

INSCRIPTIONS

Writing on long-lasting materials. Inscriptions, like texts written on papyrus (see PAPHROLOGY), are important primary sources of information about a society. In [Egypt](#) they appear on stone, plaster, clay, wood, metal, and textiles. They may be scratched, carved, engraved, stamped, painted or inked, or woven. Those written on clay sherds or limestone fragments are called OSTRACA. Those written on coins belong to the study of numismatics. Inscriptions on buildings and tombs, which are the majority of Coptic inscriptions, are dealt with in separate sections later in this article.

Inscriptions are found in all parts of Egypt, from Alexandria in the north to Aswan and [Nubia](#) in the south, and also in the Egyptian oases (see BAGAWAT). They are often in the open air, on rocks and buildings visible to all, but they are also in the interior of buildings, especially monasteries and chapels.

The inscriptions date from the fourth to the eighteenth century and are couched in many languages. In the early centuries, they are in Greek; later some are in Greek, some are in Coptic, and some are in both languages. From the beginning of the Arabic period, there are also Arabic or bilingual Coptic-Arabic inscriptions. There are isolated cases in monasteries of inscriptions in Syriac, at DAYR AL- SURYAN, and Armenian, at DAYR AL-ARMAN.

Content and Value

The vast majority of inscriptions deal with religious matters— theology, church history, and monastic devotion. Of these the preponderant number consist of memorials to the dead. As in the pharaonic period, the readers of these inscriptions are called upon to remember the dead (Thompson, 1912, no. 335; cf. Krause, 1983, p. 91). A group of these memorial inscriptions on the walls of monasteries are identical with tomb

inscriptions (see below) and are called “prayers in litany form.” These memorials give us the name and date of death of the deceased. Often, as in KELLIA, only these inscriptions have survived, not the tombstones themselves.

In DAYR EPIPHANIUS at Thebes there are several important long dogmatic inscriptions of the sixth-century patriarch Damian and Severus of Antioch, and also Syriac inscriptions. Also interesting are statements about the life of the evangelist Luke and about the Gospels of Matthew and Mark in the chapel of a monastic settlement in Asyut (Clédat, 1908, p. 221).

A large number of inscriptions are in the form of lists. Examples are lists of the commemoration days of the disciples at ISNA (Sauneron et al., 1972, no. 67), the patriarchs of Alexandria (Thompson, 1912, no. 265), monks (at AYN MURAH), abbots of DAYR ANBA SHINUDAH (the White Monastery) at Suhaj in Karnak (Coquin, 1972, pp. 174-76). A list of the bishops of Hermonthis (ARMANT) is preserved on a diptych (Crum, 1908). A catalog of the books preserved in the library of Dayr Anba Shinudah has also come down to us (Crum, 1904, pp. 564-67), as has the beginning of Psalms 51-93, found in a cave at Nag Hammadi (Bucher, 1931). A wine list has survived from DAYR APA JEREMIAH, which shows how much wine was drunk on the feast days of the saint (Thompson, 1912, no. 226). A festal calendar has also been handed down in fragmentary condition from DAYR APA APOLLO, BAWIT (Clédat, 1904, p. 5).

Inscriptions also attest visits to monasteries and chapels by pilgrims, especially in Bawit and al-BAGAWAT. They often name the place from which the pilgrims traveled (Maspero, 1931, no. 222; beginning of eighth century). The pilgrims’ homeland can also often be deduced from the dialect of their inscriptions (Roquet, 1976, p. 45).

A large number of inscriptions are legends to wall paintings, for example,

the names of the persons portrayed (e.g. Munier and Pillet, 1928, pp. 67-74).

Only sporadically do inscriptions give information of secular events, such as the extension of roads (Bouriant, 1893), the capture of [Ibrim](#) by the Turks in 1173 (Bouriant, 1886), or the foundation of buildings (see below). The value of inscriptions as primary sources is great. For example, we learn the age of Christianity at individual places in Egypt, especially in the oases. From building inscriptions, we learn the age of churches and the date of the transformation of pagan temples into Christian churches. A large number of clergy are named, especially bishops, of whom there is no other evidence. The same holds for functionaries in Egyptian monasteries. We learn their titles and their names, can draw conclusions about the organization of the monasteries, and obtain material for historical accounts. Inscriptions are also important for PROSOPOGRAPHY. We learn what names (Egyptian, Christian, or Old Testament) the monks and laity of [Egypt](#) bore. From grave inscriptions, we can determine, in addition to the name, the date of death, and sometimes the age of the deceased. Dated memorial inscriptions in monasteries set up alongside paintings sometimes help with dating the wall paintings (cf. Krause, 1966, 570).

