

## ***Monks and Scholars in the Panopolite Nome: The Epigraphic Evidence***

**DURING THE CONFERENCE** “Perspectives on Panopolis,” which took place in Leyden in 1998, Lucia Criscuolo discussed the evidence of the Greek inscriptions, including Christian ones, from the Panopolite nome, the present-day Sohag-Akhmim area. Already in the beginning of her paper, she observed that it would be “impossible to sketch a coherent picture of Panopolis on the basis of its Greek inscriptions.”[\[1\]](#)

Regrettably, the same judgment applies to the exclusively Christian sources from late antique and medieval times that are the subject of the present contribution. It is not that [Christian inscriptions](#) from the region are scarce, rather to the contrary, but the record is discontinuous and often lacks the context that might give it historical significance. Further problems, as we will see, concern the heuristics and the accessibility of parts of the material.

In the following pages, some problems and challenges of the epigraphic evidence for the Christian history of the region will be briefly discussed. Our discussion will be guided by the geographical distribution of the texts. In fact, most of the inscriptions from Christian Panopolis can be traced to one of four main provenances. First, on the east bank, the necropoleis in the vicinity of the town, and, secondly, stretching into the eastern desert, the Wadi Bir al-‘Ayin; then, on the opposite bank of the Nile, the White Monastery and its surroundings; and, finally, the more modest site of the Red Monastery.

The Wadi Bir al-‘Ayin and its inscriptions have received considerable attention in Klaus Kuhlmann’s book on the archaeology of the Akhmim area,[\[2\]](#) whereas the inscriptions in the church of the Red Monastery will be published in a volume that is due to appear under the editorship of Karel C. Innemee in the series “La peinture murale chez les coptes” (Institut français d’archéologie orientale, Cairo). As the reader can easily

be referred to the publications mentioned, only two out of the four geographical clusters of epigraphic material will be dealt with below.

First, the numerous group of tombstones from late antique Panopolis, intriguing on account of their idiosyncrasy, will be discussed by Sofia Schaten. Then, Jacques van der Vliet will review the rich and varied record from perhaps the most impressive Christian site of Egypt, the White Monastery.

## I. “Rive droite”: The Town

From the point of view of epigraphy, the town of Panopolis, modern Akhmim—a town that was a well-known production center of linen fabrics, and had a flourishing Greek-style urban life and a rich monastic hinter-land—appears to be a desert region. All the epigraphic witnesses of urban life, such as inscriptions commemorating the foundation or restoration of churches and other public buildings, seem to have disappeared. The only epigraphic material that we do have originates from funerary contexts.<sup>[3]</sup> The area around Akhmim had extensive cemeteries and, from the early second half of the nineteenth century, the discovery of tombs, mummies, and fine mummy clothes made the town famous for its splendid textiles.<sup>[4]</sup>

Cacilia Fluck’s contribution to the present volume discusses these textile finds in detail and gives extensive information about the various areas and cemeteries from where these may have come (Chapter 21). The publications about the textile finds that followed the earliest so-called excavations (for which see C. Fluck’s contribution) contain information about several necropoleis but, to the best of my knowledge, do not mention Christian stelae. The bulk of the funerary inscriptions said to be from Akhmim (some 115 stelae in Lefebvre 1907 alone) were found in the second half of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, and made their way into various museums.<sup>[5]</sup> None of these stelae, however, were found during regular excavations, and no doubt some of

them have been given an Akhmim provenance in order to make them more interesting for the antiquities market.<sup>[6]</sup>

In spite of the relatively large numbers that have survived, many Christian stelae from the Akhmim region, as from the rest of Egypt, must have been lost. Thus, the lack of decorated stelae in various styles is conspicuous, even though there are a few stelae with an *anch*-shaped cross depicted in the center of the stone.<sup>[7]</sup> Their assignment to Akhmim is often uncertain, however.<sup>[8]</sup>

Like other regions and cities that were centers of Greek culture with inhabitants of both ethnic backgrounds (Greek and Egyptian), workshops in Panopolis must have produced elaborate decorated stelae with Hellenistic and, later on, Byzantine characteristics. Variations in usage can be observed even within the same sites. In all probability, the decorated stelae from the Panopolite region were destroyed owing to natural circumstances or reused in constructions outside the cemeteries.

