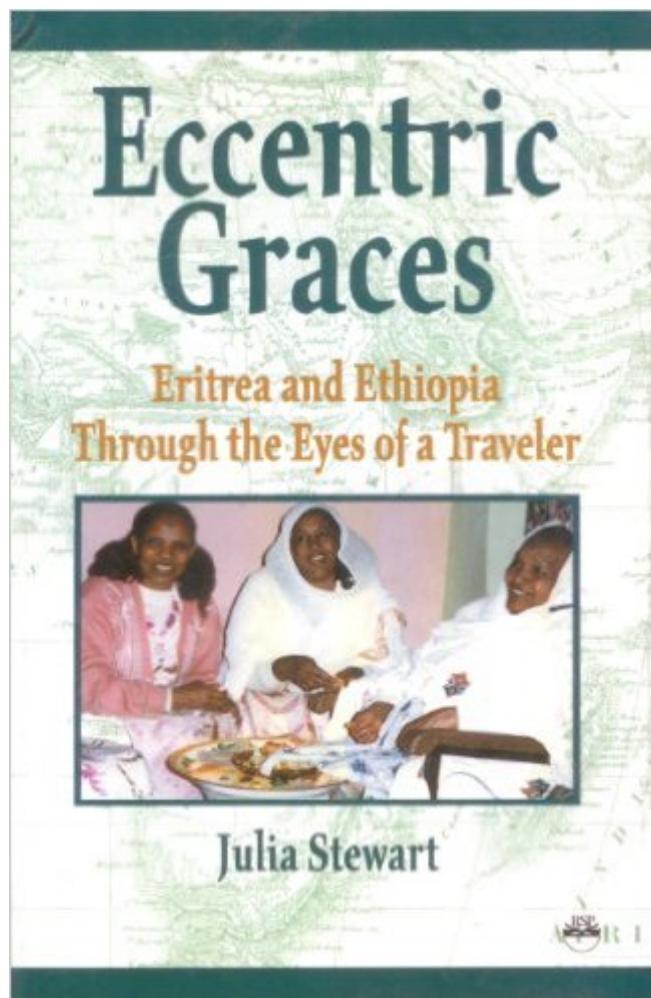


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# Eccentric Graces: Eritrea And Ethiopia Through The Eyes Of A Traveler



## Synopsis

Prologue: This is a travel narrative about Eritrea, a tiny sun-drenched country along the Red Sea, and Ethiopia, its giant southern neighbor and former colonial overlord. Among the oldest civilizations on earth, these two African countries can boast over 2,000 years of recorded history. Eritrean and Ethiopian histories interlock, yet still maintain distinctive features. Eritrea's past revolves around foreign incursions and occupation, as well as ongoing trade and cultural mingling with Mediterranean and Arabian worlds. Ethiopian history speaks of imperial glory and dominance, and for great swaths of time isolation, as its Christian kingdoms held out in highland strongholds while Islamic and pagan militaries swirled around them. Today, both countries, having just emerged from a thirty-year war, are dirt poor. Many citizens live on less than one dollar a day and both nations receive millions of dollars annually in food and development aid. But, with many well-trained professionals among local and exiled populations, rebounding economies, the rule of law, and rich histories and cultures to draw upon, Eritrea and Ethiopia represent the brightest hope for democracy and growth in Africa in the new millennium. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

It is not a surprise to me that there are such mixed reviews of this book. It is obvious by reading the reviews that you either loved it or hated it. That said, I read it and thought it was fantastic! If you have an opened mind, and a sense of wonder - as does the author of this book - than it will be apparent that most of these negative reviews have an anterior motive. Why is that? Africa is a continent that is as diverse as these reviews! Coincidence? Please read this book with the intent

that it was written: as a travel narrative. How often are we lucky enough to read the accounts of a woman travelling through these two contrasting countries? It is a perspective; and like any work of art it brings something different in everyone who views it. I'm happy to say that this book gave me an excellent insight into these countries in an easy to read and understand manner. Ms. Stewart's experiences seem wonderful, scary, mysterious...all description given to the countries as well as the continent. Bravo! It's a rare treasure and wonderful addition to my library!

Surprised that a reader/reviewer writes off this fascinating book as a travel guide, which means he entirely misunderstands the book's genre (and misreads the subtitle of the book "through the eyes of a traveller"); it is a travel narrative not a travel guide, which in travel narrative style does not pretend to offer the reader with prices of hotels and lists of good restaurants, but rather gives the armchair and actual traveller a glimpse of the atmosphere of a country and its people as a snapshot in time. Stewart has accomplished this task well. The Ethiopia and Eritrea she visited several years ago, have already changed, and it is valuable that some of their pre-border-war character - albeit from one person's experiences - was captured. Yes, you should buy Bragg if you want a good travel GUIDE, but read this for insight and entertainment.

I read this book with disgust, specially Julia Stewart's stereotyping of Ethiopians. As an Ethiopian I was offended by her writing that "Ethiopians are very arrogant people" after her 'Eritrean buddy' told her some story. This book is rather a political book against Ethiopians reflecting an Eritrean's (with hatred toward Ethiopia) point of view. Her Eritrean buddy also mentions in the book, "the only thing he likes about Ethiopia is the money". I wish the book focus more on her travel experience than trying to generalize things. Any one who really wants to find the truth about Ethiopia, may I suggest you read this book, A GUIDE TO ETHIOPIA by Philip Briggs which has a very balanced view about Ethiopia. Perhaps Julia may check this book as well. One other thing I wish the author had a warning for her use of obscenity in her writing. May I generalize now about Americans? I won't lower myself to that standard.

a well written book about the authors unique experiences in these 2 lands. I work with refugees and immigrants in a volunteer capacity and work with 2 wonderful Eritrean families. I have read much about the country, and admire it even moreso, after hearing the authors experience. She probably did not visit with preconceived notions, so I think she was objective in her viewpoint. It appears from all that I have read, that Ethiopia is in terrible shape, and they are the current aggressor, possibly in

an attempt to hide their internal problems. The book is not dry. It is very alive, particularly with interpersonal contacts, and the physical descriptions are great. I would highly recommend it as a personal and informal perspective of 2 fascinating and little known countries

I am particularly interested in the historical aspects of these two countries and found this book very thoroughly researched. The incorporation of both historical and travel narrative works very well. I felt that I was both learning and travelling with Ms. Stewart. Well written and very interesting to read.

There are far better books that can give you a perspective of these two countries. This author's work is nothing but an attempt propagating a prejudiced, if not condescending, view of Ethiopia. I find her outlook insulting and patronising to Ethiopians and Eritreans alike. It is like a poor attempt of a 90's travelogue Evelyn Waugh's style, as it is steeped in colonial hypocrisy and unabashedly patronising world view. A waste of my time, glad I didn't buy it, as I got it from a library.

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