



# Temple of Karnak: The Majestic Architecture of Ancient Kemet

*Frederick Monderson*

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Temple of Karnak: The Majestic Architecture of Ancient Kemet, published (2011) by SuMon Publishers is an updated and expanded version of an earlier issue offering readers a comprehensive artistic, historical and esoteric insight into this important religious structure instrumental in the history of imperial Egypt/Kemet. The Temple of Karnak is a full-length English language book on the ancient world's grandest home of a deity, still standing despite its many man-made and natural challenges. Insightfully, it depicts the historical, pictographic, architectural and archaeological adventures of a temple 2000 years in the making; that today, 2000 years later, still exudes and evokes much of the ancient mysticism, spirituality and awe-inspiring esotericism. Together with more than 400 photographs, illustrations and plans highlighting the more salient features of this divinely inspired complex of temples, readers are treated to an extensive bibliography in English to encourage further research on this architectural museum, making it an indispensable read and therefore a welcome addition to any library collection. It supplies readers with both photographic imagery and textual survey of a quintessential Middle and New Kingdom temple, home of the national God Amon-Ra, 'King of the Gods,' 'Father of the Gods,' ancient Egyptians considered the 'Throne of the World.' Encompassing two poems to Amon-Ra and the temple itself; a 'Why and Wherefore' of the philosophy of ancient Egyptian religion manifesting at Karnak; a compendium of famous writers' insights; a detailed description of the principal features of the temple in the ascent towards the 'holy of holies' and beyond; including a selection of some of the choicest pieces of 'talatat art' from the Open Air Museum; making it "a book you can take to the temple!" As such, it highlights important features before and beyond the entrance pylon; provides a photographic depiction of the Hypostyle Hall's temple ritual and its architectural columnar majesty; depicts the Wars of Seti I; points to Thutmose III's Festival Temple the Akh Menu's tent pole columns; features Rameses II's "Girdle Wall" illustrations; and includes images highlighting points of principal interest, viz., sphinxes, pylons, colonnades, obelisks, statues, the sacred lake, courts, axes, temples, walls, decorations, etc., and includes names of people associated with the site, all making The Temple of Karnak, a fact-filled and useful work. A "second take" on principal segments of the monuments with separate bibliography that extends the source of reference; contributes to further understanding of this magnificent and complex piece of religious architecture. All in all, it's not simply a historic description of the structure but also an indispensable Travel Guide heightening the adventure and significantly complementing any visit to the temple. Photos enliven the experience and reinforce the rich heritage of the monuments while including items the casual visitor never sees. Finally, the traveler, the specialist, student and lay person, can all benefit from this work that should be in any library collection on Ancient Kemet/Egypt. Frederick Monderson, an African historian and Egyptologist, has written extensively on ancient Egypt. He can be reached at SuMon Publishers PO Box 160347, Brooklyn, New York 11216, or, fredsegypt.com@fredsegypt.com sumonpublishers.com@sumonpublishers.com blackegyptbooks.com@blackegyptbooks.com blackfolksbooks.com@blackfolksbooks.com

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