Stelae with inscriptions only were sometimes set in a niche in the wall of a tomb. Since very few Coptic cemeteries have been found intact, it is difficult to determine whether stelae like those from Akhmim were placed in a niche or erected on top of a grave. The type that is commonly called typical for Akhmim is a roughly triangular stela with an inscription, a model that seems restricted to this particular region. All stelae in this class are from limestone, mostly roughly cut; their sizes may vary, but only a few measure more than 30 x 60 cm.

Their shape suggests that they were erected on top of a tomb, as their relative great thickness gives them considerable stability. A second group in the more common rectangular shape but with a typical inscription possibly shares the same local background. Both groups show an individuality in the textual formulae that deserves further discussion.

Inscribed funerary monuments from medieval Christian Egypt followed

the tradition of calling upon the visitor to commemorate the deceased, and recitation was thought to create a relationship between the deceased and the living person. The typical stelae from Akhmim bear a Greek inscription that consists of the introductory formula “stela of the deceased N.N.,” followed by the verb “he (or she) lived” and the age of the deceased. Although variations are possible, the date of death is usually given in the form: month name, day of the month (in numbers) and number of the indiction-year, a way of dating that does not allow the assignment of absolute dates.[\[9\]](#)

In a few cases short prayers or acclamations follow, such as “do not be sorrowful, no one is immortal.” The use of the word “to die” is avoided here as in other areas of Egypt, where it may be replaced with expressions like “to lay down the body” or “to go to rest.” In Panopolis, the word “stela” takes the place of these phrases, which is unique for Egypt. A lot of these stelae are damaged, but the formulaic pattern of the inscriptions allows suggestions for the restoration of the missing parts. Within this stereotypical group, some variation can nevertheless be observed. Thus, a few inscriptions start with formulae like “God is one, who helps” or “Oh God, have mercy on the soul” that are also known from stelae in the Hermonthis area.[\[10\]](#) Small crosses or an alpha and omega are the only decorative elements that are sometimes added to the text.

The second, much smaller group of stelae, has the more common rectangular shape and also bears a different text (in Greek or in Coptic). Like many inscriptions from Hermonthis, they state that the deceased “ended his life” or “went to his / her rest.”[\[11\]](#)

The only provenance given for all these stelae is Akhmim. No more precise indications are ever given. It would be interesting to investigate whether all these pieces may have come from one place or from different cemeteries, and whether they have been picked up in small compounds, belonging to one or more communities of either laymen or clergy. For questions of prosopography, demography, and causes of death, an

extensive research into the Akhmim stelae, covering names and occupations, [12] as well as age, gender, and the month of death, would undoubtedly yield more and more precise results. [13]

Also, dating the stelae from Akhmim (like similar stelae from other regions in Egypt) remains a problem, not only on account of the absence of absolute data but also owing to the lack of information about find circumstances. On various grounds, they may be dated to the sixth or early seventh century, however. [14]

## II. “Rive gauche”: The White Monastery

### Shenoute and his patrons

Very few inscriptions in the White Monastery can be linked to its most famous abbot and the builder of its monumental basilica, Saint Shenoute. The commemorative text inscribed on the inner face of the granite lintel above the main southern entrance to the church is a major exception. [15] Its six lines of Greek are dedicated to “the eternal memory” of “the founder” of the building, a high-ranking official, the Count (*komes*) Caesarius (Kaisarios), the son of Candidianus (Kandidianos). The inscription is an invaluable document for several reasons. It is, first of all, an independent, non-literary witness to the importance of Shenoute’s social network, confirming that he counted his patrons among the political and economic elite of his time.

