



Portraits of the Ptolemies: Greek Kings as Egyptian Pharaohs

Paul Edmund Stanwick

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As archaeologists recover the lost treasures of Alexandria, the modern world is marveling at the latter-day glory of ancient Egypt and the Greeks who ruled it from the ascension of Ptolemy I in 306 B.C. to the death of Cleopatra the Great in 30 B.C. The abundance and magnificence of royal sculptures from this period testify to the power of the Ptolemaic dynasty and its influence on Egyptian artistic traditions that even then were more than two thousand years old.

In this book, Paul Edmund Stanwick undertakes the first complete study of Egyptian-style portraits of the Ptolemies. Examining one hundred and fifty sculptures from the vantage points of literary evidence, archaeology, history, religion, and stylistic development, he fully explores how they meld Egyptian and Greek cultural traditions and evoke surrounding social developments and political events. To do this, he develops a "visual vocabulary" for reading royal portraiture and discusses how the portraits helped legitimate the Ptolemies and advance their ideology. Stanwick also sheds new light on the chronology of the sculptures, giving dates to many previously undated ones and showing that others belong outside the Ptolemaic period.

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