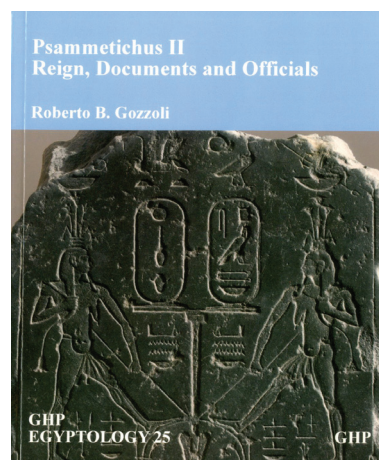

Book Review

Psammetichus II. Reign, Documents and Officials

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Author	Roberto B. Gozzoli
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Series	Egyptology



Who can resist the attraction of ancient Egypt and the thrill of uncovering mysteries that have lain hidden for thousands of years? This book about Psammetichus II goes together with a growing interest about the Late Period, and the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty in particular.

The necessity of a full scale analysis of such a reign was important, in order to put old conceptions to rest, as well as dealing with new data coming out from new publications and discoveries.

The book itself has become a sort of historical exercise, as well as an encyclopedia about Psammetichus' reign. All the royal material has been translated anew, while the debt from previous scholars is clearly stated.

Yet, this book does not deal with history of art, but history of art is perused to justify trends appearing during this reign. Archeology and philology are employed in order to clarify the historical picture. The book targets audience who are studying Egyptology and scholars who are interested in the evolution of writings and inscriptions in this epoch. The book is for those who want a brief, accurate and readable survey about the reign of Psammetichus II.

His short reign took place at a time when Egypt was not the dominant power in the Levantine area any longer. Instead, Egypt faced a powerful enemy, the Chaldean Kingdom and its army, against the Saite pharaohs had to defend their own borders. Employing royal monuments, papyri and graffiti, Psammetichus II ruled during the period of 595–589 BCE. His foreign campaigns, enigmas, royal

monuments and officials are studied in order to supply a complete study of the Pharaoh and his times. In Egyptology, he is best known for leading a Nubian campaign. Psammetichus II ruled in a period when Egypt was fighting for its life against the more powerful Babylonian Kingdom.

The book is divided into two parts: the first part relates to the historical figure Psammetichus II through five chapters, while the second part relates to his monuments and officials through two chapters. It was referred that up to the early twentieth century CE, most of the information related to the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty came from Greek authors.

In this book, succeeding chapters can be broadly categorized into a number of diverse topics covering Psammetichus II's reign, family, policy, death and officials.

While reading this book, the reader should ideally begin with chapter one that deals with the Saite Royal House, focusing on Saite rulers between Tefnakht and Necho II. This provides a useful insight into the beginnings of Psammetichus II's history. Then the author moved to Psammetichus II and his family through many inscriptions that were recorded on their statues, stela, sarcophagi or tombs. Such inscriptions gave us a detailed information about the names and titles of Psammetichus II and his family.

Gozzoli provides a good overview on Psammetichus II and his domestic policy in chapter two. It starts with a historical background about the new Pharaoh and the attempts for identifying the exact date in which he became the pharaoh. This