The text formally identifies one of these patrons, the Count Caesarius, who is known also from the writings of Shenoute, as the principal sponsor of the church. Furthermore, the language of the text, Greek, underlines the sociolinguistically significant observation that Coptic came only to be used for public inscriptions well over a century after the death of Shenoute. [16] Finally, although the inscription is not dated, the activity of [Caesarius](#) in this part of Egypt can with a high degree of probability be situated in the very middle of the fifth century. [17] This, in turn, yields a

reliable date for the building of the monastery's great church.

Further inscriptions that might shed light on the chronology of Shenoute date from a far later period. They belong to a considerable group of Coptic dipinti in and around the northern conch of the church sanctuary, which have now for the greater part disappeared.<sup>[18]</sup> Two of these (Crum A.1 and A.2) contain a concise *curriculum vitae* of Shenoute himself, which provides precise, though not necessarily accurate dates for his life and times. They may date from as late as the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century.<sup>[19]</sup> Modern scholars tend to be wary of using this information, and they are obviously right, also because of the uncertainties and the lacunae in the published texts.

Nevertheless, it may be observed that, while being all but contemporary, they are at least based on intentional computing, whereas contemporary sources rather tend to produce accidental information. Nor can it be excluded that the medieval chronologist had information at his disposal that is not available to the modern biographer. Thus, according to Crum's dipinto A.2, Shenoute was born in A.D. 348 or 349,<sup>[20]</sup> while, according to A.1, the great church of the monastery was consecrated in the 106th year of his life.<sup>[21]</sup> Combining these data yields the year 454 or 455 for the latter event, which is certainly not far off the mark. This calculation could be based upon a now lost hagiographic or epigraphic source, perhaps even a foundation inscription that, unlike the lintel of Count Caesarius, did not survive to the present.

Also near the sanctuary of the church another late antique [dedicatory](#) inscription is found, one much less known than the [Caesarius](#) lintel.<sup>[22]</sup> Regrettably, its relationship with the construction works undertaken by Shenoute remains doubtful. This brief text, again in Greek, is situated several meters above the floor, on the shaft of the northernmost of two marble columns that originally marked the entrance to the triconch of the sanctuary, but are now partly walled in. Although noticed as early as the late seventeenth century, the inscription has never been properly

published and the few authors that mentioned it failed to interpret it correctly.<sup>[23]</sup> It consists of three lines of beautifully engraved majuscules surmounted by a large Latin cross, also carefully executed in raised relief.<sup>[24]</sup> The text reads (in translation):

“In fulfillment of a vow by Heliodoros and Kallirhoe and their children.” The inscription, therefore, commemorates a Christian family who erected this column with its sculptured cross as an [ex-voto](#).

At first sight, it might seem indisputable that Heliodoros too, like Caesarius, numbered among the wealthy patrons who had assisted Shenoute in financing and erecting the great monastery church. Some objections can be raised, however. First, according to Peter Grossmann, the present columns at the entrance to the sanctuary were erected there in a relatively late stage, in replacement of earlier, larger columns.<sup>[25]</sup>

Then, palaeographically, the text is rather different from the [Caesarius](#) lintel, which is certainly contemporary with Shenoute. Finally, and most compellingly, in February 1909 a similar marble column with an exactly identical inscription and decoration was discovered, not in the White Monastery, but built into a house to the southeast of the town of Akhmim.<sup>[26]</sup> If both columns once belonged to one and the same building, as seems plausible, the find of the second column is not in favor of identifying this building with the White Monastery church.

Although various scenarios can be envisaged, it seems more likely that the columns were originally part of another Christian or christianized building, perhaps situated in or near the town of Panopolis, which was demolished or destroyed at an unknown date and plundered for various other building or restoration works. Thus Heliodoros and his family may have contributed only indirectly and unwittingly to the construction of Shenoute’s church.

