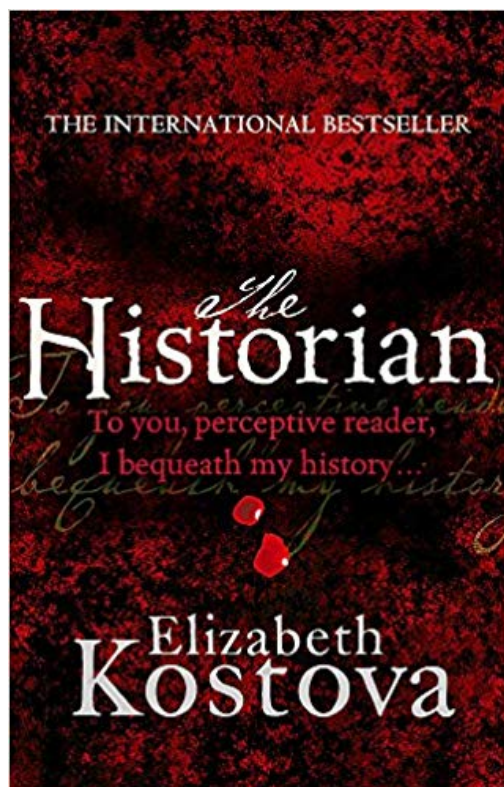


The Historian by Elizabeth Kostova



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Author: Elizabeth Kostova

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Reviews of the **The Historian** by Elizabeth Kostova

Maman

This was the first "adult" novel I read as a child, and it's still a book I come back to over and over as one of my favorites. I absolutely love fantasy novels that are heavily grounded in history and this book covers such a unique area of history, and accurately. The writing is superb and manages to stitch together multiple timelines seamlessly. It covers bits of history from Vlad the Impaler (the original inspiration for Dracula), the history of vampire lore, and some history of the USSR. It also doesn't put vampires in a romantic light like so many books do nowadays but makes them genuinely scary.

Lesesshe

Now, if you are into the undead and a tour of Eastern Europe this is the book for you! This is the second time I have read this book, I enjoyed it just as much the second time. The story takes the reader on several adventures from England to Turkey to Hungary and Bulgaria. The book is full of folklore from these countries regarding Dracula and how his servants still walk among us. The cast of characters is vast and diverse, great for a book this size, yet, you are not bogged down with too many individuals to know how they fit into the story. Give it a try.

Atineda

Relying heavily on found written accounts and correspondence, *The Historian* is an homage to Stoker's novel as much as a retelling of the Dracula legend. The characters and the way they are drawn in to the reality and threat of vampires to all who uncover their existence is engrossing. The reader also gets to know these vampire hunters much better than Stoker's statues of Victorian manly and womanly virtue. Unfortunately I found another similarity between *The Historian* and *Dracula*; an engrossing brisk beginning turns into a slog to find out how it ends. Too many teary moments, internal monologues about the anguish being experienced and every incidental local encountered warrants a paragraph of physical description. I recommend this book to anyone who likes gothic horror novels, especially about vampires which are vampires, and not unfortunate folk condemned to an appetite for blood and the nocturnal restrictions and alienation the come with it.

Buzalas

While this is fiction, it reads like nonfiction. It continued to draw me in for all 676 pages and beyond. I am still musing over the ending. Elizabeth Kostova did an excellent job of researching fact and interweaving fiction. I have, already, given copies, as gifts, to two friends. This is the kind of unexpected pleasure I hope for in every read; a work requiring active reading with use of my thinking process, as we journey through the pages with an intriguing plot and well-developed characters that are worth my investment of time and energy.

spacebreeze

Good premise, but difficult to really get into. While I enjoy historical fiction as much or more than most, this story just seems to drag when it should be captivating. The plot lines are good, just seems to get lost in details, long descriptions, and random digression occasionally.

Garr

I have never heard an audio book so well read. The book includes American, British, Scottish, Italian, Turkish, Hungarian, Romanian, and Bulgarian characters. each character is read by a different reader who is at least bilingual in English and the target language, at least as far as I can tell. The effect on the realism of this book even though the book touches the world beyond, but no spoilers, would be hard to over estimate. This gives the book a cinematic quality. This is the way a book should be read, or listened to! This is the most effective audio book I have listened to, so far.

Butius

Great historical thriller. The novel is very well written. It moves somewhat slowly through the first two parts, the pace picks up almost too fast in the last 10 chapters. The ending is not spectacular and does not conform to the preceding textual content, it takes a Hollywood twist. Elizabeth Kostova has no plans on writing a sequel. Character development is asymmetrical - we never really find out what happens to Barley, the circumstances behind Paul's death are both bland and inconsistent with the rest of the plot. It seems as though after about page 500, the author got tired of writing and just gave it a quick and comparatively less interesting end. Despite the latter, it is a page turner, I got through it in about 5 days. It embodies a very attractive Gothic, history-tinged, extensive Russo-subplot feel to it - A Bram Stoker meets Carlos Ruiz Zafon and have a quick tea time with Fyodor Dostoevsky kinda feel emerges. I like the book, its not a classic, but its an entertaining page turner. I first came across this book when my friend and I were making paper roses for her wedding decorations out of old books. She had picked this book out for its beautifully "marshmallow" aged pages - where the edges have turned a hue of golden brown. We were gluing the petals together when I saw the word "Dracula." I immediately thought, "What have we done?!" Reading the description of the book, I knew I would eventually have to read it.

My interest in *Dracula* and Romanian lore, first peaked after reading Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Then, ironically, I ended up marrying my husband, who was born and raised not 30 minutes from Castelul Bran, or better known as *Dracula's* castle.

Enough about me, and onto the book review...

This book was brilliantly written.

I loved everything about this book. Yes, it is long, and takes a bit for the plot line to pick up in the beginning. But, the endurance reading is totally worth it. Kostova doesn't waste any words that she wrote, all having meaning and importance. For anyone who likes a meaty text, packed full of detail, historic locations and all-encompassing plot lines, this is for you.

And please note, this is not about the Twilight-type vampires that are so prominent in today's literature. This is a twist off of the original "*Dracula*" novel, dedicated to the story of Vlad Tepes of Wallachia.

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