Frequently we learn the names of the craftsmen and artists at work on a building; and from a few inscriptions, in addition to the name, we learn the period at which artists worked. For example, the artist Mercurius from the Monastery of Shenute, who also worked in DAYR ANBA HADRA at Aswan, was painting in DAYR ANBA BISHOI, Suhaj, in the year 1301. In 1124 the Armenian artist Theodore had already worked in Dayr Anba Shinudah at Suhaj (Crum, 1904, pp. 556f.). The artist's financial sponsor is also named.

Sources

There is no collective edition of inscriptions in Coptic. The situation is

better for inscriptions in Greek through the works of G. Lefebvre, partly replaced by the more recent work of E. Bernand. Groups of local inscriptions are variously treated. Of those in Dayr Apa Apollo, for example, only those discovered by J. Maspero and [edited](#) by E. Drioton (Maspero, 1931) meet modern standards of publication. The publications of J. Clédat offer no translation of the inscriptions, and the Coptic text must be checked for accuracy. The Coptic inscriptions from the necropolis of al-Bagawat, published by the Egyptologist A. Fakhry in succession to W. de Bock, have been revised and edited by G. Roquet. The digest published by A. Mallon in 1914 is based on old material and has in part been superseded by inscriptions discovered later or restudied.

The Greek inscriptions were collected and published by Lefebvre in 1903 and 1907. Later other inscriptions were published by Lefebvre (1908, 1910, 1911, and 1915) and other scholars: E. Brecchia (1919), H. I. Bell (1932), H. Munier (1949), S. Donadoni (1986), R. G. Coquin and G. Wagner (1970), G. Wagner (1972), and J. Jarry (1973). A Copto-Arabic memorial inscription in DAYR ABU HINNIS was [edited](#) by Lefebvre in 1907 (no. 222) and afresh by M. de Fenoyl in 1964.

Until the 1940s only a few late gravestones, from 912 and 917, in the Bohairic sphere were known (Mina, 1939). Since then, two gravestones showing a semi-Bohairic influence have been discovered. One, from 887 or 927, is in Vienna (Till, 1955, pp. 177ff.). One, from 913, is in the Louvre, Paris, no. E 27.220 (Coquin, 1983, pp. 103f); it names a local bishop, Victor, alongside Gabriel I, patriarch of Alexandria. A greater number of inscriptions in Bohairic have been found on monastery walls such as in Kellia.

The number of gravestones with Fayyumic inscriptions is larger (Zuntz, 1932, pp. 23f. and 27-33; Leclant, 1962). Meanwhile, further gravestones have become known (Jarry, 1969). One was purchased by the State Museum of Berlin.

Building Inscriptions

Inscriptions appear on religious and secular buildings in both [Egypt](#) and Nubia. Some buildings are inscribed in Greek, others in Coptic. Some are in both languages, but the text varies so considerably that the Coptic cannot simply be a translation of the Greek (cf. Kubinska, 1974, pp. 18ff. with Jakobielski, 1972, pp. 40ff).

Ecclesiastical inscriptions may be on churches, such as one dated 710 on the church in Tafah, Nubia (Preisigke, 1913, no. 1594). Some may refer to the reconstruction or renovation of a church, such as an inscription of 707 in Faras (Kubinska, 1974, pp. 14f.; Jakobielski, 1972, pp. 40f., where the reference to the renovation is missing). The Coptic inscriptions are in the [Sahidic](#) dialect. A fifth- or sixth-century inscription from Nazlah in the Fayyum, in Greek, describes the marble enhancement of a church dedicated to Saint Menas in the time of Bishop Peter (Lefebvre, 1911). A much later Coptic inscription of 1713 in the Bohairic dialect notes the restoration of Dayr Anba Bula in the Eastern Desert; it is written under the dome. Because these inscriptions name both the secular ruler of the time and the bishop or priest, they are of great value for dating.

Above the entrance to Dayr Anba Shinudah at Suhaj is carved a Greek inscription, in which the comes (attendant) Caesarius names himself as founder. In Lefebvre's opinion (1920, p. 251), the inscription dates from the first half of the fifth century.