## **Medieval patrons, artists, and scholars**

Before the early-twentieth-century restoration that stripped the walls of the church almost entirely of their plaster coating, these must have been covered with numerous inscriptions, both painted and engraved.<sup>[27]</sup> The very few that survive or have been recorded in the past tell not only about leaders and patrons of the monastery in medieval times, long after Shenoute's death, but also about the use and development of the monastery church as sacred space. Obviously, several of these inscriptions belong to the class of dedicatory inscriptions, connected with building, restoration, or decoration works. The most sensational among them are undoubtedly the bilingual, Armenian and Coptic, set of texts that accompany the monumental painting of Christ enthroned, still visible in the central apse of the church.

They comprise both legends and prayers for the artist, the Armenian painter Theodore, and the various Armenian and Coptic sponsors of the project that was apparently completed in A.D. 1123-24.<sup>[28]</sup> The whole set-up is reminiscent of similar "multicultural" decoration projects in Dayr al-Surian, in the Wadi al-Natrun. Even if the White Monastery has never really become a "Monastery of the Armenians," the scale and the central position of the apse painting clearly indicate the importance of Armenian patronage in the early twelfth century.

Another set of inscriptions in the northeast area of the church concerns reconstruction and decoration works that took place about a century later. Two of these texts mention a major rebuilding that was completed in the year 1259 under the Archimandrite Ioannes.<sup>[29]</sup> The former is a long dipinto that can still be seen today on the front of the brick pier to the north of the central apse; the latter, much briefer, was situated between two niches in the northern conch.

They record the erection of "four columns" in order to reconstruct the roofing of two "tabernacles" and their adjacencies, which had become "uncovered" as the result of an earthquake. In view of the position of one of the texts (A.6) and the use of a Coptic term for "canopy" in both, it may



be supposed that they commemorate the reshaping of the original, late-antique triconch into its present form, with a central dome carried by four brick piers.[\[30\]](#)

Other texts in the same general area commemorate the donation and execution of a decoration program in this part of the church, but the nature of the works is not always entirely clear. Only in one case, a priest and monk, Phibamon, who is also styled a [scribe](#) and architect, is clearly credited for sponsoring the painting of an archangel, probably Saint Michael, still vaguely visible above the door to the northern pastophorion.[\[31\]](#) In addition to their obvious interest for the architectural history of the church, these [dedicatory](#) inscriptions provide lots of accidental information. Thus Crum's text A.6 gives in passing a brief biography of the Archimandrite Ioannes (l. 17-23) as well as a hint of the (very negative) popular opinion about the rule of "the Turks," the first Mamluks (l. 16-17).

A final group of dipinti from the same northeast part of the church, the famous library inscriptions, must date from the same general period as the ones quoted above (twelfth-fourteenth century).[\[32\]](#) They have recently been discussed and partly republished by Tito Orlandi,[\[33\]](#) and need only be mentioned briefly here. Written on the walls of the north pastophorion,[\[34\]](#) they list titles of books with their quantities, and in addition contain a number of apotropaic charms written in Arabic in Coptic characters as well as prayers for the scholarly priest who wrote the inscriptions, a certain Klaute (Claudius). It would seem that they combine a shelving system with an inventory of the library that was kept in the room.

In spite of their obvious interest, some cautionary remarks about the documentary value of these inscriptions are due here, some of which have been made already by earlier authors. First, we have very little idea of the disposition of the texts on the walls, which hampers any reconstruction of the library—if that it was—as a physical and functional

unit. Secondly, whereas the room in question may have stored a library, as is not unusual for a sacristy,<sup>[35]</sup> it cannot automatically be equated with *the* library of the monastery. The place where the inscriptions were situated, the north pas-tophorion, would suggest that the books stored there were primarily those used for liturgical reading.

