

and as they deal with adaptations from the same body of works. This revisiting of themes might have become tedious, but instead one is continually surprised to learn how adaptable the Egyptian idiom has been for so many types of setting. This is an interesting and thought-provoking book for anyone curious about Egypt's legacy in the visual arts.

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David O'Connor and Andrew Reid, eds. *Ancient Egypt in Africa*. London: University College London Press, 2003. In *Encounters with Ancient Egypt* series. Distributed by Cavendish Publishing, c/o International Specialized Book Services, Inc., 5824 NE Hassalo St., Portland, Ore. 97213-3444. 245 pp. Figures. Notes. References. Index. \$47.50. Paper.

Ancient Egypt in Africa presents twelve probing essays addressing aspects of the question, "To what extent can ancient Egyptian civilization be characterized as 'African'?" In the traditional view, formulated by European and American scholars in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Egypt, despite being in Africa, was not of Africa. The racist/colonialist view that Africa and African peoples were incapable of high cultural attainment naturally resulted in the view that Egypt was a non-African country, more closely connected to the Near Eastern and Mediterranean worlds and populated by peoples more akin to "civilized" Europeans. To these scholars, inner Africa was perceived only as a source of raw materials and slaves. Such interpretations of ancient history were important in order to maintain European authority and power within Africa. In reaction, African and African American scholars, mostly in the latter twentieth century, adopted an opposite paradigm: that ancient Egypt was not only an African civilization, populated by "black" Africans, but also a civilization that imparted its culture to the rest of Africa as well as Europe.

O'Connor and Reid's introduction provides a fascinating overview of how current ideas about ancient Egypt and Africa have been shaped and distorted by modern ethnic, cultural, and religious bias. "For the most part," they write, "locating Ancient Egypt has been an exercise in ideological definition, serving less to understand Ancient Egypt itself and more to define the position of the commentator" (4). From this point they introduce the essays, which document the conflicting and changing views of ancient Egypt within Africa, and examine recent archaeological work in Africa that renders irrelevant race-based theory, creates a more sophisticated view of ancient African cultural diversity, and offers commonsense directions for future research.

Along with its fine introduction, the book contains eleven chapters by the following authors: Martin Bernal ("Afrocentrism and Historical Models

for the Foundation of Ancient Greece”); John North (“Attributing Colour to the Ancient Egyptians: Reflections on Black Athena”); Michael Rowlands (“The Unity of Africa”); Andrew Reid (“Ancient Egypt and the Source of the Nile”); Caleb A. Folorunso (“Views of Ancient Egypt from a West African Perspective”); Kevin MacDonald (“Cheikh Anta Diop and Ancient Egypt in Africa”); Bruce B. Bennett (“Ancient Egypt, Missionaries, and Christianity in Southern Africa”); David Wengrow (“Landscapes of Knowledge, Idioms of Power: The African Foundations of Ancient Egyptian Civilization Reconsidered”); David H. Edwards (“Ancient Egypt in the Sudanese Middle Nile: A Case of Mistaken Identity?”); Robert G. Morkot (“On the Priestly Origin of the Napatan Kings: The Adaptation, Demise, and Resurrection of Ideas in Writing Nubian History”); and Dorian Q. Fuller (“Pharaonic or Sudanic? Models for Meroitic Society and Change”). Unfortunately there is no chapter providing an overview of the Afrocentric movement in the U.S. or reviewing and referencing the writings of its leading exponents. This is a great pity, for it is precisely these people and their considerable following who need this book the most. By excluding them, and even any reference to them, the book implies that they are unworthy of consideration. This seems an opportunity missed.

Nevertheless, this book, with its bibliographical pot pourri, should be required reading for all serious students of Egyptology, Africana, and African studies.

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