It can be noted from inscriptions that Egyptian temples were transformed into Christian churches. This is indicated by several inscriptions in the Temple of Isis in PHILAE, which under Bishop Theodore of Philae was rebuilt into a church dedicated to Saint Stephen (Lefebvre, 1907, no. 587).

A Coptic inscription in PHILAE dated 753 attests the foundation of a workshop given by a layman for the Monastery of Saint Mary in Philae

(cf. Wreszinski, 1902, p. 64; the same inscription was published by Mallon in 1905, with divergent readings). This was the second year of the episcopacy of Bishop Severus of Philae.

In different monasteries, notably at Dayr Apa Apollo at Bawit, individual complexes consisting of a chapel and several dwelling rooms were built within the enclosure walls (cf. Torp, 1981, plan I). Above the entrances to these submonasteries were fitted lintel beams of stone or wood, which are inscribed among other things with the names of the inhabitants and their offices (Krause, 1988). Often the abbots named in the inscriptions can be precisely identified.

The chapels were decorated with paintings that were given legends in Greek and Coptic (cf. e.g., Cledat, 1904, pp. 54-61 and pls. 31 and 34). Occasionally the painters give their names, for example, Phoibammon and Abraham in Saqqara (Thompson, 1909-1912, nos. 92, 319.14). In Saqqara also appear the names of copyists (grafeÚj) (Thompson, 1909-1912, nos. 13.7 and 203.31). In Bawit copyists (Maspero, 1931, nos. 149.5, 354, 452.20) and painters (nos. 58.1, 60.2, 81.1) give their names.

Two secular inscriptions in Greek attest the building of a tetrapylon in Athribis (ATRI) in the year 374 (Lefebvre, 1907, no. 64; Boyaval, 1966, pp. 361f.). Inscriptions note the renovation (Lefebvre, 1907, no. 43, p. 561) of a series of secular buildings in various other places in Egypt. Building inscriptions are particularly numerous on the island of Philae. In addition to those already mentioned, other inscriptions report the renovation or repair of walls (Lefebvre, 1907, no. 584 from the year 577; nos. 592 and 593 from the time of Bishop Daniel; no. 594 without date; no. 596 from 796; nos. 597-603 undated).

Inscriptions on wooden lintels from secular houses in the Fayyum mention not only the names of the inhabitants but also the name of the builder and the date of construction: in the years 942-943 (Roquet, 1978, p. 342, no. 4), 958-959 (Roquet, p. 342, no. 3), and 959-960 (Roquet, p.

341, no. 2).

Inscriptions give the names of a number of craftsmen who were active in the building, above all in Dayr Apa Apollo and Dayr Apa Jeremiah in Saqqara. Named in the inscriptions are builders (*ekwt*, *ekot*) in Bawit (Maspero, 1931, nos. 100, 348.2, 548.2) and in Saqqara (Thompson, 1909-1912, nos. 89, 177, 294), carpenters (*hamse*, *hamshe*) in Bawit (Maspero, 1931, nos. 96, 108, 124, 149.21, 203.4) and in SAQQARA (Thompson, 1909-1912, nos. 6, 78, 89, 145, 146, 157, 177, 182, 192, 198, 202, 224), and stone-cutters (*lfxoj*) in Bawit (Chassinat, 1911, plate 36) and in Saqqara (Thompson, 1909-1912, nos. 13, 106, 192, 232).

Tomb Inscriptions

Gravestones, or STELAE, were provided with inscriptions that gave the name of the deceased, often the date, and a prayer in a more or less set formula. On many tombstones, the inscriptions are in Greek or Coptic. Occasionally stones have inscriptions in both Greek and Coptic, especially in Nubia. Stones bearing inscriptions in Coptic and Arabic are rare. The majority of the Coptic inscriptions are in the [Sahidic](#) dialect. There are also some in Fayyumic, Akhmimic, and Bohairic.

There is an unpublished Akhmimic gravestone inscription in the Coptic Museum in Cairo (no. 17727, cf. Lüddeckens, 1978, p. 201 and n. 28).

In addition to a series of gravestones with elements from neighboring dialects, the greater part of the known Coptic tombstones from Saqqara as far as [Nubia](#) is composed in Sahidic.