However, even if this room really did contain a more comprehensive library, the inscriptions can only give an indication of what it may have looked like at an unknown, but certainly quite late stage. A library, even a monastic library, is not a static unity, but subject to constant renewal. This is all the more so when it passes through periods of language shift, as occurred in the White Monastery, which saw two major language shifts in the course of its history: first from Greek to Coptic, and then from Coptic to Arabic. The library inscriptions reflect the final stages of the last of these shifts. Even if they cannot, therefore, provide a reliable guide to *the* White Monastery library, they do remain an important witness to medieval Coptic literary culture, and as such they deserve further study.

Outside of the sanctuary area, medieval painted inscriptions can be found even today at various places where the original plaster still holds—thus, in particular, on the medieval masonry piers, erected within the so-called ‘southern narthex,’ which was perhaps originally a chapter-house.<sup>[36]</sup> As far as they can be deciphered, they seem to be mostly commemorative in character, combining names and brief prayers. Some are published, like the Coptic prayers for workmen copied in the early years of the twentieth century,<sup>[37]</sup> others appear to have been never recorded.

On the south wall of the same room, a more remarkable text, the Great Doxology in Greek, survived against all odds.<sup>[38]</sup> In some way, this long and formal liturgical text, enclosed in a *tabula ansata*, must have been connected with the function that this part of the “southern narthex” had in medieval times.

## Adding pieces to a puzzle

The walls of the basilica are not the only source for the epigraphy of the White Monastery. The extensive ruins that surround it also yielded many inscriptions, which often still await publication. Some of these afford vivid glimpses of past monastic life. Perhaps the most stunning of them is a unique stone lintel that was found in the 1990s by an Egyptian mission, and is as yet unpublished.<sup>[39]</sup> It gives a graphical representation of what the White Monastery ‘federation’ must have looked like hierarchically a few centuries after Shenoute’s death. In polychrome relief, it depicts eight standing monastic dignitaries, represented *en face*, four to the left and four to the right of a central motif, presumably a cross, now missing.

The Coptic inscription that frames the relief panels mentions their names and titles, starting from the left with “the great archimandrite,” perhaps called Apa Paniskos. As the fourth in the series, a woman appears, undoubtedly the head of the nunnery. The last person portrayed is an architect and deacon, Apa Stephanos. According to the inscription, he was the founder of the monastic building for which the lintel was intended. The monument’s lower architrave bears a prayer for the sculptor.

The top of the hierarchy of the White Monastery is again immortalized on a far later and very different monument. The largest of the impressive ceremonial keys from Sohag that are now in the Coptic Museum in Cairo is inscribed in copper and silver inlay.<sup>[40]</sup> The inscriptions commemorate the monastic dignitaries who ordered it, among whom was an Archimandrite Iohannes.

It has recently been suggested that he might be the same person as the like-named archimandrite who directed the rebuilding of the church sanctuary in the middle of the thirteenth century, according to the mural inscriptions quoted above.<sup>[41]</sup> The fabrication of such a monumental key would indeed well fit the wave of architectural renewal attested by these

inscriptions.

In addition to other textual remains, the Egyptian mission mentioned earlier also appears to have discovered funerary inscriptions, otherwise hardly known for the White Monastery.<sup>[42]</sup> This would open an as yet unexplored field of research. Until now, the funerary epigraphy from the White Monastery area seemed to be virtually limited to a single Coptic stela, now apparently lost, which belonged to a monk, Pamin, and was published more than a century ago by W. de Bock.<sup>[43]</sup> The publication of the recent finds could pave the way for a study of local funerary habits and formulae as is possible for other centers in Upper Egypt.

This brief review may give an indication of the interest and broad variety of the epigraphic material from the White Monastery. It also shows how much work remains to be done. Even within the relatively well-explored area of the great church, many inscriptions wait to be published or even identified. Others are available only in old or substandard publications. Already quite a lot have vanished completely or are doomed to vanish soon.

