

# Elephantine in Context

Studies on the History, Religion and Literature of the Judeans in Persian Period Egypt Edited by Reinhard Gregor Kratz and Bernd U. Schipper

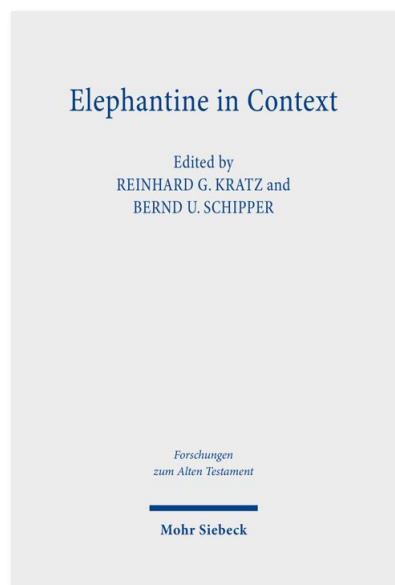
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The Persian period has long been considered a "dark era" in Israel's history. For this reason, research has mainly focused on how it is depicted in the Hebrew Bible. A spectacular discovery of archaeological relics and epigraphic sources was hence hardly noticed: the military colony located on the island of Elephantine in the Nile, on the border between Egypt and present-day Sudan. The basic approach of this volume, which documents a three-year Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft project, is to break with a research tradition focusing on the Judeans (Jews) mentioned in the Aramaic papyri from Elephantine and instead investigate the military colony in a broader historical context also documented by Demotic and Egyptian-hieratic evidence found at Elephantine. The studies presented focus on three main subject areas: society and administration, religion, and literature. They show that historically the island of Elephantine hosted a multicultural society with several interactions between the Egyptians and the other inhabitants, and that it was also an important administrative centre for the Persian authorities.

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