The essays of A. Mallon (1914) reflect the state of work at the beginning of the twentieth century (Brown, 1986). There is so far no catalog of the inscribed gravestones in the larger museum collections, particularly the Coptic Museum in Cairo. W. E. Crum's catalog of 1902 needs to be supplemented, not only by information regarding origin given by G.

Daressy (1914), but also by the works of G. Biondi (1907), Lefebvre (1903, 1908, 1910, 1911, 1915), Munier, R. Engelbach (1937, 1939), and others. In the meantime, these stelae have been transferred from the Egyptian Museum to the Coptic Museum and have been given new inventory numbers. Numbers of the Coptic Museum are given in the publications by T. Mina (1939, 1941) and Raouf Habib (1955). The works of H. Hall (1905) and E. Revillout (1885) should be replaced and completed by new ones. The ultimate aim is a corpus of the Coptic and Greek tombstones.

In the same way, local set forms must be treated, as was done for Aswan by Munier (1930-1931). We may also compare the investigations of the laments for the dead from ANTINOOPOLIS by M. Cramer (1941), the Fayyumic gravestones by J. Leclant (1962), that from Saqinya by M. Krause (1975), and that from ISNA by S. Sauneron and Coquin (1980). Only at the end can we come to a comprehensive work such as H. Junker (1925) proposed for the Nubian tombstones. His work, however, is in need of supplementing, owing to the many new discoveries in Nubia. Here the set forms of the Greek tombstones must be finally compared with those of the Coptic (for Saqinya, cf. Krause, 1975, pp. 78f). Until then any work on tombstones is provisional.

Dating. Munier's research on the gravestones of Dayr Anba Hadra is important. He identified three distinct long redactions of the set form of inscriptions. The first runs, "The day of commemoration of the blessed brother." Then follow the name of the deceased and the date of his death (month, day, and indiction year, a fifteen-year cycle). In the second redaction, these data appear before the date of death, with the addition "on which he laid himself down to rest." The third redaction expands the text after the date of death by a prayer. In this, entreaty is made for rest for the soul in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

While the tombstones carrying inscriptions of the first redaction are dated only according to indiction years, those of the second and third also

mention the years of the era of the martyrs, beginning with the year 284 (after Diocletian). From this it follows that the three redactions can be dated to different periods. Munier sets the first in the sixth century, and the second in the seventh, and the third in the eighth to ninth. A further check (Krause, 1975, p. 79) has led to a shift in these dates; the second redaction is dated in the years 716 to 768—that is, the [eighth century](#)—and the third in the years 786 to 792. The application of Munier’s methods of investigation to the large Nubian cemetery of Saqinya, containing 314 tombstones (66 Greek and 248 Coptic), has fully confirmed these methods. Only the datings of the third redaction are somewhat later in [Nubia](#) than in Egypt (Krause). Hence Munier’s methods must be applied to the investigation of all Coptic and Greek gravestones in Egypt. Here the tombstones must be investigated separately according to location, since we have to reckon with the possibility that the several redactions may sometimes shift in the period, as is shown by a chronological comparison of the redactions on the tombstones from Dayr Anba Hadra and those of Saqinya.

Many gravestones (both Greek and Coptic) carry only the indiction year (from 312-313 there is an indiction cycle) and thus cannot be more precisely dated. It is, however, to be assumed that many belong to the first redaction. The oldest Greek gravestones so far dated according to the martyr era come from the necropolis of Alexandria, al-Dikhaylah. They are dated from 524 to 590. “The blessed singer Abba Dorotheos fell asleep in the Lord on 16 Pharmouthi of the eighth indiction, in the year of Diocletian 246.” On some tombstones even the hour of death is given (Bell, 1932). The oldest Coptic tombstone dated with certainty so far derives from the necropolis of ANTINOOPOLIS and is dated 620 (Lefebvre, 1915, pp. 118ff.). Some tombstones are dated both according to the era of the martyrs and also according to the Hegira of Muḥammad, for example, a Greek gravestone from Isna of the year 890 (Lefebvre, 1907, no. 541).

Formulas. Some prayer formulas are found all over Egypt. Others are

characteristic of a particular location. A very frequent formulary attested throughout [Egypt](#) gives both Coptic and Muslim dates and is expanded by a prayer at the end. Frequently it is matched by the formula “God is one” or “One is God, who helps.”

Less frequently attested on Greek tombstones are the formulas “God [Lord or Christ] grant rest to the soul,” “God be mindful,” and “Lord, God, have mercy on the soul” (Lefebvre, 1907, XXXI).