About recent finds made in the vicinity, almost all information is lacking. It must therefore be urgently recommended that, whatever conservation or research projects are considered for the White Monastery or the surrounding area, they should on principle include a systematic and comprehensive survey of the epigraphic material, either lost or surviving. In reconstructing the long but poorly known history of this important center of learning and piety, the evidence of the inscriptions cannot be dispensed with.

**Sofia Schaten and Jacques van der Vliet**

<sup>[1]</sup> Criscuolo 2002: 56.

[2] Kuhlmann 1983: 6–9, with pl. 5–15; two previously unknown texts discovered by Kuhlmann were published by Guy Wagner (1982; cf. Lajtar 1993).

[3] For further information about funerary stelae, Greek and Coptic, from Christian Egypt and their classification, see Crum 1902 (catalogue of Christian stelae in Greek and Coptic in the Egyptian Museum; most of these are in the Coptic Museum today), Lefebvre 1907 (catalogue of [Christian inscriptions](#) in Greek from collections in Egypt and abroad), Zuntz 1932 (an attempt to locate stelae in different areas and places), Krause 1991a (general introduction to Christian epigraphy in Egypt), Wietheger 1992 (analysis of the inscriptions from the Monastery of St. Jeremiah at Saqqara), *SB Kopt* I–III (Coptic “Sammelbuch” including many funerary inscriptions), Thomas 2000 (about decorated stelae). Stelae from Akhmim were first collected in Lefebvre 1907 and 1911; for recent reviews of this material, see Timm 1984–1992, vol. 1: 90, n. 44–46, and Criscuolo 2002, to which may be added: Lajtar and Twardecki 2003: nos. 94-95 (Adam Lajtar), and Gasco 2004.

[4] For the archaeological remains in the area, see Kuhlmann 1983, McNally and Dvorzak Schrunk 1993.

[5] Most of them are now in the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria, a few others in the Coptic Museum, Cairo, and in various collections in Europe and the United States. As yet no special publication has been devoted to them; most of the stelae in Alexandria are known only from Lefebvre 1907, where no pictures are given.

[6] Thus, in Lefebvre 1907 and 1911, over fifty pieces are labelled “Akhmim?”

[7] Cramer 1955: 20-26, fig. 19-21; Cramer 1957: no. 22.

[8] E.g., in the case of the stelae Crum 1902: nos. 8575 (= Coptic

Museum inv. no. 8656) and 8603.

[9] For the indiction, a fifteen-year cycle introduced for fiscal purposes in the early fourth century, see now Bagnall and Worp 2004.

[10] E.g., Lefebvre 1907: nos. 263, 294, 345.

[11] Lefebvre 1907: no. 673, cf. Pellegrini 1907: no. 3; Lefebvre 1911: 238-45.

[12] Cf. Timm 1984-1992, vol. 1: 90, n. 46.

[13] Thus, Scheidel 2001 records seasonal mortality in Egypt from ancient to modern times; his “Appendix one” lists months of death after epitaphs from ancient and medieval Egypt and Nubia, including stelae from Akhmim quoted after Lefebvre 1907.

[14] See Krause 1991a: 1293-94.

[15] *SB* III, 6311; *ed. princeps* with facsimile: Lefebvre 1920a: 470-75; see also Lefebvre 1920b; Monneret de Villard 1923; Monneret de Villard 1925-26, vol. 1: 18-22; Emmel 1998: 94. The information in Timm 1984-1992, vol. 2: 608, n. 44-45, is misleading: the lintel is no tombstone and the text is entirely unambiguous.

[16] Cf. Bingen 1999: 613-14.

