

Hdt. 2.41-42

Text Übersetzung:

(A. D. Godley)

[41] All Egyptians sacrifice unblemished bulls and bull-calves; they may not sacrifice cows: these are sacred to Isis. [2] For the images of Isis are in woman's form, horned like a cow, exactly as the Greeks picture Io, and cows are held by far the most sacred of all beasts of the herd by all Egyptians alike. [...]

[42] All that have a temple of Zeus of Thebes or are of the Theban district sacrifice goats, but will not touch sheep. [2] For no gods are worshipped by all Egyptians in common except Isis and Osiris, who they say is Dionysus; these are worshipped by all alike. Those who have a temple of Mendes or are of the Mendesian district sacrifice sheep, but will not touch goats. [3] The Thebans, and those who by the Theban example will not touch sheep, give the following reason for their ordinance: they say that Heracles wanted very much to see Zeus and that Zeus did not want to be seen by him, but that finally, when Heracles prayed, Zeus contrived [4] to show himself displaying the head and wearing the fleece of a ram which he had flayed and beheaded. It is from this that the Egyptian images of Zeus have a ram's head; and in this, the Egyptians are imitated by the Ammonians, who are colonists from Egypt and Ethiopia and speak a language compounded of the tongues of both countries. [5] It was from this, I think, that the Ammonians got their name, too; for the Egyptians call Zeus "Amon". The Thebans, then, consider rams sacred for this reason, and do not sacrifice them. [6] But one day a year, at the festival of Zeus, they cut in pieces and flay a single ram and put the fleece on the image of Zeus, as in the story; then they bring an image of Heracles near it. Having done this, all that are at the temple mourn for the ram, and then bury it in a sacred coffin.