

Andrea FANCIULLI, Kathrin GABLER, Jessica IZAK, Martina LANDRINO, Antonio LOPRIENO, Matthias MÜLLER, Renaud PIETRI, Stéphane POLIS, Nathalie SOJIC, Susanne TÖPFER, Stephan M. UNTER

New Kingdom Hieratic Collections From Around the World. Introduction

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New Kingdom Hieratic Collections From Around the World

Introduction

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This book is the first in a series of volumes designed to provide a detailed overview of the diverse New Kingdom hieratic materials preserved in various museums and public collections around the world. The endeavour is directly connected to the interdisciplinary project *Crossing Boundaries: Understanding Complex Scribal Practices in Ancient Egypt*¹. This project is a joint venture of the University of Basel, the University of Liège, and the Museo Egizio, and it is financed by the SNSF in Switzerland and the FNS-FNRS in Belgium, as well as supported financially by the Museo Egizio. Since 2019, the *Crossing Boundaries* project has targeted the rich papyrological materials from the village of Deir el-Medina (c. 1350–1050 BCE) held in the Museo Egizio, seeking to enhance our understanding of the scribal practices that lie behind the production of the texts from this community. The driving methodological motto of *Crossing Boundaries* has always been to adopt a *contextualized* approach to these written materials; as we progressed on the Deir el-Medina materials, the need to develop a clearer picture of *all* the hieratic materials available from the same period quickly became evident. This led to the present publication, the existence of which allows us to

expand our perspective on Deir el-Medina and to situate our results from the *Crossing Boundaries* project against a much broader background.

Initially, we planned a single volume that would offer both historical and quantitative overviews of the New Kingdom hieratic materials held in various collections around the world, as well as a series of case-studies discussing unpublished documents from these institutions. The scope of the project quickly grew, however, as we began to receive enthusiastic responses to our call for papers from numerous colleagues around the world. As a result, the contributions to this project have been divided across several volumes.

Each volume is arranged geographically and proceeds in alphabetic order—continent by continent and country by country. As such, this first volume opens with Egypt and a complete overview of the New Kingdom hieratic material in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. This is followed by overviews of 18 European museums and 3 North American collections (see the Table of Contents on p. 5). Upcoming volumes address several other substantial collections, including those of the French Institute in Cairo, the Louvre, the Museo Egizio, and the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden in

1 See Polis et al. (2020); Gabler et al. (2023).

Leiden. Here we should stress that we have systematically targeted only official institutions holding hieratic materials; our coverage does not include private collections; nor does it necessarily address materials found in excavations that remain to be published.

All of the contributions to these volumes have been subjected to internal and external review processes. During the internal process, each of the articles were assigned to two editors from our team of ten; these editors worked together on these articles as main- and co-editors. These two-person teams acted independently and were supported by Jessica Izak (Basel), who oversaw the editorial work. During the external process, international experts who were not contributing to the volumes were consulted in order to assess the quality of the articles.

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2 Rosmorduc (2014).