[17] As can be inferred from works by Shenoute that mention him; see Emmel 1998: 94, taking up earlier discussions by Monneret de Villard (1923; 1925-1926, vol. 1: 18-22). A Coptic fragment edited by Johnson (1976: 10, 1 *verso*, col. a, l. 29) associates [Caesarius](#) with the death of Nestorius, which would date his activity again around 445-55, but the text smells of hagio-graphical embroidery. No other independent sources for Caesarius appear to exist (cf. Martindale 1980: 249-50). Lefebvre (1920a: 475) dates the inscription palaeographically to the first half of the fifth

century.

[18] Published by W.E. Crum (1904c) after copies by the English clergyman WJ. (not WT.) Oldfield (1857-1934; *Who Was Who 1929-1940*: 1021).

[19] If the commemoration of the artist Merkouri in A.1, l. 23-25 (cf. Crum 1904c, vol. 1: 555; Monneret de Villard 1925-1926, vol. 1: 28; Coquin 1975: 277-78) indeed belongs to the same text.

[20] Crum 1904c: 555-56.

[21] Crum 1904c: 554, l. 13-16.

[22] Van der Vliet, forthcoming, offers a fuller discussion of this inscription than is possible here.

[23] Vansleb (J.M. Wansleben; 1677: 374) erroneously describes it as an epitaph. Coquin and Martin (1994: 765) think it belonged to a pagan temple, which may be correct for the column, but not for the inscription. They are followed by Criscuolo 2002: 60-61, who tentatively links it to a far older and entirely unrelated monument of a Triphis priest (*SEG* 43, no. 1124). According to Monneret de Villard (1925-1926, vol. 1: 25, n. 6) it had disappeared; other descriptions of the church do not appear to mention it.

[24] It is technically impossible that the cross is a Christian addition, post-dating the inscription. The two belong together, as in the column's exact counterpart quoted below.

[25] [Grossmann](#) 2002b: 127; cf. 2002a: 533-34 (where he dates the [capitals](#) on top of the present columns to the sixth century).

[26] Lefebvre 1910: 62-63, no. 815 (*SB* I, 1597). This column was transported to Cairo in 1909, but I have been unable to trace it.

[27] Cf. Crum 1904c: 552.

[28] See Kapoian-Kouymjian 1988: 16-17 (includes photos and extensive bibliography); also Crum 1904a: 556-57.

[29] Crum 1904c: A.6 and A.7.

[30] Cf. C.R. Peers *apud* Crum 1904c: 569; Monneret de Villard 1925-1926, vol. 1: 28-31; [Grossmann](#) 2002a: 535-536.

[31] Crum 1904c: A.10; Monneret de Villard 1925-1926, vol. 1: 30, tends to make this Phibamon the architect responsible for the restoration works described by the other inscriptions, but this is far from certain.

[32] The texts are now completely lost; the copies by W.J. Oldfield as published by Crum 1904a: 564-69, nos. B.12-31, are our only source.

[33] Orlandi 2002: 213-15; cf. Khosroyev 2003; Takla 2005.

[34] See Crum 1904c: 552-53; *pace* Orlandi 2002: 211-12.

[35] Cf. Crum 1904c: 553 n. 4.

[36] See [Grossmann](#) 2000a: 531-32.

[37] Lefebvre 1920a: 485-86, 488, fig. 3660.

[38] Lefebvre 1907: no. 237; 1920a: 485, fig. 3658; cf. Leclercq 1921: 2511-12; 1925: 2891-93; Quecke 1970: 276; Van Haelst 1976: no. 773; Tidda 2001: 118-19.

[39] I owe my knowledge of this piece to a set of photographs made by the excavators. It presently consists of two blocks of about 36 x 46 cm. each; it can be dated to about the seventh-ninth century with the greatest caution only.



[40] Inv. no. 5915; see Benazeth and Boud'hors2003 (*editio princeps* of the texts and extensive discussion).

[41] Benazeth and Boud'hors2003: 31 and 36.

[42] Known to me only in inexpert transcriptions.

[43] De Bock 1901: 69, no. 81 (“une stele calcaire trouvee pres des ruines de la ville d’Athribis”) .

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