Typical for gravestones from AKHMIM is the formula in the first redaction “Stela of the blessed [name]. He lived [. . .] years [and date of death].” In the second redaction “be not sorrowful, no one is immortal” is added.

In stones from Hermonthis, it is noted after the name of the deceased that he “ended his life” (™teleÚthsen), and the date of death is given (Lefebvre, 1907, no. 413). In the second redaction “be not sorrowful, none is immortal in this world” is added. On the formulas in Nubia, see Krause (1975, pp. 78f.).

The Copts, like their Egyptian forerunners, avoid the use of the verb “to die” (Krause, 1983, p. 92 with references; exceptions: Munier, 1926, and the tombstones with lamentations for the dead). Instead, they speak of “going out of the body,” “laying aside the body,” and above all “laying oneself to rest.” The last description is known also on the Greek tombstones of Egypt, on which the expression “to end (one’s life)” (™teleÚthsen) is employed.

One group of inscriptions, attested both as tomb inscriptions and also as memorial inscriptions—especially in monasteries—are described by Junker (1925, p. 143) as “prayers in litany form.” Characteristic of these are invocations of saints, in which their number may be of varying size, so that the length of the inscription also may vary considerably: one of the longest litanies is Saqqara no. 203 (Thompson, 1912, pp. 60f.). This

inscription invokes the Trinity, the archangels Michael and Gabriel, Mary, the four-and-twenty elders, the powers of the Spirit, our father Adam, our mother Eve, our fathers the patriarchs, our fathers the prophets, the judges, the righteous kings, our holy fathers the Apostles; the Evangelists; the archbishops; the martyrs (sixteen names); and monks (twenty names). They are all to pray for the soul of the deceased, whose date of death is given as 25 October 775. At this time, we learn, Menas was archbishop of Alexandria and George was bishop of Memphis.

This inscription formula is attested in Egypt, from Saqqara as far as Isna, in monasteries and hermitages. It seems that it was predominantly, if not exclusively, used in monastic circles. While this inscription in Saqqara was chiseled in limestone, we find it in other places, for example, in Isna, written on the walls of chapels (Sauneron, et al., 1972, no. 89 and often).

Tombstones from Antinoopolis and its surroundings from the middle and second half of the [eighth century](#) form a special group because of their phraseology. The deceased is not referred to in the third person but rather speaks himself in the first person. He does not, as is usual elsewhere, avoid the use of the words “death” or “dying.” He laments the “shortness of his life,” “the sudden coming of death,” or of “the messenger of death,” and emphasizes that the relatives will be “left behind in great sorrow.” We find these terms as early as the pharaonic period in the tomb inscriptions of this region (Krause, 1983, p. 92) and also in Coptic texts (Cramer, 1941; Lüddeckens, 1984). The texts are often enriched with biblical citations. In outward appearance, some of the funeral stela, which are wrought in the form of an Egyptian offering table, are different from the customary stela forms.

The prayer formula in litany form of varying length, already mentioned, is particularly characteristic of tombstones in Saqqara. Beside it is found the invocation of God as “God of spirits and Lord of all flesh” and the prayer that He may have mercy on the soul of the deceased. Both formulas are, however, also attested in other regions. For Middle Egypt,

the invocation of God as “good God” is typical, for Antinoopolis the invocation as “God of Colluthus,” for Upper Egypt (Hermonthis-Isna) the affirmation “One is God, who helps.” The formula from ASWAN investigated by Munier is also attested at other places in [Egypt](#) and Nubia.

It is striking that in [Egypt](#)—in contrast to Nubia (Jakobielski, 1972, and Kubinska, 1974)—no tombstone of a bishop has so far become known. The stone described as the “gravestone” of Bishop Pusi of PHILAE (Mallon, 1914, 2880 and ill. 3283) does not contain any date of death and is, therefore, to be interpreted as a memorial stone, unless the date of death has been broken off. Bishops are indeed named on other, incompletely preserved, tombstones from Aswan (Munier, 1930-1931, nos. 121 and 145), but these are not the tombstones of bishops. Clergy of the rank below the bishop are, however, represented, as are all the offices in monasticism from abbot of a monastery down to monk and hermit. Among secular occupations, doctors and a large number of craftsmen are named.

