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van Haarlem, W.M.

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Bonnet, Ch. D. & D. Valbelle. 2006. Pharaonen aus dem schwarzen Afrika. – Mainz, Philipp von Zabern

W.M. van Haarlem



'Pharaonen aus dem schwarzen Afrika' is the German translation of the original 'Des Pharaons venus d'Afrique' (Éditions Citadelles & Mazenod, Paris 2005). It opens with a preface by J. Leclant. A general introduction emphasises the occasion for this volume: the discovery of several royal Kushite statuary in a Kerma cachette by the excavation team of the University of Geneva in 2003.

The first chapter presents the wider contexts of the discovery: the settlement of Kerma's palace, temples and cemeteries, as well as its history before, during and after the Egyptian domination. Chapter 2 reports on the more detailed context of the discovery: the historical sequence of the temple area where the untouched cachette was found. The Amun sanctuary there was later transformed into an Aton temple, and

then back into an Amun temple again. The cachette was situated in a 25th Dynasty addition to this temple. In the following chapter, the seven royal statues found in the cachette (of Taharqa, Tanutamun (2), Senkamanisken (2), Anlamani and Aspelta), are dealt with in great detail. A discussion of the question whether Egyptian or Kushite sculptors were involved in the production concludes this chapter. Chapter IV gives an account of the events of the 25th or Kushitic Dynasty, leading up from Taharqa and Tanutamun to the campaign of Psammetikhos II against the Kushites under Aspelta. During this campaign the destruction of the statues (they were all beheaded) and their subsequent burial in the cachettes must have taken place. The question whether they were just cleared away destruction debris or reverently buried is discussed; the latter interpretation is favoured. Chapter V is placing the cachettes or sacred deposits in perspective with the other cachet-

tes found all over Nubia and Egypt, such as the Luxor and Karnak examples. Paragraphs on the import of Egyptian statuary in Nubia and the production and life cycle of temple statues conclude this chapter. This chapter gives an excellent, detailed and up-to-date overview of the state of affairs of these subjects. Especially the sections on the life cycle of statues are illuminating. Part VI is an appendix, with a chronology, a bibliography, a list of figure credits and acknowledgements. An index would not have been out of place, but it is usual in these kind of Von Zabern books not to be included. Usual too are the many colour plates of high quality. This is an exemplary publication, most lavishly illustrated and extensively documented.

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