Tombstones with No Date or Known Place of Origin. Most tombstones are neither localized nor dated. Although cemeteries of the Christian period with the gravestones in situ were found during the excavations in [Nubia](#) and published by scholars such as Junker, the larger part of the tombstones of the Christian period in [Egypt](#) does not derive from excavations that meet modern requirements for scientific study and publication. Rather, tombstones either were found by people who were digging for manure, and then reached the museums through the antiquities trade, or else they derive from nineteenth-century excavations, of which only brief communications were published, but no complete excavation reports (for the tombstones of Dayr Anba Hadra at Aswan, cf. Munier, 1930-1931, pp. 257ff.). Only later did it become known where the museum tombstones came from. Thus, for example, one must read Daressy’s essay to learn the place of discovery of the stelae that were in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, since the volume of Crum’s *Catalogue général* (Crum, 1902) often does not contain this information. The

gravestones from Dayr Apa Jeremiah at Saqqara were not excavated in the cemetery of the monastery but were built-in inside the monastery. The tombstones from Wadi Sarjah were not found in the cemetery but “in various chambers on the hillside, quite apart from the cemetery” (Crum and Bell, 1922, p. 57).

For the stelae with no information about their derivation and dating, there is, therefore, the problem of finding such information. As aids to localizing we may use the material of the tombstones, their form, their decoration, the form of the letters, the language (dialect), and the wording of the inscription. Since the gravestones, as a rule, were wrought from local stone, investigation of the material is important. The tombstones in the neighborhood of Cairo come from the nearby stone quarries of Turah. In the Fayyum, hard white limestone, which is light gray on the upper surface, was used alongside nummulitic limestone. In Luxor people used the local limestone; in Hermonthis, sandstone, of a light to dark ochre or reddish-yellow to reddish-brown; and in Isna and Idfu, light, soft limestone. In Aswan and Nubia, gravestones were made from sandstone. In addition, there are isolated gravestones of terra-cotta.

The form and size of the tombstones also varies. The majority of the gravestones are rectangular, but there are also stelae, especially in Isna, which are small and rounded on top (cf. Zuntz, 1932, pp. 27ff.; Sauneron and Coquin, 1980).

For the Fayyum tall, rectangular gravestones are characteristic. They are often developed through round arches and columns or pillars with architrave and gable into a niche, in which the deceased stands or sits, often as an orant (figure in prayer) or a woman with a child (cf. Effenberger, 1977). A cross may also appear in place of the deceased.

The numerous stelae from Hermonthis appear in several variations. There are rectangular to trapezium-shaped stelae with a gable top, in the middle of which stands a cross surrounded by a garland of leaves. Other

stelae are longer, gaining space at the lower end for an eagle, which now bears the cross in the garland of leaves. In some stelae the cross in the garland is replaced by a monogram with palm branches, and alpha and omega can be written above the crossbars. Finally, the monogram may be supplemented by an ankh sign. These symbols may be combined in various ways.

Characteristic for the tombstones from Isna (Sauneron and Coquin, 1980) is their rounding at the top, their adornment with the eagle, and their architectonic shaping (Badawy, 1947). Most of the tombstones from Dayr Anba Hadra, which are characteristic for Upper Egypt, are small and quadrangular, often square.

The form of the letters has not yet been correlated to the localizing and dating of tombstones, since there is as yet no palaeography of the Coptic inscriptions. The form is naturally dependent on the material (whether it is hard or soft and therefore difficult or easy to work) and on the ability of the stone cutters.

Alongside well-executed inscriptions as in Saqqara, where there were craftsmen in the monastery, there were also inscriptions by less well-trained workmen whose chiseling was not so good.

The assignment of Coptic tombstones with a non-[Sahidic](#) inscription to the area in which the dialect of the inscription was spoken presents no problems, since the sphere of influence of the several Coptic dialects is known. But the localization of Sahidic stelae presents great difficulties, because Sahidic can be traced throughout all [Egypt](#) and Nubia. The formula of the Sahidic tombstones can be employed for the localization of the stelae only with reservations, since at almost all sites not only one formula but several were utilized—whether contemporaneously or in succession. For the localization and dating of these tombstones, therefore, all the aids mentioned must be brought into play.

[See also: Hayz, al-; Dush; Jabal al-Tarif; Jabal Tafnis; Nubian Inscriptions, Medieval; Qasr Nisimah; Shams al-Din; Umm Dabadib; Wadi Shaykh 'Ali.]

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